

CHATS WITH THE WEATHER MAN.

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FOR BROADCAST PURPOSES ONLY

ANNOUNCEMENT: Speaking of weather, our old friend Ob. Server is going to do just that. He has been nosing around among the weather records with specialists of the United States Weather Bureau --- but he will tell you about that ---- Well, Mr. Ob. Server? ---

Where is the coldest spot in the United States? ----

No, you're wrong. It wasn't in your bed room this morning ---

What is the hottest place in the country? Where is the rainiest? Where does the snowfall lie deepest? Where does the wind blow strongest? The poet speaks of the winds that blow and are never weary, "but where really are they the steadiest?

I asked Mr. Herbert C. Hunter of the climatological division of the United States Weather Bureau these and other questions, and he gave me the official records. I was surprised at some of those records too. I know some of my friends will be when I cite them.

You know about this time of the year, I find a lot of people suddenly getting an unusual interest in the weather. I guess it is the change of seasons. Anyway, they begin to look both ways toward bad weather. Some like it cold, and some like it hot. Some look back on the summer. Some think of the winter ahead and past winters. Some cuss the fall rains, and others are still talking about the drought. And some of those people are always claiming that where they were the weather was the worst.

When anybody gets to talking about dry weather, some traveler insists on mentioning Greenland Ranch, in Death Valley. For ten years, they had an average rainfall of little over an inch and a half of rain per year, at that station in Death Valley. That is our United States record dry spot.

Yet that seems sopping wet compared to that place down in Chili, Arica, where Mr. Hunter tells me, in seventeen years there was a total rainfall of one-third of an inch. There was an average of only 2 hundredths of an inch a year. Just think of it, seventeen years and only one-third of an inch of rain all put together during that time! Why, a child down there might grow almost to manhood without ever having seen a rain.

Compare that with the place in India, Cherrapunji, northeast of Calcutta, where records kept for over sixty years show an average of 457 inches

of rainfall a year. That is about 38 feet of rainfall a year. You'll have to admit that is a lot of rain for any one place.

The nearest to that we can come in this country is at Glenora, Oregon, where the annual rainfall averages 131 inches, or about 11 feet of rain. But even in the eastern part of this country we have some wet spots. The record rainiest station in the East is in Macon County, in the mountains of North Carolina, where the average yearly rainfall amounts to a little over 7 feet.

Now that we are getting along to the season when the snows begin to fly, maybe some of us think in terms of snowfall. For deep snows, we turn to the mountains. And of course snowfall records are not so easy to get. However, the Sierra Mountains in California seem to be the where the snowfall is the thickest. One station in California shows 38 feet of snow a year, and another about 36 feet. The Cascade mountains of Oregon and Washington have annual snows which are not quite that deep.

Just what is the biggest single snowstorm it is hard to tell, Mr. Hunter says, because when it gets started snowing in some of our western states, it just seems to get the habit and keep on snowing more or less continuously. In Rainier National Park 200 inches of snow fell, in the course of three weeks during which it snowed every day practically all day.

In the East we have considerable snow. The record in the East is held by a station on the west side of the Adirondack Mountains in New York where 141 inches of snow are recorded as the yearly average.

Maybe most of you would have guessed where the snowiest and rainiest and driest spots in the country are, but I am wondering how many of you can tell off hand where it is windiest. And where the wind has blown the hardest, fastest on record. Naturally, you think of some of those West Indian hurricanes which sometimes sweep up into our country.

And you will be getting into real wind-gauge smashing winds when you check up on those hurricanes. If you take in the Porto Rico records, that hurricane on September 13, 1928, which recorded a wind-velocity of 160 miles an hour before the wind gauge was blown away, beats anything we can show in the continental United States. At Miami Beach in the hurricane of 1926, a wind of 123 miles an hour velocity was recorded for five minutes. Cape Lookout, North Carolina, in another hurricane registered 125 miles. But the strongest wind on record in the United States proper was not along our southern coast, but at Mount Washington, New Hampshire, where a wind of 140 miles an hour was registered.

Mount Washington also leads the country in the average speed of the wind the year around. The average at that station is 33 miles an hour. The winds which blow around the top of Pike's Peak in Colorado average only 20 1/2 miles an hour on the annual basis.

Wind records are sometimes deceptive. Few people realize, Mr. Hunter says, how hard it is to get accurate measurements of the wind's velocity.

It is difficult to get instruments which will exactly keep step with the wind. That is, to get an instrument which will move three times as fast, when the wind blows three times as strong, for instance.

But let's look into some other weather records. Let's risk another shiver or two, and look in the cold weather record. The coldest it has been anywhere in this country, proper, is 65 degrees below zero near Miles City, Montana, back in January, 1888. But that was an unusually cold year in that section, the record that month was 25 degrees below normal, or rather below the mean temperature for that region at that time of the year. When these Weather Bureau men speak of the mean temperature, they mean the average; but for anybody who don't like cold weather, I guess you would call that real mean weather.

Of course, in the interior of our territory of Alaska the thermometer registers even lower than that. It has been down to 76 degrees below in Alaska. The world's lowest, however, was over in northeastern Siberia, where it got 90 degrees below.

If the mere thought of any such cold makes you extra chilly, just think for a moment about that temperature at Greenland Ranch, in Death Valley on July 10, 1913, when the thermometer registered 134 degrees above, in the shade. But even an ordinary daytime summer temperature in Death Valley of 115 is not exactly cold.

Yet paradoxical as it may seem, the average annual temperature at Greenland Ranch, which by the way used to be called Furnace Creek Ranch, is lower, cooler if you will, than the average annual temperature at Key West, Florida, which lays some claim to a salubrious climate.

Of course, the average in Death Valley is reduced by the night temperatures which fall as low as 40 degrees in winter.

ANNOUNCEMENT: We will have another chat with the weather man two weeks from today. These talks come to you through Station ---- in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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