

PREDICTION THAT MOUNT ETNA WOULD BE ON THE RAMPAGE IN 1928 JUSTIFIED

(Jacques Wardlaw Redway in New York Sun.)

The prediction made two years ago that an eruption of Etna would occur probably in 1928 has been verified. The forecast was made on the assumption that volcanic activity on the earth is greatest at the time of the perihelion passage of the planet Jupiter. The dates of sun-spot periods in the last century are 1821, 1833, 1845, 1856, 1868, 1880, 1892, 1904, 1916 and 1928. Eruptions of Etna occurred in 1830, 1852, 1865, 1879, 1886, 1892, 1899, 1910, 1923 and 1928. Granted that volcanic activity in general may be greater during sun-spot periods, the eruptions of Etna conform thereto in only two instances. There is no question concerning the year 1928, however. A cinder cone in Nicaragua was in eruption in January. Mayon and Rokatinda in the Philippine Islands have been violently active. A submarine eruption in the Pacific Ocean covered the sea with floating pumice over an area of many square miles. Now, an outburst of Etna, one of the most destructive in history, adds another to the year's eruptions.

Etna as a cinder cone may be geologically young—it scarcely antedates Pliocene times—but it is old as human history goes. If we may rely upon the word of Thucydides, there were eruptions in the eighth and again in the fifth century B. C. Livy mentions several, one of which occurred in the first century B. C. All these were in the legendary period. According to legendary history Zeus threw the cinder cone upon the giant Typhon, forcing him down into Tartarus.

Vulcan found Etna, a convenient shon wherein to forge the thunderbolts required by Jupiter, and the one-eyed Cyclopes were his helpers. And then there was Empedocles, a famous Greek philosopher—sometimes esoteric, always emotional, and finally sensational. He reasoned that if neither track nor trace—only remembrance—were left of him after he departed this life it would be said of him that he had been translated to the abode of the gods. Craftily, therefore, he cast himself into Etna's seething crater. But alas and alack! A puff of steam tossed his brazen sandals out into the open. In spite of that mishap the people of his times—and likewise of the times that have elapsed—never ceased to honor his memory. And is not the observatory where Etna's eccentricities are recorded named Torre del Filosofo? Last of all the shades of Anne Boleyn were consigned to the pit of Etna. That incident ended the legendary period. It could not tolerate anything beyond.

Etna is about thirty miles south of the horn tip of Sicily, close upon the coast. The circuit of its base is about ninety miles and a fringe of villages surrounds it. Why? The answer is easy. Disintegrated lava makes the finest and richest soil ever. Therefore, the washings of the lava have been converted into a wonderful market garden. On the coast tide water furnishes cheap transportation to the markets of the mainland. Half a dozen villages are threatened by the lava floods; one, Mascali, has been destroyed; Nunziata and Carabba perhaps are doomed.

But destruction many times has been the fate of villages and cities at the base of Etna. In 1169 Catania, even then a flourishing city and seaport, was overwhelmed by a lava flood. Five hundred years later another flood from Etna's throat wrought disaster but did not destroy the city. It is now safe for the reason that the great ridges of rock, the flow of previous eruptions, have diverted the flow at the present eruption along channels of less resistance. But come what may, humanity will always seek habitations where there is easy money, and the fans of fertile soil at the base of Etna are rich as the gold fields of South Africa. Even the volcano itself is a source of profit; for Catania is a great export market for sulphur and pumice.

The character of the eruptions of Etna varies. First, a part of the cinder cone is blown off by the escaping of steam under tremendous pressure. There may follow dense clouds of finely powdered lava—the "ashes" of

the eruption—hurled miles into the air, or the eruption may consist mainly of a flow of lava; sometimes it is the one, sometimes it is the other; it has been both. The eruption of the present time is chiefly a flood of lava. It was preceded by earthquakes, but the earthquakes were not unusually severe. The eruption of 1169 had an ominous forewarning—an earthquake that crumbled Catania to rock piles and wiped out of existence most of its people. The loss of life was estimated between 15,000 and 20,000. In 1669 the eruption spared human lives but covered fifteen square miles of cultivated lands with a crust of lava. Fourteen villages were destroyed. The greatest catastrophe of Catania occurred twenty-four years afterward. Earthquakes shattered and volcanic dust and lava covered the city. They destroyed more than a score of villages. The loss of life exceeded 50,000 souls—just how many no one will ever know. But the region thereabout is a gold mine, and humanity will take the risk. Catania was rebuilt; so were many of the villages.

