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No. 136.

VOLCANIC DISTURBANCES.

Great Loss of Life and Property in the East Indies.

A cable special from London says: Further particulars of the great volcanic eruption in Java, which have just reached London from Batavia, show that the disaster was even more widespread and more disastrous than reported in yesterday's advices. At noon to-day the eruptions and shocks were supposed to have reached their height, but late in the afternoon and evening the violence of the disturbances suddenly increased and the island seemed to be about to be completely buried in fire and sulphurous ashes. At the same time enormous waves began to dash with great force upon the shores, coming in some places far up into the interior. Great chasms opened in the earth and threatened to engulf a large proportion of the people and buildings.

About midnight the most frightful scene of all took place. Suddenly an enormous luminous cloud formed over the Kandang range of mountains, which skirt the southeast side of the island. This cloud gradually increased in size until it formed a canopy of lurid red and whitish gray over a wide extent of territory. During this time the eruptions increased and streams of lava poured incessantly down the sides of the mountains into the valleys, sweeping everything before them. Here and there a stream of lava would enter an arm of the sea or come in contact with the water of a river. Then the incandescent lava would suddenly produce a boiling heat and vapor would arise, but the superficial consolidation that almost instantly ensued would prevent any further contact with the water. The fissures that opened in this thin crust as it solidified on the stream of lava emitted torrents of vapor, extending high in the air and making a tremendous seething sound, as if a thousand locomotives were simultaneously letting off steam.

Here and there in the lava streams were innumerable thin plate crystals of feldspar, arranged in trains one behind another in the direction of the flow of the current, and felspathic spherulites were rapidly formed in the vitreous matters resembling those which form in the slag of glass furnaces.

One of the most singular freaks of the eruption was the carrying in the midst of molten lava of a bed of solid ice of enormous size, which had been emitted from one of the craters. It was carried along by the current and landed on the extremity of Point St. Nicholas at the northeast corner of the island. This bed of ice was surrounded by a thick envelope of sand and scoria, which are non-conductors of heat. It is supposed that this ice had formed the crust of some subterranean lake.

About 2 o'clock on Monday morning the great cloud suddenly broke into small sections and quickly vanished. At the same time frightful rumblings were heard and the columns of fire and smoke over the southeast corner of the island ceased to ascend, while the craters in the other parts of Java seemed to open their fiery throats still wider to let out the greatest quantity of lava, rocks, pumice and ashes yet vomited forth. The hissing of the sea became so loud as to be almost deafening and the waves dashed upon the shore to an unprecedented height.

When daylight came it was seen that an enormous tract of land had disappeared extending from Point Capucien on the south to Negery Pafszaranong on the north and west. This was a low point covering an extent of territory about fifty miles square. In this were situated the villages of Negery and Negery Babawang. None of the people inhabiting these places or of the nations scattered sparsely through the forests and on the plains escaped death. This sec-

tion of the island was not so densely populated as other portions and the loss of life was comparatively small, although it must have aggregated fully 15,000 souls.

The entire Kandang range of mountains extending along the east in a semi-circle for about sixty-five miles, disappeared from sight. The craters of Welcome bay, the Sunda straits and Pepper bay on each side, and the Indian ocean at the south, then rushed in and formed an area of turbulent waters. Here and there peaks of craters were exposed for a moment by the receding of the great wave, and occasionally a puff of brownish gray smoke or a light shower of rocks showed that the volcanoes still continued in active eruption. The debris of the submerged and destroyed buildings was tossed hither and thither on the water, the only sign left that there had been inhabited land there.

