A flood swept southern California early in the year, when the great St. Francis dam broke and scattered destruction over a vast area in the San Francisco valley. This was all that was left of the 185 foot high dam that had bridged 1,200 feet from hill to hill.

(Photograph from Associated Press.)

Mount Etna awoke and poured forth a fiery flood of lava, snuffing out 10,000 homes and burying three towns. Huge stretches of Sicilian countryside were swept by the whirling flow.

(Photograph from Pacific and Atlantic.)

A hurricane swept over Florida, wrecking millions in damage and leaving thousands homeless. The picture on the right was taken while the terrific gale was still in progress at West Palm Beach.

(Photograph from Associated Press.)

Japan crowned a new emperor, Hirohito, who became the 124th mikado following the death of his father the year before. At the coronation at Kyoto, the ancient capital, vast crowds turned out to watch the procession through the triumphal arch.

(Photograph from Associated Press.)

The sinking of the Vestris, which went down 240 miles off the Virginia capes, carrying 111 persons to their untimely end, produced the year’s most dramatic photograph reproduced above. Keeping cool while terror gripped the hearts of others, Fred Hanson, a pantryman, snapped this picture just before the Vestris sank. Then Hanson leaped into the last lifeboat that left the doomed ship.

(Photograph copyright by Pacific and Atlantic.)