

Volcano Active After 28 Year Rest

Volcanology

Mayon, the volcano that has destroyed the coast town of Libog, and several neighboring villages in the Philippines, has aroused itself after a slumber of twenty-eight years. The eruption has not come as a surprise to students of volcanoes, because although quiescent, it was known to be active. During the nineteenth century 26 eruptions occurred, with especially violent ones in 1814 and 1897.

The Philippines boast a dozen volcanoes that are classified as active, but eruptions of most of them are rare. Mayon, and its neighbor, Taal, both of which are in South Luzon, are the most energetic of the lot, though no severe eruption of Taal has happened since 1754.

When Mayon erupted in 1897, the circumstances must have been very similar to the present one. That of 1928 began on June 21, while the one

in 1897 started without warning on June 23. By the next day it began to excite alarm, and on the day after that began its work of destruction. Lava flowed down the side and for seven miles to the east; volcanic ash was rained over the surrounding country for 100 miles to the east and 75 miles to the west. Finally, by June 30, the volcano was again quiet. The next eruption was in 1900, and since then it has been inactive. Even the fiery glow which its vapors gave forth at night for centuries has been absent in recent years, but volcanologists have learned by experience that such a thing can occur without indicating that the volcano has retired for good.

Mayon forms a picture of a typical volcano. It is nearly 8000 feet high and rises from the plain to form a perfect cone. The circumference of

its base is about 120 miles.

Altogether there are several hundred active volcanoes scattered about on the earth's surface, their eruptions are quite independent of each other, in the opinion of volcano experts, and all are intermittent in their action.

When Krakatoa, near Java, erupted in 1883, it did so after two centuries of dormancy. One famous Japanese volcano, Bandaisan, which went off with particularly great force in 1888, was quiet for over a thousand years, so it seems that volcanoes erupting after long inactivity are apt to be unusually severe.

As a contrast to these volcanoes there stands Stromboli, in the Mediterranean, known to mariners as the "lighthouse". For two thousand years it has been continuously, though moderately, active.

Science News-Letter, August 11, 1928

Canada Has 15,000 Bison

Zoology

Buffalo ranching has been a decided success, as carried on by the Canadian Government. This year's quota of American bison, 1,057 animals, have just been transferred from the government ranch at Wainwright, Alberta, to Wood Buffalo Park, near Ft. Smith, Northwest Territories. This reduces the Wainwright herd to about 5,000 head, and brings the total shipments into the Park to over 6,000. In addition, there is a herd of some 1,500 "wood buffalo" who were native to the Park, so that taken altogether the bison now under Dominion protection in the two places number well over 13,000.

The Wainwright herd traces back to four calves, survivors of the wholesale slaughter of the vast bison herds that roamed the western plains during pioneer days. Michael Pablo, a half-breed American Indian in Montana, adopted the calves and with them as a nucleus built up a herd of some 700 animals. In 1907 he sold them to the Canadian government, and they were transferred to the fenced range at Wainwright.

In the 21 years since then the 700 bison at Wainwright have increased to over 15,000. Those not accounted for in the two major herds at Wainwright and Wood Buffalo Park have been distributed to other parks or otherwise disposed of. Some of the surplus animals have been killed for meat and buffalo robes.

Science News-Letter, August 11, 1928

Babies May Remember Experiences

Psychology

An adult who relates strange things that happened to him in the first years, or even the first days, of his life, may be remembering the actual facts, in the opinion of J. A. Hadfield, psychologist at London University.

People who apparently recall events out of a supposedly blank babyhood are noted from time to time by psychoanalysts, as they probe into the early years of life in search of the root causes of maladjustments. Such stories have often been taken with a grain of salt by the individual's family, who believe that these must be merely imaginative memories that have come to seem real to the individual. It is also possible that the individual's "memory" of an event was gained in perhaps his third or fourth year of age, from hearing someone else recount an incident of his babyhood.

Describing a number of cases in the British medical journal, *Lancet*, Mr. Hadfield tells of a doctor who remembered a fire that occurred when he was eight months old. The fire completely destroyed the house and no pictures of the home were preserved. The doctor described the circular staircase and a colored glass window at the landing, and the flames licking at the glass panels. When he was about seven years old he had told his parents about this memory,

and gave so many details that they accepted the story, incredible as it seemed to them.

A more remarkable instance cited by Mr. Hadfield is that of a woman under hypnosis who vividly described the terrifying infantile experience of being slapped, held upside down and shaken harshly. The psychologist inquired if she did not know how they revived infants when they do not breathe after birth. She answered that she had no idea, and was surprised to hear that she had described the usual procedure.

Undoubtedly young children are too young to understand the whole significance of their experiences, Mr. Hadfield comments, but they "are not too young to feel, and experiences that are not in the least understood by a child may produce violent commotion in its soul."

Studies of anatomy, he states, show that in the year-old child the brain center for emotion is active, though the center for more discriminative thought is probably not in full function.

The young child, he suggests, can hold in its memory the feeling of a scene, and later when he can use language he puts the feeling into words more or less accurately as the case may be.

Science News-Letter, August 11, 1928