

FURTHER DETAILS OF MARTINIQUE HORROR

Captain of the Steamer "Roddam" Describes the Terrible Scenes Through Which He Passed—Tale Perhaps Never Had a Parallel in Stories of the Sea

First of all the ships that passed through the shower of ashes of Mont Pelee and reached the American mainland to tell about it, the British Etona, bound to New York from Montevideo and St. Lucia, has arrived at New York. Her captain, John Cantell, and her passengers brought with them a thrilling story, not only of their own experience in the second eruption of Martinique's destroyer, but of the Roddam and her heroic captain, whom they visited in the St. Lucia hospital.

The Etona reached St. Lucia on the evening of May 10, expecting to coal

of the Roddam, which escaped from St. Pierre May 8. The watchman was engaged in gathering up fragments of human bodies and putting them away in the locker. He discontinued the work to show us around.

"The Roddam presented an awful spectacle. She looked as if she had been thrust into soft, clinging mud and pulled out again. The mud stuck to her like cement and was two feet deep on her decks. Awnings, stanchions and boat covers had been burned or swept away. Tarpaulins, rails, stays, hatch covers and even

"Men on the Roralma were wringing their hands and rushing about frantically. Some of them jumped into the sea, where they must have died instantly, Capt. Freeman said, for the water was boiling like a caldron. It was like a mass of boiling mud. Many of the Roddam's crew had disappeared, probably swept overboard, and the rest went one by one until only six were left. Every one of them must have died a terrible death.

"After a time the captain got the steering gear working, the ship answered her helm and he headed her out

the group, is of volcanic origin and culminates in the vast crater of Morne y Garou, which in 1812 was the scene of a tremendous eruption. Billions of tons of rock and earth were hurled high into the air—part, as molten lava, flowed down into the sea; part, shivered into thin dust, was carried high up into the clouds. For three days the awful convulsions of nature continued. The dust from the crater so obscured the rays of the sun and brought on a darkness so terrifying that the few survivors believed that the world had come to an end. The

miles west of Barbados and between St. Lucia and the Grenadines. From north to south stretches a ridge of high, wooded hills, extending to the sea on either side. The Soufriere, which is now in eruption, is in the northwest. It towers 3,000 feet above the sea. Its crater is three miles in circumference and 500 feet deep. From the summit the view on all sides was superb. Eastward over the new crater—formed in 1812—the Atlantic was visible through the hill ranges; westward to the blue waters of the Caribbean, and on the margin of the bay the quaint and curious town of Chateau Belair. Travelers who have stood on the highest point describe the view of Morne Garou as a spectacle of awe-inspiring grandeur, with the vast forest clambering over lofty peak and deep-hewn glen right to the northern verge, where, twenty miles off, the island dips under the blue waves.

The climate of St. Vincent is unusually humid, the average rainfall being seven feet annually. But the mortality rate is low and the inhabitants enjoy excellent health. The soil in the valleys is a rich loam, well calculated for the growing of cotton and cocoa palms, as well as sugar cane. The average temperature is 85 degrees Fahrenheit in the high lands. In the low lands it hovers between 90 and 95. The island has been noted for the beauty of the plumage of its birds and for its rare specimens of insect life.

It is the home of the giant firefly, whose phosphorescent brilliancy is so great that one fly will shed sufficient light by which to read a book or newspaper. A dozen of these insects will light up a large room, and the Caribs, in the olden days, used them for purposes of illumination. Unlike the birds of the tropics farther south, the birds of the forests of St. Vincent are not only brilliantly feathered, but

MURDERER TELLS IT ALL

He Details to the Court the Killing of Michael Sierks.

ALLIANCE, Neb., May 26.—District court for Box Butte county convened here, and when the case of the state of Nebraska against August Jahnke for the murder of Michael Sierks came up it brought out a confession from Oliver Olson, who is charged as an accessory to the crime. Olson's confession is as follows:

"We had entered into an agreement to kill Mike Sierks and I was to have half of the old man's insurance, for which Jahnke was the beneficiary, and a share in the old man's estate, which was by previous inducement also devised to Jahnke. We made three attempts upon his life which were unsuccessful. The first time we let him fall into a 120-foot well onto a piece of pipe projecting four feet from the bottom. The second time we put corrosive sublimate in his coffee at two different times, but this failed, as the old man vomited it all up, and we played sick, placing the cause with the whisky we had been drinking. The third was to shoot him with a revolver, and he was gotten drunk and forced to stagger in front of the revolver in my hands which I discharged, apparently by accident, but the shot miscarried and went under his arm, failing to do the work. The last and successful attempt was well planned. Jahnke said to me: 'We will have to shoot him with a shotgun.' We came to town and procured a gun and went back. The next morning, as Mike was at the breakfast table, I got the gun and loaded it in an adjoining room and returned, and as I came out of the door behind the old man I pulled the hammer and let the whole charge into his back, whereupon Jahnke shouted: 'Come, help me, Mike is shot!'"