Newspaper literature still contains many of the old traditional terms of volcanology—"flames," "smoke," "ashes" and "clouds." Of these the last named only exist in fact. The "flames" and the "fire" of an eruption are merely reflected light from the white-hot lava. The "smoke" is not a product of combustion; it is the mass of finely powdered lava hurled into the air. It is formed when the occluded steam blasts the lava into the finest dust, and the "ash" is that same dust that has dropped out of the air and settled upon the ground. The "clouds" are real; they consist of the belching steam condensed upon volcanic dust motes; and the cumulus cloud that hovers over a cinder cone at the time of an eruption does not differ materially from the ordinary "thunderhead" of a summer sky. They are constituted alike; and rain may fall from the under side of each. Volcanic eruptions build cinder cones or "mountains" about the fissure through which the ejecta are driven. The fissure and not the cinder cone is the essential feature of the volcano and an eruption is usually a steam explosion.

UNIQUE WILLS OFTEN HELP OUT LAWYERS

London, Nov. 20.—People who make curious provisions in their wills, give a lot of trouble to their beneficiaries, but also give a lot of money to lawyers, according to legal circles here.

The discussion on eccentric wills arose over a clause in a will creating a trust which was to continue until 20 years after the death of the last survivor of the lineal descendants of Queen Victoria living at the time of the testator's death. The will recently was the subject of litigation in the high court here.

Among other recent peculiar wills was that of the Yorkshire gardener who bequeathed one shilling and a cracker bowl to his wife.

Another man left his wife five shillings, approximately \$1.25 to buy a rope with which to hang herself. He left his son £5 (about \$20) "with which to go to the devil."

The type of will which has for its object the discomfiture of the testator's relations is often proved in England, but in other countries such legacies are illegal.

A testator in Toronto a few years ago put a number of Methodist ministers into an extraordinary dilemma. Staunch prohibitionists, they were rather embarrassed by a large brewery concern which was left them. The same man also left to three important opponents of racing in Canada shares in the Ontario Jockey Club, the legatees being requested to draw the dividends and exercise the other privileges of membership.

There is a record of a testator writing his will on a door, another on a petticoat.

"Football taught me to think fast. 'Yeh, well matrimony'll teach you to think faster."

THE 1929 CAR HAS BETTER LINES THAN PRESENT MODEL AND MORE POWER FOR ITS SIZE

The curtain has risen sufficiently on the 1929 car to be in a rather secure position to classify and evaluate its embodiment of trends toward general refinements and advances in construction and equipment.

Taken as a composite unit, the 1929 edition of the automobile may truthfully be said to include in its specifications many notable steps in the direction of better motor cars. It is a thing not only a beauty, but of a newer and distinctive type of beauty. It has moved onward in respect to improved performance and heightened mechanical appointments. In brief, the 1929 models are well worth having.

Classifications.

These advancements may be classified under the general headings of more attractive appearance, improvements to the power plant, and development of such mechanical appurtenances as braking system, rear axle, and cooling system.

Speaking of progress in the general pleasing appearance of the automobile there are several points to which some emphasis may be given. Much of this has been achieved in the treatment of the front of the car. In this respect, automotive genius has followed the age-old adage that first appearances are the more lasting. And it may be said of the 1929 car that once one gets past this feature of the current models, it is with no disappointment that the car owner finds other factors of importance in the characterization of the newer cars as definitely improved.

Artistry Utilized.

