

VESUVIUS, THE CHIMNEY OF THE WORLD

WHEN a mountain goes to roaring and bellowing, splitting its sides, blowing its top off and destroying all the cities and towns in its vicinity mere man takes to the woods. Ordinary catastrophes he may receive with criticism, with revivings, even with blasphemy, but when the earth goes to doing things he has not a word to say. That is too appalling for comment. Cyclones, floods, fires, famines and pestilences are everyday afflictions. When man is assailed by them he is not entirely swept off his feet. He can show fight. But when the earth quivers with pain or howls with agony there is nothing left for the human animal but to lie down and die or slide for the tall timber. Talk is entirely outclassed. It is not at home in the volcanic atmosphere. If the voice is used at all it is only for inarticulate sounds. Words are too artificial for such elemental surroundings.

Vesuvius has been called "the chimney of the world," likewise "nature's ash heap," also several other names that fall a million miles short of being as horrible as the thing they seek to describe. There is no word or combination of words that comes within speaking distance of that. All of them are not only inadequate, but in logical phraseology are "immature, incompetent, irrelevant and have no bearing on the case." After Goethe had been to see Vesuvius he said something about hell hanging over paradise, which as a description of the contrast between the old mountain demon and sunny Italy round about is perhaps as near to the thing as human language can come; so it is just as well to let it go at that.

If seven battles and seventeen thunderstorms could be combined in one the resultant noise would be something like that of Vesuvius when "working." It howls, whistles, screams, thunders, toots, bellows and rips up the universe generally. In other words, it makes a noise like the day of judgment. If you have never heard a mountain whoop and carry on when it gets ready to shoot up the town and country also—then get your life insured and go to Vesuvius. It will be worth the money. If you get back alive you will be able to say, as did Artemus Ward after visiting the tomb of Shakespeare, "It was a success." Over 1,800 years ago Vesuvius came

into existence. It was in the year 79, and the young Titus was on the throne of Rome, then practically the throne of the world. There is no record of a Vesuvius before that year, though Mount Somma, the smaller mountain beside it, was well known. Tradition has it that the larger peak actually was brought into being in that most disastrous of all eruptions when Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabiae and smaller towns were swallowed up almost instantly and forever. In Italy folk still speak of that as the time "when Vesuvius was born and Pompeii died."

Since then there have been many eruptions, some of them severe. Naples has been frequently sprinkled with ashes, Torre del Greco has been swallowed up a half dozen times or more, other towns have been threatened and nearly buried with ashes, lava has been poured all over the mountain and down into the sea, new craters have been formed, only in turn to be obliterated, while other yawning mouths were made, and over and over again from out of the demon heart of the volcano has been belched an infernal torrent to overwhelm the peaceful land below.

Rarely Entirely at Rest.

The mountain is seldom entirely at rest. It may be but a thin wisp of steam that arises from it, just a reminder to the world that it is not dead. All the while lava will be pushed up into the crater, where it will harden and form a sort of stopper. Then either the cork must be blown out or the bottle broken. Sometimes both things happen at once. Even the neck has been blown entirely off at times. In the present eruption the whole mountain top, nearly 600 feet of it, was demolished. Often the great sugar loaf of a hill is split, rent and battered out of all semblance to its former self. Great masses of rock weighing thousands of tons are borne upward by the tremendous pressure of the gases, at first slowly, but with ever accelerated speed, finally to be tossed high above the mountain top and crash back upon the slopes with an earthquake shock. One such giant boulder was thrown out of the crater that it was estimated would require over half a million horsepower to lift.

Ashes and steam are blown through the opening with such force that they take the form of an immense pine tree, as described by the younger Pliny

in his letters to Tacitus.

Red Snakes That Dart and hiss.

Vesuvius is the sort of workshop in which chaos is made, where world stuff is tossed about as a blacksmith tosses about horseshoes. All that it

down long, red snakes that dart and hiss—snakes miles in length, 300 feet in width and sometimes 100 in depth—snakes that creep on irresistibly, wiping out huts, trees, vineyards and towns as they move and finally plunging with a great hissing into the sea.



VESUVIUS IN ERUPTION AND QUIESCENT—THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY.

does is titanic. It speaks with a great voice. It sends its smoke clouds nearly five miles high. Its ashes have been known to fall in the streets of Constantinople, fully 800 miles distant as the crow flies, and from its top it sends

The "chimney of the world" not only covers all the country round about with a thick pall of smoke, but sifts down ashes over the land till the crops and vines are destroyed, over the roofs till they fall of the weight and crush

the inmates beneath, over the roads and streets till vehicles are foundered and people fleeing on foot fall exhausted and are unable to rise again; then as they lie buried in the ash they waste the volcanic snow sifts softly over them until they are buried from sight forever. In the ruins of Pompeii figures were found where they had been overcome nearly twenty centuries ago, mothers and little children together, men and women clasping each other in love. Rather the molds in the ashes were found, for the bodies long since had crumbled away. And as they fell so others fell but yesterday.

