

EARTHQUAKES.

Cause of the Disturbance One of the World's Mysteries.

The rarely delicate instruments with which the seismologists the scientific investigators of earthquake phenomena—now record and measure the movements within the earth's structure have revealed the fact that the "firm foundations" of Mother Earth are not firm at all, that tremors of some sort are of daily and hourly occurrence and that it is only when the disturbance reaches some degree of violence that it can be dignified with serious attention. As the vibrations in the earth's structure are transmitted through the earth by means of around its circumference and as they traverse great distances, the center of disturbance may be many miles away, deep in the rocky frame work of our planet.

Accurate observations, such as those made with the seismograph and other instruments, of the time, direction and amplitude of the vibrations enable the investigators to fix with a considerable degree of accuracy the point of the disturbance. The general run of earthquakes may be classed as either volcanic in their origin or as due to slips or fractures in the earth's crust, the result of stress. By far the greater number belong to the latter class, those due to volcanic upheavals being, as a rule, somewhat limited in their intensity and area. On the other hand, the earthquakes due to the breaking of earth strata in regions of the earth where there is great diversity in the surface, as in the vast oceanic deeps or in those places on the land where the crust is turned up to form great mountain ranges, are far more numerous and destructive.

The causes of earthquakes are bound up to a large extent with the unsolved mysteries of this globe upon which we dwell, and until we shall be able to explore deeper into the interior than we have yet penetrated we must be content with the inductive reasoning of the scientists. The volcanic causes are obvious enough; just as the railroads and iron mills set up so great a tremor in the earth as to disturb the delicate observing and recording instruments of the astronomer and physicist whose station happens to be near them, so the vast steam explosions which occasionally occur in volcanic phenomena create greater tremors, which are dignified by the name of earthquakes. The larger cause is found, however, in the readjustments in the earth's crust which are constantly going on as a result of changing conditions of pressure. Such pressure changes may be accounted for by contraction as the cooling process goes on, by the gradual denudation of the continents, by the

processes of erosion or by the sniffling of the atmospheric envelope. The stresses and strains in the convoluted and twisted strata of rocks which make up the earth's crust must be at times vast beyond the power of the human mind to imagine. When the inevitable slips and breaks occur near the surface, whether on the land or in the oceanic deeps, the effect cannot but be stupendous. The alterations in the surface are often attended by appalling consequences to mankind—the outright destruction of their habitations either by the mere violence of the vibrations or by the engulfing power of the waves set in motion if the break happen to be beneath the sea.

Happily for us, the vast majority of the changes are deep in the crust and possess but slight significance for the dwellers on the surface—Philadelphia Ledger.

Southland Superstition.

Cathness (Gaelic "Gollabh") Catteynes, the Land of the Stranger, and Sutherland, the Southland, are steeped in strange superstitions, some traceable to Norse, others to Celtic influence. The lone, wind swept home of the clan of the Catts, with its miles of moorland and peat fields, its bold, rocky coast, with Sutherland, and the groups of islands to the north are in a peculiar sense the home of folklore, legend, myth and peasant wisdom. To this day the older members of the fishing community take off their bonnets as they row past the head of Wharfedale and thus express in their simple way the deep reverence which they feel for the "great mother" on whose breast they are tossed.

The lassies of Freswick dress their hair before sunrise on pain of causing their sweethearts to be lashed with these silken tresses by the evil kelpies of the pool. The farmer of today lifts the bonnet at midnight on New Year's eve and passes his key through the flames to secure them from disease, while the herd boys jump over the flaming peats for good luck. Changing children are regarded with the same awe as of old, and witches, clan and sprites can, it is said, be discerned around the Maiden Paps weaving the threads of fate. Scottish Review.

Scotch Humor.

An artist is busy at his easel by the wayside. A rustic is looking over his shoulder in the free manner of the independent Scot. A brother rustic is in a field near by with his hands in his pockets. He is uncertain whether it is worth while to take the trouble to mount the dike for the uncertain pleasure of looking at the picture. "What is he doing, Jack?" asks he in the field of the better situated mate. "Drawing" we hear" returns Jack, over his shoulder.

shot in a coffin. There is a queer story of a Dutch eastward. In the days when the island of St. Helena was an unpeopled waste, long before the coming of the great exile who made its name famous, a Dutch vessel, returning from the West Indies, cast anchor off its coast. In a short while a boat was lowered. The occupants, besides the crew, were a dead officer in a coffin and a downcast seaman in 'trons. This seaman for some offence against discipline had been condemned to death by the captain, but in consequence of an appeal for mercy signed by his messmates he was ordered to be marooned on this desolate island instead of being hung up to the yardarm. It is probable that even this grace would have been denied him but for the dead officer, for whose burial the ship put into harbor. The grave was dug, the officer buried. The crew departed and the ship weighed anchor. The Dutchman, on his side, lost no time. He opened the new made grave, dragged out the coffin, tumbled his dead superior out of it and carried it down to the shore, where, having launched his extemporized boat, he jumped in it, a free man, and, using the lid as a paddle, quickly thanks to a calm overtook the departing ship. He was taken on board and pardoned in consideration of his pluck.



Up to "Him." Mr. Showenah—How came your elderly sister's life to be blighted? Miss Pertleugh—Hem! She became an old maid while waiting for her bushful lover to propose.—Leslie's Weekly.

As Others See Us.

Mrs. Knox—Mrs. Gabbleton tells everything she knows. Knox—Her husband is even worse. Mrs. Knox—How can that be? Knox—He tells a lot that he doesn't know.—Chicago News.

Too Smooth.

The Finnee—There's just one thing that worries me a little. The Finnee—What is that? The Finnee—There seems to be no opposition on the part of any of our relatives. Baltimore News.

Diplomatic.

Mrs. Green—How do you manage to keep a cook so long? Do you treat her as one of the family? Mrs. Brown—I should say not! We treat her as an honored guest.—Detroit Tribune.

The Handsome Apology.

"You owe me an apology, sir. You called me a dog." "My remark was too sweeping. I do apologize to the injured party. Not all dogs are curs."—Baltimore American.

A Definition.

"What is your idea of success?" "Success," answered the cynic, "consists in making enough str about your achievements to cause your failures to be overlooked."—Washington Star.

About in a Coffin.

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A Home-made Island.

While island, the large gunnery establishment for training seamen of the British royal navy, is not a natural island. Years ago it was only a mud bank which was uncovered by water at low tide. When the authorities commenced to make the docks in Portsmouth, the earth from the excavations was deposited from barges upon this mud bank, until a small island was formed, showing at high water about the size of a whale's back; hence its name. As the work proceeded the island grew rapidly, and a few years later a railway was constructed on piles from the dockyard works to the island, and the earth was deposited much more quickly than when barges were used. In 1860 this island had been made so large that the admiralty decided to lay it out as a drill ground. A small pier was erected and a house was built for a warrant officer to live in and act as caretaker of the island. At the present time the island is about thirty-seven acres in area and provides accommodation for over 1,800 men.—London Graphic.

Their Talk.

"Just listen to those little chicks," said the proud mother hen. "Yes," replied the wise old rooster. "In their case there's no doubt of the old saying, 'Talk is cheap.'"—Baltimore News.

A Word of Warning



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TIDE TABLE, MARCH

Table with tide data for March 1906, including High Water, Low Water, and times for A.M. and P.M. for each day of the month.

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