

Hurricanes Not New Columbus Knew Them

Hurricanes Are Not New, But Florida Resorts More Numerous.

A hurricane, has to have something to blow away—or how can it demonstrate that it is a hurricane? Thus the U. S. Weather bureau—in reply to suggestions that West Indian Tempests, winding up with a lot of damage at Florida east coast resorts, are becoming extraordinarily frequent.

In the opinion of bureau officials, the storms are no more numerous than ever they were.

The Florida east coast resorts are, however.

Columbus lost some vessels in a West Indian hurricane. The archipelago was cyclone swept as long as that, at any rate.

Storms played smash with the buccaners for a couple of centuries. Weather bureau records show 197 tropical cyclones in the West Indies between 1887 and 1915. There were unnumbered before 1900.

But southern Florida was practically unsettled before 1900.

Hurricanes doubtless were sweeping the east coast regularly, as far back as there was any east coast—but what of it?—until people began to live there?—and build cities?

Today, when a hurricane hits the Everglades state, it destroys millions of dollars worth of property, maybe kills some hundreds of inhabitants, leaves several thousands homeless and, more important than all else, scares the daylight out of several multi-millionaire colonies.

Islands like Porto Rico and the Virgin, to be sure, were well settled long before southern Florida was, but this country was not responsible for them until comparatively recent years—not for Porto Rico until we took it away from Spain; not for the Virgin until still later, when we acquired them from Denmark. Consequently, although hurricanes had been laying them flat about every so often, from away back in the 16th century, we never paid any particular attention to their troubles earlier than the latter part of the 19th.

Now, as possessions of our own, their difficulties are ours, too, when disaster befalls them.

A hurricane? A cyclone? A typhoon?

All the same thing, according to the weather bureau.

A tornado is a different breed of kittens.

A tornado is one of the "twisters" such as we are familiar with on our western prairies—and sometimes elsewhere, but in the prairie country in particular.

It is a local disturbance and relatively a small affair, although terrific in its violence, where it does strike.

Popularly the tornado is often referred to as a "cyclone," but never by a meteorologist. To him a cyclone is a storm of large proportions, from 50 to 500 miles in diameter, which may travel hundreds of miles from its point of origin, until it dissipates itself.

The cyclone is, indeed, a vast whirl, just as the tornado is a small one, but a whirl in a direction the reverse of a tornado and at no such frightful velocity as the latter—in fact, at a rate of speed comparatively so moderate as to be spoken of only as a "wind," though sometimes a very high wind.

Cyclones are constantly traversing the globe, usually as quite ordinary storms, worthy of no especial notice beyond what is customarily accorded to day-by-day weather changes.

The creations of cross currents in the air and conflicting temperatures, it is only occasionally that the right combination occurs to kick up a really destructive manifestation—hurricane, torrential rain, blizzard or what-not, dependent on season and latitude.

The tropical hurricane is the most violent type.

Its genesis is in the vicinity of the equator, where just the elements prevail of heat and moisture which appear to be necessary to give it fury.

Moreover, the globe's spin naturally is swiftest at this point of greatest diameter, at right angles with its axis, so that the earth's surface, in a sense, literally is jerked out from under the gathering storm, giving it its initial impetus.

Exactly where the tropical cyclone is born is a matter of controversy. In the western hemisphere it certainly is somewhere to the eastward of the line of the West Indian archipelago. In the eastern hemisphere it appears to be in the neighborhood of the island of Guam.

In the West Indies the customary term for these storms is the "hurricane," in the orient, the "typhoon." The difference is purely one of nomenclature.

Theoretically it may seem as if there is no reason why a cyclone should not be brewed at any point, the world around, in the equatorial belt, sweeping thence to the north-westward—the big tropical storm's invariable direction at the outset, though subsequently generally more or less deflected by atmospheric and other conditions which it encounters.

In point of fact, when the cyclone crosses a large land area, its character is changed, presumably by the friction of the earth and the obstruction of mountain ranges; so

that great portions are reached only by those spawned in a few rather limited areas.

America naturally is mainly interested in the cyclones which first make themselves felt on her own coast, and less in the typhoons, which spend their forces along the Asiatic littoral.

Blows like the latest West Indian and Florida hurricane come tearing their way out of a little-navigated stretch of ocean in the general direction, from the southern West Indies, of the Cape Verde islands, and generally are assumed to have originated somewhere between the two longitudes.

Lieut. E. H. Kincaid, until lately of the United States naval hydrographic office has evolved the theory, however, that they are born primarily of the hot air of the Sahara.

As a means of testing his hypothesis, Kincaid has invented a device known as the static recorder, soon to be installed at coast points scattered from the southeasterly tip of the West Indies to the neighborhood of the Virginia capes, which it is hoped will give advance notice of approaching disturbances with absolute reliability.

The storms are depended on to furnish the static and the converging lines from the various stations, if the theory is sound, will establish the position and movement of their centers.

The same natural laws which affect storm conditions in the northern hemisphere of course produce similar effects south of the equator modified by the considerably different arrangement of continental areas "down under."

"Old Families" Are Slipping.

Hendersonville Times.

Robert Babson, famous statistician, made some highly interesting remarks the other night at a meeting of Boston business men.

After saying that he was optimistic over New England's commercial and industrial future, he added:

"But I am not optimistic about the old New England families. Our business is passing into the hands of immigrants and the sons of immigrants, while the grandsons of the old families are playing golf."

Within a quarter of a century, he added, the presidents of all Boston banks will be immigrants or the sons of immigrants, and the famous old families will have passed out of the financial picture completely.

If there is any section of the country that specializes in Old Families, it is New England—and especially Boston, Virginia, to be sure, has a number of them, and so does Maryland; but nowhere has the importance of being born right been considered quite so important as in Boston. To bear the name of Cabot, Lodge, Peabody, Saltstall, Endicott or Lowell was to be one of the elect; and to bear such a name as O'Brien, Cohen or Bercovicz was to be a barbarian.

For many years these old New England families justified their pretensions. They were the financial overlords of New England—indeed, for a time they were pretty much the whole community. They furnished the country with some of its greatest statesmen, authors, artists, educators and jurists. They believed that they were born to rule, and they did a pretty fair job of it, too.

But Mr. Babson believes that the end is near, and it is not hard to agree with him. Boston has long ceased to be the center of the country's intellectual activity. Instead it devotes itself to banning books and plays that other cities find stimulating. One of Massachusetts' senators bears the good old name of Gillette; but the other, alas, is an Irishman named Walsh.

So it goes. New blood keeps coming to the surface. Old dynasties give way before more energetic newcomers. Boston is only experiencing what all other old cities from Florence on down, have gone through. It is impossible to keep financial or industrial rule in a family forever.

The great problem is distribution. Think of legs like that being wasted on a kangaroo, far from street crossings.—Hagerstown Herald.

Now the war is outlawed, nations need armament only to show what they could do if they hadn't reformed.—Windsor Border Cities Star.

The real question is not whether the Kellogg treaty will end wars, but whether it will keep them from beginning.—Norfolk Virginian-Pilot.

We expect to see the next creation of General Motors look something like a camel in front and a brown derby in the rear.—The Thomas E. Pickering Service.

Maybe corruption isn't an issue because the pot is afraid the kettle might have noticed something, also.—Syracuse Post-Standard.

Herbert Hoover's invasion of the South will accomplish at least one good. It will show those Democrats that not all Republicans are post-masters.—Sun Diego Union.

Russia isn't the only state that makes marriage too easy.—There's the state of intoxication.—Wilmington Dispatch.

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