

Aid Requested for Quake Observations

Seismology

Public cooperation in reporting effects of local earthquakes is requested by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and the Division of Geology and Geography of the National Research Council. If every person who feels even a mild quake would report to the Survey, in Washington, the work of the scientists would be greatly aided. In particular, they want observations of the earthquake felt in New York and neighboring states on Monday, August 12. While this quake was recorded by seismograph instruments at various observatories, these are rather sparsely scattered, and many quakes, on which information is desired, are not recorded on any instruments.

What is needed especially is some knowledge of the direction in which the earth and the things on it seemed to move, and the general intensity of the shocks. This can be judged from such points as these:

Did the buildings jar or tremble, or did dishes or windows rattle?

Did chairs or lightly balanced things, like lamps or potted plants, rock back and forth?

Did doors, lamps, or hanging things swing? If so, in what direction?

Did heavy articles, like tables, stoves or beds, move?

Were there any cracks in plaster walls?

Did bricks fall from chimneys?

Were there any cracks in walls or foundations of buildings?

Were there any shocks after the main one?

At what time did the shock occur?

The information thus collected will be used for many purposes. The measurement of intensity of earthquakes and the correct outlining of the areas where they occur is one of the chief uses. But it will also be valuable in furnishing statistics on earthquakes for the use of insurance companies, facts for the use of engineers and architects and association of earthquakes with the geological structure of the region where they occur.

Science Service and its associated newspapers are cooperating in this work by describing the needs of the Survey and by publishing a questionnaire giving the information wanted by the earthquake students. For several years Science Service has cooperated with the Coast and Geodetic Survey and the Jesuit Seismological Association in gathering earthquake records from a number of seismograph stations, and thus promptly reporting the exact location of severe earthquakes in all parts of the world.

Such methods of gathering earthquake information have been used before to advantage, especially in the case of the St. Lawrence quake on February 28, 1925. A representative of the Geological Survey, Dr. Arthur Keith, now chairman of the National Research Council's Division of Geology and Geography, visited the affected regions and secured much material by personal interviews.

An interesting sidelight was found in the way in which different groups responded to the questions. The descendants of the old New England stock regard moderation and absolute truth as objects of respect, and to them the giving of help to a public inquiry was an inherited duty. They could be relied upon to give cool, impartial statements because they had preserved their calm even though star-

ted by their first great earthquake. In strong contrast were the French Canadians, of rather recent immigration, with whom reticence is not a leading characteristic and whose desire to tell a good story and give the hearer his money's worth seemed to lead some of them rather far afield. The Italian fruit dealers who flourish in all the good-sized towns were excellent sources of evidence. Earthquakes meant little to these people, for they were old stories to them in Italy. They gave ready and matter-of-fact accounts, provided the inquirer could convince them that what they said in such a government investigation would not be used against them. The Greeks were the most irresponsible, and the cold shoulders that they turned upon the Federal scientist spoke volumes as to their views on governmental inquiry.

Science News-Letter, August 24, 1929

Quake Near Buffalo

Seismology

The earthquake which shook most of New York and parts of neighboring states on Monday, August 12, was centered near Attica, New York, at 42 degrees 55 minutes north latitude and 78 degrees 20 minutes west longitude. This was determined by earthquake experts of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey with the aid of data gathered by Science Service. The quake was recorded by seismograph instruments at Georgetown University and the U. S. Bureau of Standards, Washington; the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey's station at Chicago; the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; St. Louis University, St. Louis, and the Dominion Observatory, Ottawa, Canada.

Science News-Letter, August 24, 1929

An important new lighthouse has been built on a coral island in the Philippines to guide shipping in transit between Hong Kong, Manila, and Australia.

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