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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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BUYS BALLOT'S LAW

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An important practical rule expressing certain relations between wind and barometric pressure is usually known as "Buys Ballot's Law", because it was first clearly enunciated and brought into prominence by the Dutch meteorologist, Prof. Buys Ballot, though the same principle had previously been recognized by others. It is sometimes called the "baric wind law". It is generally stated thus:

"If you stand with your back to the wind, in the northern hemisphere, the barometer will be lower on your left than on your right. The reverse is true in the southern hemisphere."

Evidence of the correctness of this rule is easily obtained through an inspection of daily weather maps. On such maps published anywhere in the northern hemisphere it will be found that the winds (indicated by little arrows), though subject to a good many local variations, have a general tendency to be directed "clockwise" around a center of high barometric pressure and "counter-clockwise" around a center of low barometric pressure. This remark applies to their direction at a given moment. It does not mean that the winds actually make complete or nearly complete circuits around "highs" and "lows", which are, as a rule, traveling much too fast to permit a particle of air to circle around them.

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