On cross-examination Olson said he was under the hypnotic influence of Jahnke, who is his brother-in-law.

COLEMAN KEPT HIS MONEY.

And Sent Officers to the Designated Stump at Night.

ADAMS, Neb., May 26.—H. Coleman, living three miles southeast of town, received a letter some days ago in which he was told to go to a certain stump in the timber about half a mile from his home and there deposit \$300, and failure to do so would cost him his son's life, his house and barn would be destroyed and other dire calamities befall him.

Mr. Coleman came to town and reported the matter to Constable Medical and Deputy Sheriff Galloway, who went to the place designated and watched a couple of nights, but no one appeared. In the letter, which was mailed at Sterling, Mr. Coleman was directed to go to the stump unarmed and at night.

Farmer Loses His Barn.

BASSETT, Neb., May 26.—Word was brought in of a disastrous fire in the burning of a large barn and all its contents, except two horses, belonging to Joe Stolpart, seven miles east of here. No one was at home at the time, Mr. Stolpart being in Bassett. Upon reaching home he found many suspicious circumstances and a careful investigation will follow. He carried \$400 insurance.

Snake in Letter Box.

LINCOLN, Neb., May 26.—Mail Carrier Warnke took a small and active snake out of a mail box. A youth named Henry Ernst was found to be the party who introduced the snake into his new home, but he insisted that he only put the snake on the box and that the reptile crawled in of its own accord.

Preparing for State Fair.

LINCOLN, Neb., May 26.—The state board of agriculture met and contracted for the construction of four new live stock barns on the state fair grounds. The board also authorized the various live stock associations to hold auctions on the state fair grounds during the next fair.

Long Pine Has Commercial Club.

LONG PINE, Neb., May 26.—The business men and property owners of Long Pine have organized a commercial club, with officers as follows: President, W. A. Bucklin; secretary, J. S. Davison; treasurer, R. S. Hall.

Independent Telephone Company.

BRAINARD, Neb., May 26.—The village of Ulysses recently organized an independent telephone company to cover the entire town and also making connection with many of the nearby farmers' houses.

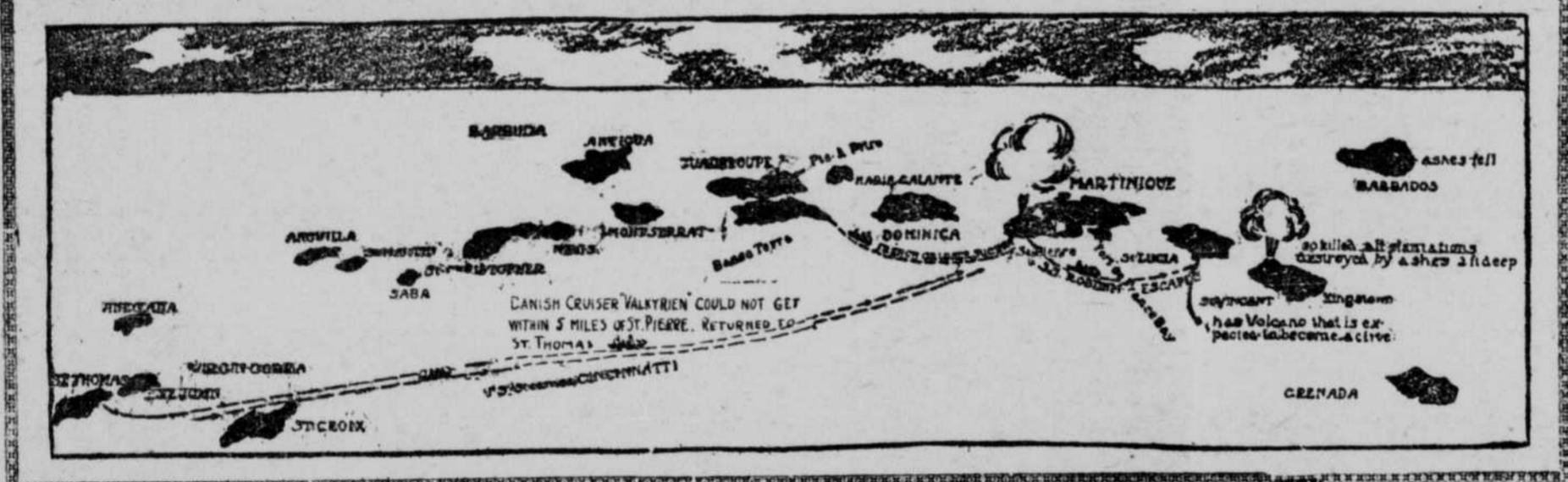
A Young Man in Trouble.

