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December 10, 1927.

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed December 3, 1927.

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SOME INDIRECT EFFECTS OF TROPICAL CYCLONES

The cyclones or hurricanes of the tropics are notorious for the vast amount of damage they do through the combined agencies of wind and water. That they also have a number of striking indirect effects has been pointed out by Dr. S.S. Visher, who has made a special study of the storms that rage among the tropical islands of the Pacific. He finds that cyclones tend to increase the inertia of tropical peoples, to strengthen their faith in fatalism and communism, and to favor the spread of disease.

"Nothing," he says, "is quite so deadening to ambition as the conviction that one's efforts are likely to be in vain. The devastating tropical cyclones have rendered vain innumerable efforts. They have helped produce 'laziness' because from time to time they have swept away the products of labor and made the hard-working individual or family as poor in worldly goods as the laziest."

As to the effects of these visitations on health: "The people are weakened by the strain; few of them eat or sleep sufficiently during the blow, which often lasts two days. Their diet suffers long afterward because of the injury to food plants. Disease also increases with the mosquitoes that develop in the water holes washed by the torrents produced by excessive rainfall. Healthfulness also is affected by the size and location of the houses, both of which may, in turn, be related to storm."

Most native houses are low and squatty, because larger dwellings are more damaged by storms, and, in certain regions, are located in valleys instead of on the more healthful, breeze-swept hilltops, in order to escape the violence of the occasional hurricane.

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21st and B Sts.,  
Washington, D.C.