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Circulating atmosphere! The earth (including the atmosphere) must be in a state of heat equilibrium, or else it would be getting continuously cooler or warmer. In other words, as much heat is absorbed from the sun as is lost by radiation into space. However, more heat is absorbed in the tropics than is lost, and more heat is lost in the polar regions than is received. The agency which brings about equilibrium is circulation of the atmosphere and of the oceans. In general, the air over the equatorial regions is always rising and flowing north and south, while the air over the polar regions is flowing toward the equator. This transfer is called the general circulation of the atmosphere.
