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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed December 6, 1935

WEATHER STATIONS GALORE

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The world's network of stations at which weather is regularly observed and recorded grows apace. These posts of observation are now thickly dotted over every civilized country, particularly in the temperate zone, and there are many stations remote from civilization.

Consider, for example, South Africa--a rather thinly settled portion of the globe and one of only moderate economic importance. In the Union of South Africa, Basutoland, Swaziland, and the Bechuanaland Protectorate there are 4,074 meteorological stations. Of these, 3,721 are equipped with rain-gauges only; 242 with a rain-gauge and thermometers; and 111 with rain-gauges, thermometers, and barometers. Some of the barometric stations are further equipped with automatic instruments, and continuous records of wind direction and speed are obtained at 16, of pressure at 44, of temperature at 40, of humidity at 39, of sunshine at 40, and of precipitation at nine stations.

At Pretoria, where the central office of the weather service is located, weather reports are received daily by telegraph from 84 stations in the Union, four stations in Southwest Africa, eight in Rhodesia, and 16 in Portuguese East Africa; and by wireless from eight stations in Madagascar, one in Portuguese West Africa, and from ships at sea. Reports and forecasts based on these data are disseminated throughout the Union, and weather, shipping, and synoptic reports are broadcast by the coast wireless stations.

The recent growth in aviation in South Africa has necessitated special provision for the safety and assistance of aircraft, and suitably equipped meteorological stations have been established along all the regular airways.

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