

## ACTIVITIES OF THE MANILA OBSERVATORY

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ANY years ago, before the establishment of the present efficient meteorological service which renders timely warnings of approaching typhoons, it required much courage to embark on a voyage across the China Sea. But with the erection of weather stations and the development of vastly improved means of communication, the scientific study of typhoons progressed and a system of forecasts and warnings has been established by which ocean travel has been made much safer and more reliable. It is well known that the Manila Observatory has had a very important part in the development of the science of weather forecasting, and that it has rendered a service of immeasurable value, not only within the Archipelago but also throughout the Far East.

Situated as it is in a position favorable for observation of approaching typhoons, or for detecting those forming close to the Archipelago, the Manila Observatory is able to render valuable service in giving prompt warnings to the general public throughout the surrounding areas. The Manila Observatory is the Central Office of the Philippine Weather Bureau and has four departments in its organization. These departments are under the direction of priests of the Society of Jesus, which organization has two other Observatories doing the same work, one at Shanghai, China, and the other at Havana, Cuba.

## ESTABLISHED IN 1865

Of the four departments, viz., Meteorological, Astronomical, Seismological and Magnetic, the Meteorological is the oldest. It was established in 1865 by one of the teachers of the Ateneo de Manila. Rev. Federico Faura, S.J., took over the work in 1867; and, by his thorough study of the observations, was able to give his first typhoon warning to the public in 1879. He obtained his data through the courtesy of the Bureau of Posts, the officials of which volunteered to take observations at various places in the Archipelago and to send them to Fr. Faura. Such was the enthusiasm which greeted these practical warnings that, in a few years, Fr. Faura was placed at the head of the newly organized government bureau. He established his office in a new building erected in the Ermita residential district, south of the Walled City portion of Manila. There, the Observatory has carried on its labors to the present as the Central Office of the Philippine Weather Bureau.