

## FOREST FIRES ARE A NATIONAL PERIL

Problem in United States Becomes More Serious With Each Year.

BY JONTHON WINFIELD

Washington, March 20.—The forest fire problem becomes more serious with every passing year. It has now reached the proportions of a national peril.

Despite the vigilance of forest experts, and the expanding appropriations of congress, the same enormous toll is exacted by wind and flame every summer, involving an enormous drain upon our national resources. Methods of preventing and checking the fires are improving rapidly, now that the gravity of the situation is realized, but the magnitude of the task is in some cases almost beyond human capacity to cope with.

The huge losses in the northwestern states last summer on the forest reserves caused the greatest apprehension to the officials of the Forest Service. Striving to find a remedy, they are now also probing into causes and placing responsibility where it belongs. Weather conditions, aided by human carelessness and negligence, tell the story. Nature, at certain periods of the year, make conditions for great, encompassing flame ideal in the immense woodlands.

Nature Denies Rain.

First of all nature denies the forest rain. For weeks at a time not a drop of moisture falls from the heavens, and the trees become as dry and parched as kindling wood. Then the hot, scorching winds come to speed the spark onward, and whip the flame into fury wherever it appears. That the spark will come, either from the fire of some careless camper, or in some other fashion, can be counted upon. Forest experts in the field, dredging the fire as they do, recognize that it is inevitable in the long drought of the mountain summers of the northwest. They can do little to prevent forest fires; the main effort is directed toward checking them.

In spite of all the bitter experience that has been gained from forest fires, it is frequently impossible to compel private corporations and individuals to take proper precautions against them.

Last summer timber was being cut by lumbermen on a tract of land lying near the boundaries of a national forest in the Cascade mountains. There was no question about their ownership of the land, and the United States merely made a request that, in view of the existing conditions, operations be suspended until a rainfall. The lumber company curtly refused. The forest was very dry, with the needles, twigs and branches of the felled trees turning to tinder as fast as they came down. Sparks were being thrown far and wide by the lumbermen's logging locomotives and donkey engines, the lumber "jacks" were smoking and an atmosphere of carelessness and indifference prevailed.

All this at the foot of a richly timbered slope belonging to the United States government.

Then a Wind Comes.

Then Pacific east wind came. On the eastern seaboard an east wind means humidity; on the Pacific coast it brings on its crest all the heat and dryness of the Utah and Nevada deserts. The wind blew from the new slushings straight up the mountain side toward Uncle Sam's own woods. Then came, and before the first telephone message reached the forest supervisor, a thousand acres had been swept away. For days the battle with the fire raged. When it was over, and the government started to count the cost, it was found that several hundred thousand acres of young trees had been ruined, and the loss in timber had been about seven million feet. The actual expenses of the fire-fighting were about \$2,500. The full loss incurred by both the United States and the lumber companies was so vast that its mere recital in dollars and cents would be appalling.

No less than twenty fires in the same forest reserve were started by sparks from passing locomotives. Many of the forest fires might have been prevented by the use of spark arresters, or by the use of petroleum as fuel.

There are many ways of putting out forest fires. On the Pacific coast last summer 26 were put out by the rangers without assistance, and before they had spread far enough to do any great harm. Any of these fires, had they been left to extend without interference, would probably have started a great conflagration and done damage beyond estimation. Ten others were fires of more importance, so that the rangers had to have help, but they too, were extinguished before having done any appreciable harm. Others were fires of still greater magnitude.

How Rangers Fight.

The rangers fight around fires with wet blankets, by shoveling dirt upon the flames and in other ways. Throughout all the great forest reserves there are great alleys and lanes cut through the thick of the trees, to arrest, if possible, the spread of the fires.

Dynamite and water are used, the former to create a clearing across which it is hoped that the flames will not be able to pass.

All the forest reserves are under-manned. They are not equipped as they should be for efficient fire-fighting. If proper measures had been taken by the Government at the request of the Forest Service there is little doubt that the recent great fires in Minnesota and Idaho, which caused such a fearful loss of life and property might have been avoided. There has never been a time when the Forest Service had the financial resources to fight fires adequately, and it does not have them now.

The United States is learning by experience, however, every year sees a

## CLARA MORRIS BUSY PREPARING MEMOIRS



## DOCUMENTS FOUND IN A BRASS BALL

Was Taken from the Steeple of the Old Saint John's Lutheran Church.

"Auf dass auch in spateren Zeiten unsere Nachkommen wissen magen wie die St. John's Gemeinde bei dem Bauherrn veränderten Kirche in Jahre des Herrn 1855 Zu Wege gegangen sei wollen wir solches hiermit den Nachwelt mitteilen."

At the St. John's Lutheran church yesterday morning, the Rev. A. J. Feiger, pastor, read documents placed in a brass ball, which was over the old St. John's church on North Fourth street. This ball was removed Saturday and the inclosed documents taken from it. The quotation above is the opening paragraph of one of the inclosed letters. Its translation is:

A Word to Posterity.

"In order that in future days our posterity might know how St. John's congregation proceeded when they undertook the changes in the present church in the year 1855, we herewith submit the following."

The letter told how on July 30, 1855, a resolution was adopted by the congregation to enlarge the church making it into a two story building. The upper floor was used for regular church purposes, while the first story was for the parochial school.