Even if one escapes the ashes and the lava he may yet be suffocated by the poisonous gases, for these, too, roll out of the great chimney and scatter death about the country side. The groaning and reverberating hill is an outpost of death, and many forms have the forces of destruction that issue to do its commands. It is a section of the inferno whose actual horrors almost equal those of Dante's imagination. It is a fountain of fire playing upward from the central court of hades. It is—Vesuvius, for there is no figure of speech that conveys so dire a meaning as its own dread name.

Thousands of Victims.

No one can tell the numbers of its dead. There is no exact record of those who perished at Herculaneum and Pompeii nor in the centuries since. It is impossible even to number those who fell in the last fearful eruption, the greatest that the mountain has given forth since that initial one in the days of Titus. Thousands of tourists have lost their lives seeking only to look upon Vesuvius in its quieter moods. Hundreds of thousands have paid the penalty for daring to till its fertile slopes. One city, Torre del Greco, has been swallowed up over and over again, and each time a new town has arisen on the lava and ashes that had buried the old, thus making a sort of municipal layer cake, as it were. When an earthquake once opened a seam through the town a man descending into the chasm found himself in

a church. The human animal is a daring brute, after all.

It is a saying in the Vesuvian region that "Naples sins and Torre del Greco pays the penalty." The smaller city is a sort of a buffer against the divine wrath. Yet through the ages has persisted a prophecy that at last Naples would have to pay her own debts, for she herself would fall a victim to the ire of the mountain.

Millions Lost in Money.

The great loss from the recent eruption, the total destruction of Boscolrease, a city of nearly 10,000; the partial destruction of Ottajano, Sarno and many other cities and villages, the wiping out of little farms and vineyards, the hundreds killed and the tens of thousands driven from their homes, the terrors and discomforts of the half million people living in the vicinity—of these things it is impossible for cold type to tell. The money loss alone is estimated at over \$20,000,000. There are over 50,000 homeless.

The falling of the roof of the great market at Naples, killing or injuring nearly 200 people, caused the citizens to shovel the ashes from their roofs to prevent other like catastrophes. As the ashes sifted down the necks of the pedestrians the language grew quite as lurid and volcanic as the mountain itself. The flights that resulted rather relieved the tense strain.

There have been few greater examples of modern heroism than that of Professor Mattucci, in charge of the observatory of Mount Vesuvius. The loss of life would undoubtedly have been much greater had it not been for the timely warnings sent out by this soldier of science. Through all the frightful days of the eruption he remained at his post dispatching messages of cheer to the distracted inhabitants, taking records and observing the phenomena of the terrifying upheaval that constantly threatened his own life. Associated with Professor Mattucci is an American, Frank A. Perret, formerly of Brooklyn.

Vesuvius has been in a state of more than wanted agitation for a year, but

without doing any especial damage, except to the railroad that leads to the cone. It is as though the ancient mountain was not entirely devoid of sympathy for the human ants that swarm about its base and had given a long warning of the disaster to come. The ants failed to heed the sign, however, having grown familiar with the impending doom.

Where Poets Seek Inspiration.

A few weeks ago the Neapolitan district was glowing into all the loveliness of a southern Italian spring. Grass was growing green, buds were swelling to leaf, the earlier flowers were in blossom, birds and bees filled the air with music, and over all arched the soft, blue sky of Italy. Nature there puts on so fair a seeming that for over 2,000 years this region has given birth to some of the world's sweetest songs. Even the poets of England and America go to Italy for inspiration. And why not? For in that clime nature herself is a poem that only needs to be translated into the music of words. No country of the earth has been so hallowed in poetry and romance, and of all Italy no section is more entrancing than that surrounding the sparkling bay of Naples.

Today that earthly paradise is a vast Sahara desert. Over all the region as far as the breath of the monster could reach there is left no green thing.

The villas are swallowed up, the cities are dead, the smiling valleys and plains are a desolation, the vineyards, bowers and gardens are waste places. In all the march of science and progress Nature comes to remind us of our weakness. While we boast of our mastery over her, she overwhelms us; while vaunting ourselves that we have learned her secrets, she presents to us her ancient mystery, and while sitting secure in our little happiness she swallows it all in one red night of earthquake and destruction.

Yet in the end it is we who triumph, for after her night there comes another morning, and we arise and rebuild our earthly paradise.

J. A. EDGERTON.

In the Suburbs

TIMBER.

Timber, April 19.—Ruth Andrews and Chester Schulte are improving after a very bad attack of measles.

S. E. Roberts and wife, Mrs. D. L. Parmenter and sons, Lawrence and Myron and Everett Hayes, spent Easter Sunday at Clarence Roberts' at Andalusia.

W. F. Piper and Thomas Hayes were in Rock Island Wednesday.

W. E. Parmenter left Sunday afternoon for Gilman, Iowa, to see his son, Ray, who had his face and neck cut very severely on barbed wire last Friday morning.

Mrs. Thomas Shelden returned Wednesday from Sheldon, Ill.

Mrs. Irwin Tompkins spent a few days last week at her sisters', Mrs. Henry Perry of Andalusia.

Mrs. W. H. Robeson spent Monday afternoon with her sister, Mrs. D. L. Parmenter.

