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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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A JAMAICAN DOWNPOUR

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Tropical cyclones are not always attended by violent winds, but they can usually be counted on to yield drenching showers. The winds of the cyclone that, coming up from the tropics by way of the mid-Atlantic, struck the American coast August 23 fell short of hurricane strength, but the storm produced heavy rains along its inland route.

An incipient cyclone, so slightly developed that on the weather charts drawn in Washington it is manifested merely as a pronounced bend in an isobar, appears to have been responsible for the disastrous deluge of rain that descended on eastern Jamaica during the night of August 15. The city of Kingston had a rainfall of 11.60 inches within 24 hours, the heaviest recorded there during the past 63 years. Much heavier downpours were registered at surrounding places, but nothing to vie with the famous one of November, 1909, at Silver Hill Plantation, in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica, when 30-1/2 inches fell in 24 hours and 135 inches in 8 days.

The floods resulting from Jamaica's recent downpour drowned upwards of 20 people and did more than a million dollars' worth of damage to property.

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