

THE NEW MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW.

It will be observed by readers of the MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW that with the current number, July, 1909, a series of important changes have been made in the contents of this publication.

The climatology of the United States was originally developed chiefly for the agricultural and transportation interests, and the usual data were collected by voluntary observers stationed in nearly every county of the country except in the mountainous regions of the West. These data were published as monthly section bulletins, the sections generally being identical with the States except in certain parts of the North Atlantic States. The monthly bulletins on climatology have long been recognized as valuable publications intended for practical purposes, especially in keeping the public informed as to the relation of the weather to the condition of the crops. The crop-reporting feature was a few years ago transferred to the Bureau of Statistics of the Department of Agriculture, so that it became less important to continue the close supervision of the effects of the weather upon the crops, which has been one of the main features of the work of the Climatological Service.

It is evident that since the agricultural territory is generally located in the river valleys and the lower levels of the United States, it was but natural that the cooperative (voluntary) observers should be drawn largely from the agricultural communities. On this account the extension of meteorological observations into the high levels of the Rocky Mountain Plateau, and Pacific States was not pushed forward with any special activity. It is easy to secure cooperative observers in settled communities, but in mountain districts it becomes more difficult on account of the sparsity of the population. This is especially true in the winter when the people who find occupation in the mountains during the summer return to the lower levels because the snow makes it quite impracticable to live in places remote from the source of supply needed for the necessities of life.

The rapid growth of interests in irrigation and forestry, as well as in the sources of water power, especially in the semiarid regions of the West, has developed a new demand for meteorological data in these very mountain regions. The Weather Bureau has therefore organized a campaign in order to extend its observations into the mountain districts, and it has entered into an association with the following Bureaus of the Government service, because they are able to assist materially in this work.

The Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture.

The Bureau of Plant Industry of the Department of Agriculture.

The Reclamation Service of the Interior Department.

The Water Resources Branch of the Geological Survey of the Interior Department.

The Office of Indian Affairs of the Interior Department.

The purpose of this inter-Bureau cooperation is to secure observers to make records of the amount and condition of the snowfall and rainfall along the sources of the rivers utilized farther on by the irrigation and power projects at lower levels. In a general way the U. S. Weather Bureau supplies the necessary apparatus, instructs the observers, and makes a small payment for the taking of the required observations, while the cooperating Bureaus render most valuable service in securing observers and

in installing the apparatus. A good beginning has been made in the work of organizing this inter-Bureau service in respect to the water resources of the semiarid regions of the West, but it will take some time to extend it as far as required by the demands of the people.

Under these changed conditions it has seemed desirable to somewhat modify the form of the publication of the acquired climatological data. There will be no special changes as regards the administration of the service by the section directors of the several States except so far as regards the actual publication of the data.

After conference with the associated Bureaus it has seemed proper to divide the United States into twelve large districts, generally having the same boundaries as the great drainage basins of the country, these boundaries being marked off by the natural topographical divides. It is proposed to adjust the administration and the publications of the respective Bureaus as far as practicable to conform to these twelve districts, so that the several publications issuing will have a close relation to each other; that is, so that whatever concerns any one of these twelve drainage districts shall appear in such a form as to be easily accessible for comparative studies to engineers and the public generally. The Weather Bureau has thought it convenient to bring together under one publication, namely, the MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW, representative climatological data covering the general climatology, the daily precipitation, and daily maximum and minimum temperatures of the respective districts. The data for each of the twelve districts will be edited by local representatives familiar with the country, who will prepare monthly summaries made up from the notes written by the several section directors. These twelve districts will be brought together in the MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW, and they will not appear as detached summaries in section bulletins, such as have been issued heretofore in addition to the general climatological summary appearing in the MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW. In this form all the climatological data of the United States will be readily accessible for reference, month by month, and separates covering each of the twelve drainage districts, respectively, can be utilized by the local interests. The MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW will contain the usual data regarding the forecasts, the river stages, the storm tracks, and similar matter. Besides these there will be prepared each month several charts covering the climatology of the United States, for the precipitation and the temperature conditions of the month.

In view of the common interests that exist between meteorology, agriculture, transportation, forestry, irrigation, and the development of water power, it may prove to be convenient to make this publication on climatology the medium for the interchange of information between the associated Bureaus and the public generally along this line. It is hoped that the officials of the cooperating services will supply our editors with such news items and such reports from time to time in the several districts as may contribute efficiently to this end. The twelve adopted climatological districts are shown on the accompanying chart.

In all matters pertaining to the climatological data at the local Weather Bureau offices the district editors are to be addressed as indicated on page 265.

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