BEATRICE, Neb., May 26.—A young fellow by the name of Grover Brown from Hubbell, Neb., was arrested here last night on a charge of forging a check on some party for \$140.

Liquor Dealers to Meet.

OMAHA, May 26.—The sixth annual convention of the Nebraska Retail Liquor Dealers' association will be held in this city June 4 to 6 inclusive.

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF PART OF THE WEST INDIES SHOWING SCENES OF VOLCANIC DISTURBANCE



and leave the same night. In the harbor news was received of the St. Pierre disaster, and, lying at anchor, was all that was left of the Roddam.

All St. Lucia was in mourning and the people were so distracted by the news from the neighboring island that it was not until May 11 that Capt. Cantell could obtain coal and pass on his journey. St. Pierre was passed at a distance of about four miles and all on board studied the land with glasses.

"The weather was clear and we had a fine view," said the captain, "but the old lines of St. Pierre were not recognizable. Everything was a mass of blue lava, and the formation of the land itself seemed to have changed. When we were about eight miles off the northern end of the island Mont Pelee began to belch a second time. Clouds of smoke and lava shot into the air and spread over all the sea, darkening the sun. Our decks in a few minutes were covered with a substance that looked like sand dyed brown, which smelled like phosphorus.

"Partial darkness came upon us, and everybody on board the ship was badly frightened. After the stories we had heard and the sights we had seen at St. Lucia we did not know but that we ourselves were to be buried under red-hot lava or engulfed by another tidal wave, though we were then ten miles from shore.

"Crowd on steam," I whistled to Chief Engineer Farris, and he needed no urging. Slowly we drew away through a suffocating atmosphere, foot by foot, yard by yard, and at last the sun began shining. We had passed outside the hailstorm of dust and sand. When I looked at my watch I found that we had been about an hour reaching daylight.

"Our decks were covered two inches with this matter," and the captain exhibited a box of volcanic dust, which

her smokestacks were gone. When the watchman dug into the lava he found here and there fragments of human remains. All that was left of the ship was her hull, and that, being iron, had escaped destruction.

"Hearing that Capt. Freeman was at the Hotel Felite, we called on him. I wanted to get from his own lips the story of his escape. I was unprepared for the terrible sight which greeted my eyes when I entered the room.

"Capt. Freeman's face was burned to the color of teak wood and large patches of skin and flesh were burned from his bones, here and there. Both his hands were swathed in bandages. His hair and mustache were gone, his eyes were tied open and he was in great pain. When I told him who I was he talked a great deal, to relieve himself, he said, of his suffering.

"He said the Roddam had been in St. Pierre only an hour when the eruption occurred. He was talking to an agent in a boat alongside when a big black squall approached the ship from the island. It was like a black wall, traveled fast and was accompanied by a tidal wave and a deafening roar. The sun disappeared immediately.

"Capt. Freeman said that he shouted to everybody to stand clear. An instant later the air was filled with flame and falling batches of fire. The ship was immediately ablaze from end to end, and the crew and laborers aboard began to rush about, frantic with pain. As nearly as he could remember there were forty-two persons aboard the ship, only six of whom survived. The ship keeled over when the tidal wave hit her and nearly capsized. Then she righted and the falling shower of fire continued.

