

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed August 14, 1928

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CLIMATIC STATISTICS

One of the leading tasks of meteorologists is to collect the data of observations made in the course of years at meteorological stations and digest them in the form of climatic statistics. Such statistics are indispensable in many arts and sciences, including geography, biology, medicine, agriculture, engineering, etc.

There is a striking disparity in the amounts of climatic information available for various parts of the world. It is relatively abundant for a great part of Europe, the United States, Canada and some other regions, and very scarce for most of the ocean, the polar regions, and vast areas in Asia, Africa and South America.

There is, however, no part of the world for which climatic data have been compiled in such abundant detail as to meet all the diverse demands that arise for such data. In several cases large books have been published on the climates of individual towns, yet they never set forth all the information on the subject that is sought, from time to time, for practical reasons. Moreover, besides being fragmentary, climatic statistics are, on the whole, difficult of access. They are scattered through thousands of books and articles, and it is quite exceptional to find a large fraction of this literature accessible in any one library or in any one town. The library of the United States Weather Bureau in Washington is probably more nearly exhaustive in this respect than any other in the world.

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