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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed February 9, 1929

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology

CHERRAPUNJI RAINFALL

What is the average annual rainfall at Cherrapunji, Assam --- long reputed to be the rainiest place in the world for which climatic statistics are available? Whoever seeks the answer to this question in reference books is likely to be bewildered by the many different figures quoted by different authorities. This diversity does not mean that most of the writers are mistaken. It depends upon two facts; first, that several rain-gauges have been in use at Cherrapunji, and they give quite different results owing to marked local variations of rainfall; and second, that a single unusually wet or dry year makes a decided difference in the "normal" or average yearly rainfall, of a place as deduced from a long record of a single gauge, brought up to date.

The following are the latest figures for the normal yearly rainfall, as measured at four different points in and about Cherrapunji:

Police Station	(mean of 49 years)	428 inches
Welsh Mission House	(" " 18 ")	442 "
Mr. Shadwell's house	(" " 12 ")	450 "
Roman Catholic Mission House	(" " 11 ")	381 "

At Manoyuram, another village in the same mountainous district of Assam, an average of 499 inches a year fell during the five years 1913-17, inclusive, as compared with an average of 455 inches a year during the same period at the Welsh Mission House, Cherrapunji. Is Manoyuram normally a rainier place than Cherrapunji? Unfortunately no positive answer can be given to this question because the rain-gauge at the former place was in operation only during the brief period above mentioned, and a much longer record is necessary to furnish a trustworthy value.

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