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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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FREAK CYCLONE TRACKS

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It is a long-standing rule of the textbooks that while many cyclones originating within the tropics pass into the temperate zone, no cyclone originating in the latter ever invades the tropics. A partial exception to this rule, perhaps the first on record, was probably furnished by the hurricane that wrought havoc at Miami, Florida, early this month. So far as anybody knows, this storm began its career as a mild and harmless barometric depression that formed a few hundred miles southeast of Bermuda and outside the torrid zone, though belated ship reports may eventually show it to have been tropical origin. It then traveled southwest--just the opposite of the direction usually followed by a cyclone in that locality--crossed southern Florida and passed over the northern part of the Gulf of Mexico. The center did not cross the Tropic of Cancer, but the southern border of the storm was, for a time, south of that line.

In July, 1934, a cyclone also reached the eastern Florida coast from the northeastward, crossed the peninsula, and skirted the northern coast of the Gulf, but in that case the influence of the storm did not extend into the tropics.

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