Artistry has been utilized in the treatment of the radiator and headlamps. Radiators are narrower and rise to greater height, giving the car those refined fleet looking lines which engage attention from the first glance. The radiator cap is of the flush type and in many instances has a centre fin merging into the hinge of the hood. Larger headlamps may be noted and their arrangement has added appreciably to improved appearance.

The trend toward the narrower radiator may have an effect which should not be overlooked. If style dictates further decrease of the breadth of the front cooling unit, it is not unlikely that it will result in the use of two fans, since one cannot sweep with any appreciable degree of efficiency the entire area of a long, narrow radiator. While on the subject of the cooling system, there is another trend that should receive attention. It is the greater vogue for radiator shutters. Their popularity was given definite impetus this year and is destined to invade even lower price classes next year.

More Wire Wheels.

Another feature of appearance of the 1929 car is the wider adoption of the wire wheel. It is a mark of many of the de luxe models throughout the price range. They are equipped with six wire wheels in many instances, two being set in fender wells on opposite sides of the car.

Of paramount importance, so far as externals are concerned, is the general adoption of chromium plating for such outside units as radiator shell, headlamps, and the like. This use of a non-tarnishing finish has been reflected in virtually every new line and has reached down into the lowest price tiers.

When one is discussing automotive advancement, a natural question is, of course, "What has happened to engines?"

While not a distinguishing mark of the 1929 car, it may be said that there has been an appreciable increase in engine power. It has been brought about in various ways. Compression ratios have been increased and this has been made practicable by the availability of improved motor fuels. Engine speeds have moved upwards, being effected by the use of larger lift valves and light alloy pistons.

More Room in Front.

Placing of the gear shift lever has received attention of late. The driver's compartment is being looked upon more as a place which the motorist can leave easily rather than one from which he must extricate himself. Several makers have increased the ease of entry or exit from either side by mounting the lever on the clutch cov-

er plate instead of immediately above the transmission. To do this the slide bars have been extended into the clutch housing.

There are installations of hydraulic brakes to be noted, and nearly all are of the internal shoe type. Several manufacturers using mechanical brakes have replaced them with this type. Some of the heavier cars have been equipped with self-energizing brakes to make stopping more effortless. Attention also has been given to brake adjustment in the case of the four-wheel type on which clearances were reduced to heighten efficiency.

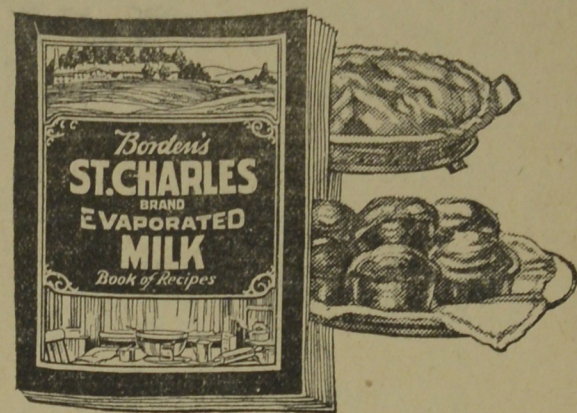
These things will the motorist see as he sweeps a searching glance over the array of the 1929 models. They are more attractive; they are sturdy and replete with power; and, in short, they are significant milestones along the pathway of automotive progress.

BARON O'NEILL PASSES AWAY IN IRELAND

Belfast, Northern Ireland, Nov. 21.—Baron O'Neill, aged head of the noted O'Neill family of County Antrim, died yesterday at Eralerstown, County Derry, in his 89th year.

There are those among the older generation along the shores of Lough Neagh, who declared that the wail of a banshee, or white fairy associated with deaths in old Irish families, was heard near the ruins of Shane's Castle, the O'Neill residence, during the previous night. The O'Neill banshee is one of the most famous in Ireland. It is said to have seldom failed to announce an impending death in the family for a score of generations.

Baron O'Neill had a long career as a judge and parliamentarian. He sat as a member of the British Parliament for County Antrim from 1863 to 1880.



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