# A MARITIME FREAK.

## NARROW ESCAPES FROM WATER-SPOUTS IN MEXICO.

**A Tourist Relates Two Experiences He Had With These Twisting Terrors—A Congregation of Them, Each of Which Was Nearly Lost Sight In Height.**

The accompanying cut of a water-spout [illegible] I was sailing a very little out of the gulf islands in the gulf of Mexico, about 20 miles from Tampico, a place famous for its waterspouts, and in the distance we could see three more like this one, only much smaller. It was blowing directly for us, but we felt perfectly safe, as there was a large reef and long sandy bar between us. On came the monster, passing the reef in safety, a grand spectacle, and every one in the island was now watching it as it moved rapidly up the bayou, its upper portion apparently lost in the clouds. If it had continued it would have passed between the two islands and on to land the open sea, but for the bar. Some [illegible] thought, and he was correct, it would break the island in an instant. We fully expected to see the island go down deep, for it kept growing on the coast, and even struck a good sized schooner that had been hauled on the beach whistling to shoot and for the life of a feather. Then, to our consternation, the spout headed for our island, and with a great roar it came round us.

The natives from Alvarado to shoot was a most efficient guide to show us how to lie down on the sand, so the spout had full force to pass over us. We felt no wind, only a terrible roar, and I felt as if I had all about me a cloud of stinging insects.

We came out safely and congratulated each other on our escape. Looking for our sailing craft, we saw a mass of splinters piled behind us, and in less time than the minutes take to tell about it she was dropped from the clouds and we were saved.

There was not a breath of air, and there was an unclouded sky. For the ever present guide seemed to have searched the place. We got on the land and rested well to pick up the boat we had lost, and we were compelled to await developments.

The cloud that slowly dropped, and all about us appeared to release from up to meet them, spun in a few minutes we were surrounded by three huge pillars, so fast in one direction the bayou appeared to be suspended upon these variety columns. A most remarkable sight we expected to be imprisoned, and when they began to move we prepared to lie down in the sand, as two appeared to be heading down upon us.

As good luck would have it, they seemed to bring a breeze, and we were able to get under way, and, fortunately, escaped. The two giants came sweeping down upon us—a spectacle to demoralize the most hardened. One passed on the first away, rushing on with a noise like that of a score engine. I could distinctly see the bottom twisting and whirling mass of the water, and for a large area about it there was what appeared to be a heavy rain.

The spouts began to move as soon as they were complete, and very soon surrounded the island so fast that they [illegible] them, and spent sailing away. These giants were so full that I would not venture to estimate their height. My companion said a mile high, and then carefully looked it for fear we were under 1,000 feet.

My nearest approach to a waterspout occurred later, and dissipated some of the terrors I had concerning them. This was that a spout was broken when touched or interfered with in any way, yet I saw this water giant stand as it land.

I was lying in the cabin near our sailing one day when a fully equal noise came from the south. It was blowing directly for us, but we felt perfectly safe, as there was a large reef and long sandy bar between us. On came the monster, passing the reef in safety, a grand spectacle, and every one in the island was now watching it as it moved rapidly up the bayou, its upper portion apparently lost in the clouds. If it had continued it would have passed between the two islands and on to land the open sea, but for the bar. Some [illegible] thought, and he was correct, it would break the island in an instant. We fully expected to see the island go down deep, for it kept growing on the coast, and even struck a good sized schooner that had been hauled on the beach whistling to shoot and for the life of a feather. Then, to our consternation, the spout headed for our island, and with a great roar it came round us.

"Spout, spout! What do you mean?" [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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