Another account. The latest advices from Batavia, the capital of Java, show that the volcanic eruption on that island are much more serious than at first indicated. Much of the northern portion of the island was covered with forests, which were soon in one great blaze. The red-hot vomitings from the craters had set the trees on fire and the giants of the woods fell one after another like so many sheaves of wheat before a gale. As the eruptions increased in frequency and violence the disturbance of the waters surrounding the barren coast became more and more violent. Here the waves rushed in terrific force up the steep, rocky incline, breaking upon the overhanging crags and receding rapidly, leaving a lava flow cooled at the moment when it was about to fall over a precipice and there remaining, quickly hardened by contact with the water and forming a distinct strata of black and bright purple and brown, all thrown about in the most eccentric manner, while huge peaks of basalt rose at frequent intervals. Three waves came whelming over a marshy plain along the shore, suddenly engulfing a hamlet of fishermen's rude houses and turning back swept away almost every vestige of the whole hamlet. A second before it had been a bustling village. The surrounding country which but a few hours before was covered with flourishing plantations of coffee, rice, sugar, indigo or tobacco, the staples of the land, were now but mud, stones and lava, a field of destruction and ruin. Not a single crop in Java will be saved. At the entrance of Batavia was a large group of houses, extending along the shore and occupied by Chinamen. This part of the city was entirely swept away and of the 25,000 Chinese who lived in this swampy plain it is hardly probable that more than 5,000 managed to save their lives. They stuck to their homes until the waves came that washed them away, fearing the torrents of flame and lava of the interior more than the flood of water.

Of 3,500 Europeans and Americans in Batavia, perhaps 800 have perished. It is impossible to make any estimate of the great pecuniary loss. Anjer, the European and American quarter, was first overwhelmed by rocks, mud and lava from the crater and then the water came up and swallowed the ruins, leaving nothing to mark the site and causing the loss of somewhere in the neighborhood of 200 lives of the inhabitants and those who had tried to find a refuge there. Bantam, once a prosperous native city, but practically abandoned by Europeans many years ago, was entirely covered by water, and there must have been from 1,200 to 1,500 people drowned there. The island of Zerant, just off the coast, was completely inundated and not a soul remained on it to tell the tale of the disaster and death. At Cherebin there was no great flood of water, but the loss of life

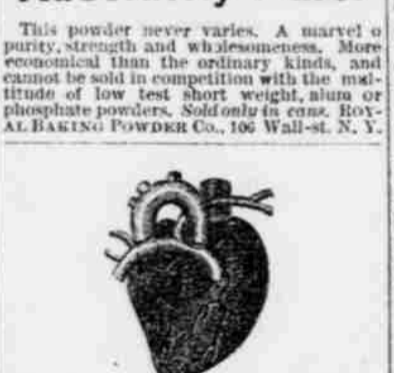
and property, by the falling of rocks and flow of lava must have been considerable. Buetenzorg, Gog, Lakerta, Sourakerta and Sourabaya, while the meager reports from the lesser towns indicate that their loss was as great in proportion. The "Thousand Temples" at Brambanan were very much damaged and some of them destroyed. Some of the domes of the noted temple of Borobodo were crushed in by the huge falling rocks.

While there can be no accurate estimate formed at present of the loss of life, it must be apparent when it is considered that the island has a population of 18,000,000, that the death list will foot far up into the thousands. At last advices the eruptions were continuing, although their violence had abated somewhat, and it is feared that the end of the disaster will show it to have been one of the most frightful ever known in the history of the island.

Another dispatch from Batavia, Java, says the towns of Anjer, Tyrengene and Flokeblous were destroyed by volcanic eruptions. All the lighthouses in the straits of Sunda have disappeared, and where the mountain Kramatano formerly stood the sea now flows. The aspect of the Sunda straits is much changed and navigation is dangerous.

It is reported that the Egyptians are indifferent to death if it comes on them in the shape of cholera. The natives take no sanitary precautions at all, except when they are compelled. They would crowd like flies round the body of one of their own saints or holy men without the slightest dread of infection. They wear the clothes left by relations whom the miasma has just carried off, showing even more courage than the merchants who are so anxious to bring Egyptian rags into this country. They still devour the flesh of animals which have perished by a natural death, and what they cannot eat they throw into the canals, of which they then drink the water. When plague was more deadly in Cairo than cholera is to-day Mr. Kinglake found almost as great indifference. The ladies made it a kind of joke to touch the European in passing, by way of frightening him into the belief that he had the plague. But the festivals of Islam went on just as usual, and the surviving children played with the Oriental merry-go rounds till the plague, in response to the prayers of the faithful, "went to another city."—*London News.*

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CHAS. HILBORN, Treas. Clatsop County.
Astoria, August 20th, 1883.



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