A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed November 18, 1929

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Authority on Meteorology.

WHEN HURRICANES MOVE INLAND

The tropical cyclone, or hurricane, in its full development, is a marine phenomenon and is confined to certain more or less definite oceanic areas of the globe. Prof. A.J. Henry, of the U.S. Weather Bureau, says of the behavior of such storms on reaching the North American continent:

"The store of energy in tropical storms seems to be rather easily dissipated. It is the rule all over the world that they either wholly dissipate or greatly diminish in energy on striking land, particularly when their onward course is obstructed by high hills or low mountains. Tropical cyclones entering the mainland of the United States east of the mouth of the Mississippi on the second branch of their course are a partial exception to the general rule, since such storms may move northeastward parallel with the coast but over land and retain a measure of the intensity of a true hurricane. Several cases are known of the central calm area persisting to and above the 40th parallel of latitude.

"A notable exception to all rules is the case of the tropical cyclone of September 28-29, 1896. In the morning of the 28th it was centered over southeastern Georgia, with a central isobar of 20.70 inches. During the daylight hours of the 28th the cyclone moved rapidly northward, pressure at its center decreasing about half an inch. It was not associated with much heavy rainfall, but hurricane winds developed by nightfall. One person was killed by falling walls at Washington, D.C., and 113 elsewhere, mostly in Florida and Georgia. The property loss aggregated about $7,000,000."

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