

In October 1883 Verbeck visited the area and reported that the three islands were completely bare and covered with a hundred feet thick layer of ash and pumice which had exterminated the flora and fauna. The ground was still hot, and scalding steam issued from crevices.

The total destruction of the fauna and flora of Krakatau offered an excellent opportunity for studying re-colonization. Unfortunately very little was known of the previous fauna and, still worse, biologists failed to take advantage of the opportunity presented until too late. Cotteau landed on May 27, 1884, and found that the only sign of animal life was a minute spider; but in 1889 Selenka, who visited the island, found to his astonishment a rich fauna of insects and even giant lizards.

Dr. K. W. Dammerman now presents us with a comprehensive analysis of the work done on this problem of the re-colonization of Krakatau. He has himself made frequent collecting visits to the island, and has for many years specialized on the subject. In the first part of the book the fauna of the island is compared with that of surrounding islands. The re-colonization of other desert areas such as the Katmai volcano in Alaska and the volcano of Jorullo in Mexico is compared with that of Krakatau. The succession of biocoenoses, the sequence of animal categories in the islands and methods of dispersal are all studied in turn. The derivation of the fauna is also discussed. Part 2 (taxonomic part) consists of the complete annotated list, arranged systematically, of the animals now found on the Krakatau islands. Some of these are illustrated by text figures. The same list is repeated in tabular form without annotations to show at a glance the distribution of each species in the various islands in 1908, 1921 and 1933 respectively. The book concludes with an extensive bibliography and excellent photographic plates.

## THE CANINE CULT

### Dogs in Britain

A Description of all Native Breeds and most Foreign Breeds in Britain. By Clifford L. B. Hubbard. Pp. xii + 471 + 8 plates. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1948.) 21s. net.

GREAT BRITAIN, per head of population, contains more dogs in private ownership than any other country in the world. Dog-breeding in Britain is a big industry, dog-showing a bigger, dog-owning a passion. Yet there is a profound ignorance about dogs, about everything to do with dogs, in Britain. Too many people own dogs because it is 'the right thing' to do, and not because they either love them or understand them: too many people breed freaks because it pays to do so. It is, in fact, not far from the truth to say that we are a nation of dog-owners and not, as we like to make out, a nation of dog-lovers.

How near to the truth that statement is can be seen from a study of canine literature. There is a small but excellent specialist Press; there are a number of specialist booklets devoted to individual breeds: there is one encyclopædic volume at a high price, a price beyond the reach of most dog-owners: there is a vast assortment of illustrated literature of a popular and definitely sentimental type; and it has always been the same. There is, therefore, a

great opportunity for an all-round book about dogs; one that does not sentimentalize; one whose illustrations do not portray the dog as something rather more than human, stressing its 'fetching' ways to the exclusion of all else; one that both entertains and instructs. Mr. Hubbard has seized the opportunity. His book, most reasonably priced, will meet a long-felt want.

This book is uniform with those two excellent volumes by L. J. F. Brimble, "Flowers in Britain" and "Trees in Britain", which means that it is lavishly illustrated in colour and half-tone, yet in rather less than five hundred pages the author has managed to cover almost every aspect of the modern dog-world. Origins, breeding, training, management, breeds and varieties, diseases and ailments, all are treated authoritatively but simply. Mr. Hubbard never becomes involved, never ceases to be anything but practical, never ceases to entertain. He has, too, the wide view. He is not content to deal only with the popular British breeds, but also gives details of many foreign breeds, few specimens of which are to be seen here, but which in their own countries are as popular as the cocker spaniel is in the English suburbs.

On the practical side—on breeding, training, management, and on the health and care of the dog—what he has to say, and the way in which he says it, is beyond praise. His chapter on the dog in literature and art (in which he had the assistance of Mr. Stuart Tresilian, who was also responsible for the beautiful coloured plates, and Mr. Stuart Raye) cannot fail to appeal to anyone with a fondness for dogs. All those who have at any time "given their heart to a dog to tear" will read this section again and again.

Mr. Hubbard will not, however, find universal acceptance for all his views on the origin of the dog, or for all he has to say on the very interesting (but surely, more complicated) subject of the wild dogs of the world. In particular, it is certainly oversimplifying matters to dismiss the pariah dog as semi-wild, if, by that, is meant feral. Pariah is a word that has come to be loosely used in English. That there are feral dogs infesting the Middle and Far East is beyond question; but there is also a quite distinct form (some authorities recognize two types) of truly wild pariah. These are matters, however, for the specialist with zoological leanings, and do not affect in any way the great value of the book for the non-specialist dog-owner and -lover.

But on another matter, of great concern to all dog-owners and -lovers, Mr. Hubbard has allowed his enthusiasm to run away with him. He speaks of dog specialists as "cynologists". He even goes so far as to describe Dr. John Caius, the learned founder of Caius College, Cambridge, as "the Elizabethan cynologist", and, further, to put the generic separation of dog and fox to the credit of advance in "cynological study". It was due, of course, to nothing of the sort. But it is the word that is disturbing. It has no place in the dictionary, and it should have no place in the world of dogs, for if it is to be accepted what are we to call the specialists in horses, cats, pigs, and other domestic animals?

Enthusiasm is, however, a good fault. To read this beautifully illustrated and produced book is to catch much of the author's enthusiasm. It should have, and will thoroughly deserve, a great welcome from the dog world, for there is no one—specialist no less than novice—who will not be the better for reading it.

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