



THE BEGINNING OF DESTRUCTION

Opening phase of the Colima earthquake, as recorded by seismograph at the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia.

SEISMOLOGY

Earthquake Served First Notice By Disturbing Galvanometers

Hours Later Wires Brought News of Shock That May Have Set Off Eruption of Colima Volcano in Mexico

MEXICO'S earthquake, that "blitzed" the city of Colima on April 15, sent its own first notice to Washington, D. C., by interfering with some work which the National Bureau of Standards was doing for the Army Signal Corps. Dr. Frank Wenner and his aides were testing some electrical apparatus belonging to the Signal Corps. At about 2:20 p.m., the delicately balanced mirrors on three large galvanometers began to swing abnormally, and kept it up for more than an hour. Dr. Wenner knew that a violent earthquake was going on somewhere, and judged from the behavior of his instruments that it might be in Mexico. Not until hours later did belated wire reports bring confirmation.

The earthquake may have set off the reported eruption of Colima volcano, in the opinion of Dr. Emanuel G. Zies, volcanologist of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. This volcano is the westernmost of a string of such peaks that mark a high ridge in an approximately east-west line across Mexico, and joining the coastal range at this point. It is one of the most active mountain-forming regions on earth today, Dr. Zies stated, so that stimulation of an eruption by an

earthquake might well occur. Ordinarily earthquakes and volcanic eruptions have little to do with each other, despite a widespread impression to the contrary. The quake's epicenter was about 75 miles southeast of the city of Colima, U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey seismologists reported, after a study of data wired and radioed to Science Service by a number of observatories ranging from Ottawa to Manila. The spot of greatest disturbance was provisionally fixed as in latitude 18.5 degrees north, longitude 102.9 degrees west. This is in an isolated mountainous region in the state of Michoacan. Exact time of origin was 2:09.8 p.m., E.S.T.

Science News Letter, April 26, 1941

It takes 60 to 70 yards of cloth to make an ordinary-sized parachute.

The Bronx Zoo will have its first featured exhibit of *insects* this spring.

Army *ski troops* that wintered in Mount Rainier area trained with various kinds of snowshoes, ski equipment, sleeping bags, tents, stoves, and dehydrated foods, to determine the most practicable types.

GEOLOGY

Map of North America Is International Enterprise

A GREAT map of North America, showing in detail all present indications of the vast glacial sheets that once lay thick on this continent, is being undertaken as an international scientific enterprise by a committee of 16 geologists of the United States and Canada, under the general chairmanship of Prof. Richard F. Flint of Yale University. (*Science*, March 28.)

While the general outlines and some of the details of glacial development that began about a million years ago are well shown on some of the older maps, geologists have long known that for real accuracy an entirely new map on an entirely different order of exactness would have to be compiled; and it could not be a one-man job. Hence the formation of the present group. It is expected that their work will require many years for full completion, since even the best of geologic data now on hand leave many blank spaces on the North American glacial map.

Science News Letter, April 26, 1941

HERPETOLOGY

"Water-Goggling" Helps In Study of Turtles

LEWIS J. MARCHAND, of the University of Florida, told the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists how he has developed an intimate acquaintance with turtles by becoming a kind of temporary turtle himself. He puts on a pair of watertight goggles made of a circular piece of glass set into a piece of inner tubing, and goes right down among his hard-shelled friends.

Swimming is all right, said Mr. Marchand, but for getting around faster in Turtledom he hangs onto the bottom of an outboard motor boat by a special handle, sticking his head up (like a turtle) for air once in a while, and lets a friend take care of the details of propulsion.

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