"Capt. Freeman ran into the chart-room, but was driven out again by flames that came in at the port hole. Then he rushed to the engine room telephone and signaled the engineer to

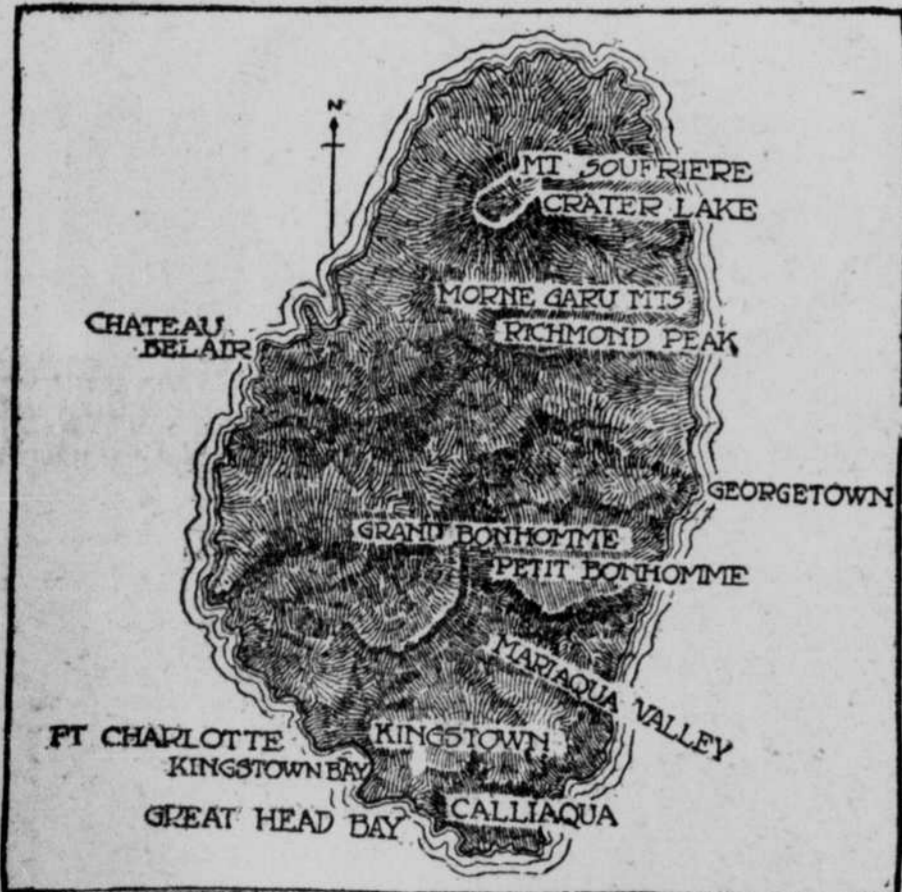
to sea. Slowly the sky cleared, and it was possible for him to see about him. Men in the red hot lava lay dying all along his track. He himself, though he stayed at the wheel, was unable to lift his burned arms. Blood from his forehead kept running into his eyes, obscuring his vision. He likened his escape to the passage from hell into heaven. At last he reached

impalpable dust was carried by the trade winds to the islands of Barbados and St. Lucia and turned day into night. The inhabitants became panic-stricken with fear and abandoned their ordinary vocations and devoted themselves to prayer and fasting.

This was the closing period of a series of volcanic eruptions which had lasted two years, and the direc-



ISLAND OF ST. VINCENT.



had been saved by his crew. "You can see the marks of it yet about the masts and our polished woodwork, and I don't think my passengers are yet over their fright. No curiosity would ever take us again near that terrible place.

"Before leaving St. Lucia," Capt. Cantell said, "we visited the wreck

put on full steam. Some one responded and the ship began to move, but the steering gear was jammed and would not work. He kept the engines going ahead and astern alternately, hoping to free the paddles, and in so doing nearly struck the Quebec Line steamer Roralma, from which clouds of steam and flame were rising.

the open sea, and with the help of two sailors, two engineers and the boat-swain, succeeded in taking his boat to St. Lucia.

"During the run out of the harbor the chief engineer died a horrible death. He escaped the first shock, started the engines and, not finding his men below, went on deck to look for them. As he thrust his head out of the hatch a mass of lava fell upon him, burning one side of his face completely off.

"Capt. Freeman's performance perhaps never had a parallel in stories of the sea," continued Capt. Cantell. "When the Roddam arrived at St. Lucia, the brave man refused all medical treatment until the others were cared for. He will live, the doctors tell me."

