

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed September 26, 1930

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HURRICANE WINDS

The winds in the hurricane that recently devastated the city of Santo Domingo appear to have been stronger than the average for such storms, but, so far as reported, they accomplished no unprecedented feats.

On July 26, 1825, a hurricane caused immense damage in the island of Guadeloupe. The report of the French governor states that during this storm a piece of deal board 37 inches long, 9 inches wide and 7/8 inch thick was driven through the trunk of a palm tree 16 inches in diameter. Similar episodes have been reported in connection with two hurricanes of recent years; viz, in Cuba in 1926, and in Porto Rico in 1928.

Another account of the Guadeloupe storm says: "Five ships, which had lain at anchor in the roads of Basseterre, disappeared, and only two of the captains were saved. One of them saw his brig, after a struggle with the raging sea, carried by a whirlwind to be wrecked, so to speak, in the air."

Sir George Rodney, who witnessed the effects of the "Great Hurricane" of October, 1780, at Barbados, believed it impossible for wind alone to cause such destruction and suggested that an earthquake must have accompanied the storm. The same hurricane produced similar effects, however, at other places in the West Indies as it traveled along its course, the time varying with location, so that the earthquake hypothesis is ruled out.

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