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Released upon receipt
but intended for use
November 2, 1934.

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed October 26, 1934

GULF STREAM AND STORMS

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman
Authority on Meteorology.

Meteorologists once believed the Gulf Stream to be, on account of its physical characteristics, a natural highway of storms coming up from the tropics. Maury thought that its relatively high temperature "attracted storms" from afar. Prof. Elias Loomis wrote: "If a storm commences anywhere in the vicinity of the Gulf Stream, it naturally tends toward that stream, because here is the greatest amount of vapor to be precipitated, and when a storm has once encountered the Gulf Stream it continues to follow that stream in its progress eastward." Recently, however, the Chief of the U. S. Weather Bureau wrote as follows concerning the alleged effects of this current on the paths of tropical cyclones:

"The hurricanes that pass northward do so because they are in a great current of tropical air. This current, unless otherwise affected, as it frequently is, flows past and west of the western end of the Atlantic segment of the northern belt of high atmospheric pressure. Normally this end is a few hundred miles off the American coast at 32 to 35 degrees latitude. Hence the course of a northward moving hurricane off our eastern shore is more or less along or parallel to that of the Gulf Stream, but controlled by air currents and not by ocean currents. In fact, not infrequently a hurricane passes directly across the Gulf Stream."

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