

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed March 19, 1929

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EUROCLYDON

The "tempestuous wind called Euroclydon," mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as the cause of St. Paul's shipwreck on the island of Malta, has been a subject of more or less controversy. The name, as found in the Authorized Version, appears to be a compound of "Euros", the east wind, and "klydon", a wave. In the Vulgate, however, it is given as "Euroaquilo", a common Latin name for the northeast wind. The consensus of opinion among scholars is that Paul's ship encountered a northeast storm such as is now well known and much dreaded in the neighborhood of Malta under the name of "gregale". The stormy wind is so called because blowing from the direction of Greece.

The gregale has been responsible for many shipwrecks besides that of the apostle Paul. On August 10, 1810, the British frigate "Lively" was driven on the rocks on the very spot in St. Paul's Bay supposed to have been the scene of the event mentioned in the Bible. In 1828 two Neapolitan vessels were wrecked by a gregale in the same bay.

Unfortunately the two principal harbors of Malta are exposed to the violence of these storms. Recently two large breakwaters have been erected to shelter the Grand Harbor, but even so, when a stiff gregale is blowing, traffic in the harbor is impossible and all vessels are in serious danger.

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