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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed February 13, 1929

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INDIA'S WEATHER BUREAU

In British India where, in the words of a recent writer, "over two-thirds of the population are occupied in an industry the success of which is almost wholly dependent upon a sufficient and well-distributed rainfall", and where a spell of unfavorable weather, such as formerly caused colossal famines, is still a source of widespread distress, it is fitting that the government should maintain a first-rate meteorological service, and such a service has existed for many years.

The head office of the India Meteorological Department was moved last July from Simla to Poona, where it occupies a fine new building located in a compound more than 10 acres in extent. Other important institutions belonging to the department are the solar physics observatory at Kodaikanal, the magnetic, meteorological and seismological observatories at Colaba and Alibag, the upper-air observatory at Agra, meteorological offices and observatories at Alipore (Calcutta), Karachi and Madras, and two hundred other stations that telegraph daily reports of observations. Collaborating with the department are the forecasting centers of the Royal Air Force at Quetta and Peshawar.

The head of the department is Dr. C.W.B. Normand, who holds the title of director-general of observatories. At the Poona office there is a scientific staff of 12, all of whom are native Indians, besides 70 clerks. The office has a library of 25,000 volumes. The department issues daily weather maps at Poona, Calcutta and Madras, besides numerous other publications, including an annual collection of rainfall records forming a volume as big as an unabridged Webster dictionary.

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