

HURRICANE AT MARTINIQUE, AUGUST, 1903.

The following account of the passage of this hurricane over Martinique is communicated by Dr. A. Lahille, chemist in charge of the meteorological observations for the chief of the sanitary service at the Military Hospital at Fort de France:

During the night of August 8-9, 1903, a cyclone coming from the north-east-north-northwest, passed over Martinique.

The barometric pressure which, with numerous oscillations, had fallen during the day of the 8th, had nevertheless remained as high as 758 millimeters, or above, until about 9 p. m. From that time, however, the pressure fell rapidly and reached its minimum, 728 millimeters at 12:30 a. m. From 12:30 to 12:45 a. m. a relative calm succeeded, corresponding to the passage of the center of a cyclone. At 12:45 the hurricane recommenced blowing from the south-southeast. August 9, at 2:30 a. m., the pressure was 753 millimeters, and at 4 a. m., 756 millimeters. The amount of rain which fell during the night from 8 p. m. to 8 a. m. was 160 millimeters.

The maximum velocity of the wind, as recorded by the anemometer, was 35 meters per second.

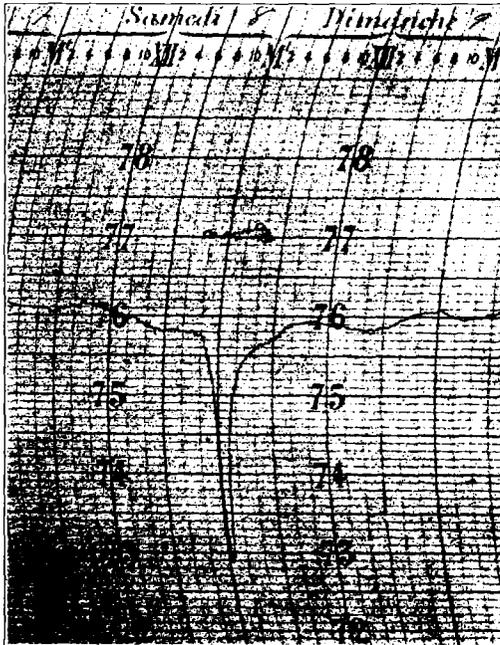


FIG. 1.—Barogram from the Richard barograph, large model, at the meteorological station, Military Hospital, Fort de France, during August 7, 8, 9, 1903. The time scale probably relates to local mean time.

THE RESIGNATION OF H. SOWERBY WALLIS.

It is well known to meteorologists that the great system of rainfall stations and publications, known as the British Rainfall, was organized by Mr. G. J. Symons, and that at his death he left his house and other property as an endowment for the permanent continuation of this important work. His assistant, Mr. H. Sowerby Wallis, was designated by him as his successor, but we regret to learn that it has become necessary for him to retire. Under date of September 1, 1903, Mr. Wallis sends the following letter to the Editor:

DEAR SIR: After thirty years association with my late friend, G. J. Symons, in the development of the rainfall organization, by his desire, I took up the burden of his work with grave misgivings that my health would not long support the strain.

Frequent illness now prevents me giving it continuous attention, and for me to remain in charge could only be a source of weakness. I therefore feel that the time has come for me to pass on the control of the work, and I am glad that so able a successor as Dr. Mill is ready to take up the onerous task. I am handing over to him all the records and instruments, and leaving this house, that he may continue the organization, without a break, at the old address.

Dr. Mill had devoted much attention to rainfall, and for three years we have conjointly carried on the work while he acquired that intimate

knowledge of detail so essential to ensure continuity on the lines approved by experience.

In thus taking leave, while naturally regretting the termination of a life long labor with which many pleasant memories are associated, I would congratulate the nation on possessing a body of private individuals who have, for nearly half a century, kept up a national work of the first importance, and who may be trusted to maintain it in perpetuity.

Yours, very truly,

H. SOWERBY WALLIS.

RETIREMENT OF PROFESSOR NEUMAYER.

We learn that Prof. George von Neumayer, director of the Deutsche Seewarte at Hamburg for many years past, has been retired on account of advanced age and ill health, and that Captain Herz, of the imperial navy, has been appointed his successor with the rank of rear admiral. The Seewarte has hitherto been distinguished for its devotion to the scientific aspect of meteorology, while not neglecting the practical applications. It has in fact introduced so much accuracy into the magnetic, meteorologic, and geographic work of the German Navy that it may be said to have demonstrated that science is eminently practical, and that the highest science must be assimilated by the navigator if he would do his own special work in the most satisfactory manner. With such an eminent scientific man as von Neumayer at its head the Seewarte has been an inspiration to German navigators.

Our contemporary, *Nature*, states that the appointment is explained on the theory that a man of science at the head of the executive office is so overburdened with administrative work that he has no time for scientific investigation. But one might as well say that a practical man at the head of a large office is liable to be so overburdened that he has no time for his private affairs. The whole question is simply one of organization. The chief of a bureau may so select his subordinates, assign their duties, and economize his own time as to find opportunity for any special personal work that he is specially qualified to perform. Men of energy and business ability are to be found among scientific men quite as frequently as among military officers, at least this is the experience in England and America. All modern arts, including the art of war, are applications of modern science, and as a general rule the practical scientist is a safe leader.

LOCAL STORM IN BALTIMORE, MD.

Mr. Edward O. Easton, Observer, temporarily in charge of the station at Baltimore, Md., reported, on July 14, on the storm of Sunday, July 12, in that city, from which we make the following extracts:

The time of the greatest damage appears to have been about three minutes after noon. No damage occurred in the vicinity of the office of the Weather Bureau, at the Johns Hopkins University, but a heavy thunderstorm was experienced there. There were two areas of extreme severity. The first, probably, in order of occurrence, embraced much of the 1700 blocks of Fulton avenue, Mount street, and Calhoun street, the second extended from Eager street and Broadway eastward for 6 blocks, and was from 2 blocks to less than a block in width, narrowing irregularly. In the first named area a funnel-shaped cloud was distinctly observed by a number of the residents, but no very definite account of its manner of formation was obtained. In the second district, where the damage was greatest, more explicit information was obtainable, of which the following is the substance: A heavy storm cloud approached from the northwest and another from the southwest; they apparently merged at Eager and Broadway, where the destruction abruptly began. The funnel-shaped cloud was seen by many, and a heavy roaring sound was followed by almost complete darkness as the storm burst. The upper cloud mass was distinguishable, however, with its narrowing extension downward, the latter appearing to lag slightly behind the mass above in its movement eastward. The whole traveled with almost incredible velocity (so it is stated) only a few seconds elapsing between the time the cloud descended to the housetops at Eager and Broadway until it rose into the air again 6 blocks to the eastward.

In both districts the nature of the destruction pointed clearly to the claims made that the city had been visited by a tornado. Some walls were blown outward, as though by sudden expansion of confined air