

The Climate of the Philippines

THE PHILIPPINE ARCHIPELAGO extends from north to south over thirteen degrees in the Tropics. It is divided into more than 7,000 islands, whose form and area vary exceedingly but whose combined area is about 114,400 square miles. Some, as Luzon and Mindanao, cover an extent of over 30,000 square miles; 9 have a surface of between 1,000 and 6,000 miles, 20 between 100 and 1,000, 73 between 1 and 10 square miles, with more than 6,800 islets of less than 1 square mile each. Bearing these facts in mind and considering also the bold relief of some of these islands, constituting various plateaus in the mountainous regions, we can readily see that they give rise to a decided variety of climatic conditions which cannot be comprehended in a single or uniform type of climate. The foundations for a classification of climate must necessarily be based on observation and experience. The latter show that the differences of climatic conditions found in the different parts of the Archipelago depend mainly on the local air currents, which in turn are a resultant of the general air streams, the position of the islands, and the most usual storm tracks.

Purely local air currents are caused by the various thermal conditions of our islands and their adjacent seas, and they are more or less independent of small differences of latitude; the general air streams, however, are caused by the thermal differences between polar and equatorial regions, or they owe their existence to the normal differences of temperature corresponding to latitude. The influence of the general currents or latitude upon some of the climatic elements for the Philippines may be very slight. Take for instance temperature. The highest recorded temperature for 16 years in Jolo, latitude $6^{\circ} 3' N.$, is $35.7^{\circ} C.$ in 1913, while that in Aparri, latitude $18^{\circ} 22' N.$, is $37.8^{\circ} C.$ in 1903.

Besides, the yearly mean maximum temperature for the same period is $33.8^{\circ} C.$ in Jolo and $35.8^{\circ} C.$ in Aparri, and the average mean temperature of the hottest months is $27.0^{\circ} C.$ in Jolo and