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Earthquakes!

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Media type:

Book

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Our unstable planet and voracious media have ensured that we know a lot more about earthquakes than we did a few months ago. However, this title does provide a useful background to the dramatic stories that we've had from Christchurch and Sendai. Earthquakes, we learn, are happening all the time ? mostly insignificant ones like the one we had in Dumfries a month ago (we never noticed a thing in the Masonic Arms and I bet you never heard anything about it).

A very useful map of tectonic plates explains the vulnerability of certain quake-spots as well as the consistent rising of the Himalayas. Examples of regional disasters follow with eyewitness photographs and testaments. The scenes of mass destruction of man-made environments are, sadly, now familiar to us all but still shocking. Tsunamis get a two-page mention, as does seismology and prediction. Interestingly, the Chinese are now observing snakes to assess their well-known changes in behaviour well before quakes strike.

The book is served by competent biblio- and web-ographies but, now we have all learnt to say Fukushima politely, its job may already have been done.

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