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October 13, 1933

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed October 6, 1933

BUILDING FOR HURRICANES

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Tropical hurricanes have wrecked a great many buildings this year, and much of the attendant loss of life would not have happened if these buildings had withstood the violence of the wind. The practical lesson to be drawn from all such disasters is that in hurricane countries people should build for hurricanes, if their means permit, just as, in countries subject to frequent earthquakes, the inhabitants should build for earthquakes. Dr. M.T. Cook, a resident in Puerto Rico, writing of a recent hurricane in that island, says:

"Many of the old Spanish buildings are still standing. They have very thick walls of masonry and flat tile roofs without projecting eaves. They were not damaged to any great extent. The American bungalow type of house, with steel-reinforced walls and corrugated galvanized roofing, has become very popular in recent years. The walls of these residences stood, but most of the roofs were blown partly or completely away. This was partly due to the failure to anchor the roofs properly and partly to the fact that the projecting eaves are exceptionally favorable for hurricane damage. Most of the frame houses were damaged, some of them beyond repair. The great majority of the people are very poor, as is the case in all tropical countries, and live in frail little houses constructed of fragments of lumber, old roofing, old boxes, palm leaves, etc. These houses are destroyed in great numbers. The money value is very small and they are of such simple construction that most of them can be rebuilt within a few days."

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