

Released upon receipt  
but intended for use  
August 3, 1935

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed July 27, 1935

OCEAN-BORDERED DESERTS

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

Much has been heard since the great drought of recent memory about the supposed effect of artificial lakes and reservoirs in increasing rainfall. That proximity to bodies of water does not necessarily afford any protection from drought is evident from charts of physical geography. Thus Dean A.M. Shaw, of the University of Saskatchewan, said in a recent address:

"Let us for a moment take a look at some of the arid or desert regions of the world. Where are they -- far inland or on the sea coast? The majority of them are bathed on one entire side by the ocean. In German Southwest Africa, the country is almost completely arid for a hundred miles or more inland. Thousands of square miles of territory produce nothing but the typical desert flora and no change occurs until the elevation caused by ranges of hills located far inland causes the warm moisture-laden air to rise sufficiently high for precipitation to occur. And yet this vast territory forms the shoreline of the Atlantic for hundreds of miles. Let us go to the West coast of the North American continent and give some consideration to the southern part of the State of California and the northern part of Western Mexico. Here again we find similar conditions -- typical desert country extending far inland and yet its entire western edge is bathed by the waters of the Pacific Ocean."

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

-----  
SCIENCE SERVICE  
2101 Constitution Ave.  
Washington, D.C.