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May 17, 1930.

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

May 10, 1930

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THE STRENGTH OF A HURRICANE

Twice in recent years the winds in West India hurricanes have driven good-sized boards entirely through the trunks of large royal palms. These episodes, one of which occurred in Cuba and one in Porto Rico, indicate wind forces considerably greater than have ever been registered by anemometers in tropical storms. The same may be said of the feat accomplished by a tropical cyclone that struck the island of Mauritius on April 29, 1892.

The center of this Indian Ocean storm passed directly over Port Louis, where an immense amount of damage was done. The most remarkable effect was the overthrow of the monument erected in honor of the Count de Malartic, a column 49 feet high, built of stone blocks. The upper part of this column, 26 1/2 feet high and 5 feet 3 inches across at the base, was overturned by the wind, and it was afterward calculated that the wind pressure involved must have reached 142 pounds per square foot, equivalent to a velocity of more than 200 miles per hour.

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21st and B Sts.
Washington, D.C.