

Watchdog *of the Pacific*

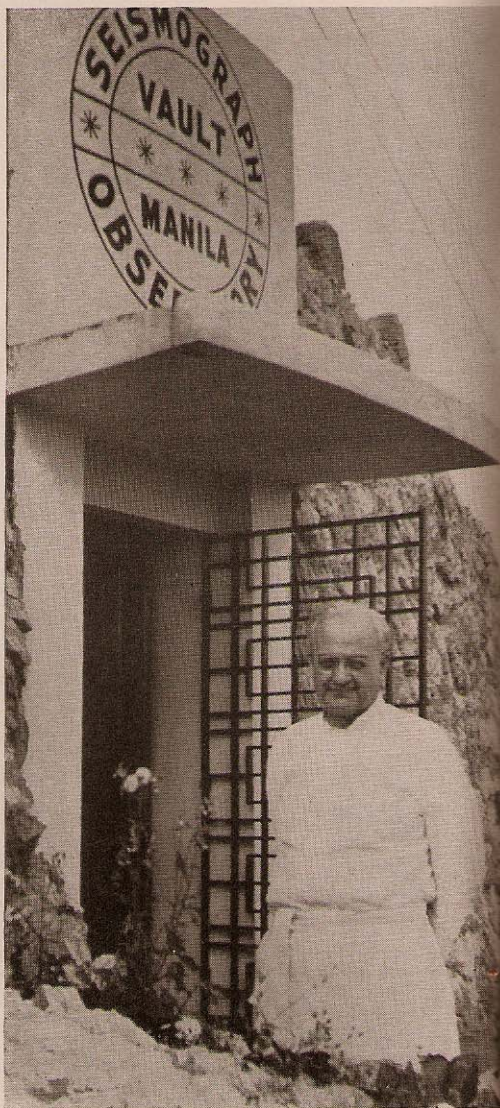
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For eighty years navigators of the Pacific have looked to the Manila Observatory for warnings against storms.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE VESSEL LYING ALONGSIDE of Manila's famous Pier Seven regarded coldly the white-cassocked figure approaching along the dock. The priest boarded the vessel and headed for the bridge where the Captain waited, an icy challenge in his manner. Then the priest spoke. "I am Father Doucette of the Manila Observatory." In a moment all the ice had vanished and the Captain welcomed him warmly.

This was in the peaceful years before 1941 when every navigator in the Far Pacific was aware of his own indebtedness to the Manila Observatory for warnings about treacherous typhoons and devastating storms. In those days there was scarcely a Captain who failed to pay his respects to the Fathers and to express his appreciation for the weather work they were doing. The eighty years of service in the fields of science had earned for the Jesuits and the Manila Observatory a distinguished reputation in the Far East.

Over this bright scientific research not only in meteorology (the study of the weather) but also in seismology, astronomy and magnetism



Father Doucette of the Observatory.

came the cloud of the Japanese occupation of Manila. This cloud brought darkness—and then the blackest night for the Observatory. Knowing the strategic importance of weather warnings for a war that involved tremendous traffic on the sea the Japanese at first restricted the work of the Fathers, then stopped it entirely by putting them in concentration camps.

Finally, in an attempt to frustrate future work, they deliberately destroyed