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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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MEMORABLE WEATHER EVENTS

The well-known English scientific weekly Nature is publishing this year in each issue a "calendar" of historic natural events of past years, such as storms, great frosts, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and the like. The first installment, covering the dates from January 1 to 11, is entirely meteorological except for an item relating to a California earthquake, and weather is likely to prove the principal subject of future notes.

Here we find, among other things, the following paragraph about the storm of January 6-7, 1839, so often referred to in America as the "Big Wind in Ireland"; "On the night of Jan. 6-7 western and northern Ireland, northern England and southern Scotland were visited by an exceedingly violent gale from the southwest; probably the worst since that of 1703. Many thousands of trees were uprooted in Ireland, houses were unroofed, chimney stacks and walls blown down. Many vessels were wrecked and there was great loss of life. Menai Suspension Bridge was damaged."

The earliest event chronicled is a violent storm coincident with the capture of Calais, in 1558, as recorded by Holinshed, and the latest the great Thames flood of January 6-7, 1928, due to storm waves from the North Sea.

On January 7, 1831, "owing to the presence of a kind of luminous mist, print could be read at midnight in Italy and Germany," and these abnormally light nights continued for a considerable period.

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