ZUMA.

Zuma, April 19.—Mrs. Johnson of Barstow visited with relatives in this vicinity one day last week.

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D. W. Mumma was in Moline and Rock Island last week in the interest of the new telephone directory he is putting out.

Miss Edna Wainwright spent a few days with Ella Schafer last week.

Frank Schafer was a caller in Moline one day last week.

Charles Mead is sick this week.

Farmers commenced sowing their oats this week.

William Filbert will erect a large barn this spring. Work will commence as soon as possible.

The Zuma W. C. T. U. held a meeting with Mrs. D. W. Mumma last Thursday afternoon to elect delegates to attend the convention at Milan next week. The following delegates will go: Mrs. Lackey, Mrs. W. H. H. Dow, Mrs. Charles Walthers, and Mrs. S. S. Beal.

Mrs. William Cox was called to Moline last week to the bedside of her sister, Mrs. Peterson, who was very low with appendicitis. She underwent an operation at the Moline hospital last week. She rallied from the operation, but took a relapse and passed away Saturday. The funeral was held at Hampton Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock and interment was made at Hampton cemetery.

Mr. and Mrs. John O'Hara visited with their son, Frank, a few days last week. They will go north soon on a pleasure trip.

Jimmie Berry of Port Byron, has commenced work with Sylvester Daley.

S. S. Dailey had the misfortune of losing two valuable milk cows last week.

Rollie Whiteside was a Moline caller last week.

Zuma school commenced last Monday with Miss Edna Mumma as teacher. Abrah Searle is sick.

Mrs. Ben Schafer was in the tri-cities shopping last week.

Mrs. John Noah of Moline is visiting with relatives in this community.

Ned Wells is working for Will Smith in South Moline.

A few from here attended the K. of P. lodge Saturday night at Port Byron. The Easter exercises at Zuma church Sunday morning were well attended. The program rendered by the children and choir pleased the audience very much.

Mr. and Mrs. Marlon Walker visited with their daughter, Mamie, one day last week.

Saturday was the last day of the season to hunt ducks and a good many hunters were out, but not many ducks were killed.

Mr. and Mrs. John Snyder visited their daughter, Mrs. Fred Frels near Hillsdale over Sunday.

F. M. Taubee, the assessor, has been at work the past week.

Ross Wainwright of Watertown, spent Sunday with his parents.

Edward Schafer and Justin Smith spent Saturday and Sunday in Moline.

Miss Lillie Walthers of Moline spent Sunday with her parents.

William Griffin will erect a large

barn this summer. The foundation is almost completed, and the lumber is on the ground ready to begin work.

Ralph Beal, who has been quite sick with the measles, is able to be out again.

Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Ekstrom were in the tri-cities last Tuesday.

Ben Rah and Jack Schane of Watertown were in this community Monday buying horses. They depart this week for South Dakota.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bensonberg and daughter, Ruby, of Watertown, spent Sunday with Grant Miller.

John Deviney of Rapids City, who has been quite sick all winter, is able to be around again. He visited with James Searl Monday.

Jesse Nicholson spent Sunday in Rock Island with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Nicholson.

Mr. and Mrs. Milton Coder of Barstow visited in this community last Monday.

A few from here attended the W. C. T. U. meeting at Port Byron Sunday night.

Mrs. Eunice Luce is visiting this week with Mrs. James McRoberts of Port Byron.

FOSTER.

Foster, April 18.—Thomas Watson, J. H. Foster and Allen Shirley were business callers in Rock Island Wednesday.

Rev. J. R. Spiller filled his appointment at Andalusia Sunday, baptizing 10 young people in the afternoon. He reports the roads between here and Andalusia fairly good.

Mrs. F. P. Gillett and daughter, Bessie, attended Easter services in Muscatine Sunday.

Ethel Foster is spending a few days with her sister, Mrs. Joe Bowser near Muscatine.

ANDALUSIA.

Andalusia, April 20.—Aleck Irwin spent Sunday at home.

Mrs. Daniel Roe is very ill. Mrs. John Parks spent one day last week with her mother Mrs. Davis.

Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Skinner of Rock Island were recent visitors at John Kane's.

Mrs. Celestia Huntley of Reynolds spent a few days last week with her son Charles.

Miss Emma Kuhn of Buffalo visited Sunday with her cousin Miss Maude Seefeldt.

Mrs. Gustav Bull of Buffalo Prairie spent Sunday with her parents Mr. and Mrs. John Kane.

Mrs. Dolph Dunlap has moved here from Rock Island. Mr. Dunlap has gone to Dakota for the summer.

Mr. and Mrs. Dick Roberts entertained Mr. and Mrs. Simeon Roberts and Mrs. Dan Parmenter and children of Timber Sunday.

Miss Josephine Strohmeier and Miss Miller of Rock Island spent Sunday with the former's parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Strohmeier.

Mrs. Otto Glazier and daughter Hazel are visiting with Mrs. Glazier's parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. P. Roth.

Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Thompson entertained at dinner Sunday Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Roberts, Mrs. O. R. Schutte and

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