

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
April 11, 1934

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed April 4, 1934

GATHERING CLIMATIC DATA

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

Are you interested in the rainfall of Mexico, or the temperature of Greece, or the prevailing winds of Australia? Have you ever studied the charts of climate in the physical geographies? When we have a spell of abnormal weather, do you wonder how science finds out exactly what kind is "normal"?

Perhaps you know vaguely that, before the climatic statistics of a country can be compiled and computed, a great many people must patiently read thermometers, rain-gauges and other instruments from day to day for many years. Probably you do not, however, realize that the gathering of such data is the biggest scientific job in the world. A veritable army of weather observers, on land and sea, is engaged in carrying on the climatic survey of the globe, and it is estimated that in the aggregate the members of this army take upwards of fifteen million observations of weather in the course of a year.

The collection of climatic statistics is, as a rule, performed under the direction of the same institutions that issue weather forecasts and storm warnings, and it is so important an undertaking that if all attempts to predict coming weather were abandoned the cost of maintaining these expensive establishments would still be amply justified.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE
21st and Constitution Ave.
Washington, D.C.