BEAUTIFUL ISLE OF ST. VINCENT

Was an Earthly Paradise Before the Recent Awful Disaster.

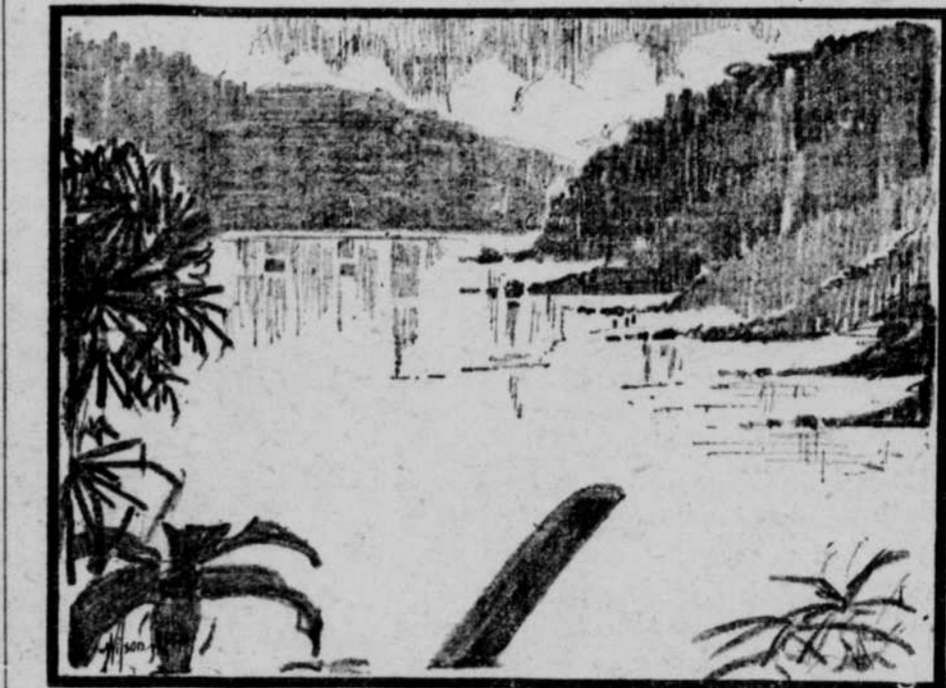
St. Vincent, which has suffered from the eruption of its own soufriere volcano, is one of the most beautiful and picturesque islands in the British West Indian group. It has an area of 131 square miles and has been described as one of the flashing jewels that lie like a necklace around the Caribbean sea. The last British census credited it with a population of 50,000, of whom a large majority are negroes engaged in the cultivation of sugar cane, which is the principal crop. Two hundred years ago it was the home of the Carib Indians, who were induced by the French to join in a revolution against England. They were crushed and thousands were transported. Hundreds, rather than submit, threw themselves into the sea. A few descendants of these original owners of the island still exist on lands granted to them by the British government.

St. Vincent, like all the islands in

tion of the seismic wave was not unlike that which devastated Martinique. The disturbance in 1812 seemed to pass under the bed of the ocean to Venezuela, Caracas, the capital of that country, was partly destroyed by an earthquake and 10,000 persons perished. With the exception of the great Lisbon earthquake, the eruption of the mighty mountain was the most

are possessed of melodious song. One is a sort of mountain oriole, which has a note of peculiar sweetness and wonderful penetration.

As in most countries where earthquakes are feared, the houses are, as a rule, one story in height. The more pretentious are two stories, and the public buildings are three, but the descendants of the Carib Indians re-



frightful cataclysm known to the world up to that time. The whole configuration of the island was changed. The eastern end sank into the sea, and where it stood there is now a great depth of water. The volcanic forces remained quiescent until 1882, and then the warning rumble was heard again; but it was a false alarm, and the terrible scenes of the early part of the century were not repeated.

The island of St. Vincent lies 100

gard these as dangerous and cannot be induced to enter them.

Secretary Shaw's Exercise. Mounted on a "single-footer," Mr. Shaw, secretary of the treasury, goes for a ride nearly every afternoon. The animal's gait is so smooth that the rider gets as much exercise as though he was swinging in a hammock. But then the secretary on such trips looks more like a man doing his duty than out for a pleasure ride.