A committee composed of Frederick Ross, John Eggemeyer, David Meier and William Deuker was appointed to draw up plans for the church. These were submitted and approved in November, 1853. The contractors on the church were John Peterson, John Eggemeyer and David Meier, all deceased. The documents state, in quaint German, that "the painting was let to an American, but some of the work was done by Germans."

The church was finished in 1855, and on April 29 the brass ball was placed over the steeple. In this was placed a piece of hard maple, which was chiseled out, making room for the letters.

It was protected by a small piece of tin. Besides the letter telling of the improvements there was a constitution of the church signed by members of the vestry who were: John George Theiss, pastor, F. W. Deuker, the secretary of the congregation, John Peterson, William Seick, German Stilow, John Eggemeyer, Charles Raukopf and Eberhardt Merke, all deceased.

The envelopes in which the documents were placed were worn eaten, but the documents themselves being of a different texture paper, were uninjured.

## MUNICIPAL PLANT ASKS NEW ENGINE

To Seek Appropriation of \$10,000 from City Council This Evening.

When council convenes in regular session this evening it will pass an appropriation for \$10,000 for the purchase of a new engine for the municipal light plant, upon the recommendation of the board of works and Superintendent Nimrod Johnson. The present engine is inadequate, not being able to develop the amount of power required. Approval of the project was given by the board of works in secret session. This was done for fear that if it was given publicity the opposition would commence solicitations for patronage on the ground that the municipal plant was unable to cope with the situation.

The new engine will be capable of developing 670 horse power and will drive the 500 kilowatt generator. It will have a fly wheel weighing 35,000 pounds. It was at first proposed to make improvements on the present engine to meet the increased requirements, but a trip to the Hamilton, O., engine works by Superintendent Johnson, City Engineer Charles, and Howard Gluys, engineer at the light plant, showed that these would cost in the neighborhood of \$6,000, and that a new engine would be a better investment.

The appropriation will be made out of the light plant fund which now totals \$26,852. There is a sinking fund also amounting to \$2,600.

The old engine has been in use nine years and has been in operation on an average of 16 hours out of every 24.

## REFUSES DAMAGES THE CITY ALLOWS

D. S. Brown of Watertown, N. Y., who was in the city a week ago as the guest of the Commercial club, is expected back in a few days, at which time he will either accept or reject the proposition of locating his manufacturing in Richmond. He is the head of a firm which manufactures horse collar pads and saddles, the patents to which he owns. The excellent local labor conditions, the public schools and the city in general pleased him and his wife greatly. It is almost certain that he will locate his concern here, as he already has made a proposition for a residence property. The firm employs about twenty skilled workers. The location for the proposed factory has not been made public.

## DYNAMITE EXPLODES; GUESTS IN PANIC

(American News Service) French Lick, Ind., March 20.—The guests of a big hotel here were thrown into a scene resembling panic early today when a stick of dynamite exploded under the hotel annex. Many died in their night clothes. No one was injured. The damage was considerable aside from windows and plaster. It shook the country for ten miles around. The affair is mysterious.

If you are troubled with sick headaches, constipation, indigestion, offensive breath or any disease arising from stomach trouble, get a 5c or \$1 bottle of Dr. Caldwell's Syrup, Peppermint. It is positively guaranteed to cure you.

## AN ORDINANCE FOR CITY DOG CATCHER

The dog ordinance, providing for the appointment of a dog catcher, will be presented to council tonight. The council asked that a provision be made that city license be charged, and that tags should be worn by the dogs. The city fathers wanted the police to have the privilege to shoot every dog that didn't wear a tag, but City Attorney Gardner will probably leave this pro-

## DOCUMENTS FOUND IN A BRASS BALL

## EXTEND CAR LINE INTO RIVERDALE

Company May Take Stock in Amusement Park and Increase Service.

Within a week or so John Appel, the real estate agent for the Terre Haute, Indianapolis and Eastern Traction company, will meet with the committee of the Commercial club and take up the proposition of the company purchasing stock in the Hawkins park project. Should the company do so, it would not only endeavor to assist in the exploitation of the amusement park proposition but this would be the entering wedge to the company's development north of the railroad.

Eventually this development will mean that the company will have a belt line in Riverdale, which will include Reid Memorial hospital and a crossing over or under the Pennsylvania railroad, probably at Eighth street.

On a visit to general manager Todd at Indianapolis recently, the Commercial club committee brought up the proposition. He was much interested, believing that it would not involve a great risk, but would prove a profitable venture both to the city and the company. He assigned the investigation of the project to Mr. Appel. The latter has not requested for a date with the committee, but is expected to do so soon.

One entrance to Riverdale would be over the Nineteenth street bridge, while the other would be down town. The belt line would add several miles to the company's lines and give them a large amount of business in the North End, particularly to and from the amusement park and the hospital. The company will be asked to subscribe for fifty shares of stock in the amusement park proposition.

Stark jumped up and sent his right fist to Smith's face, laying open the right cheek. The blow sent Smith sprawling into a group of girls seated just outside the railing. Stark sprang after Smith, bore him to the floor and choked him.

In an instant the house was in an uproar. Many women, girls and children were in the hall watching the Sunday proceedings. Their screams added to the din as they fled. Many angry members rushed to the scene of combat. Doorkeeper Wilson fought his way through the angry men and hysterical women and dragged Smith in the door. Blood streamed from the cut in his cheek. Other members held Stark, who was thoroughly aroused. Stark tried to get back into the house and was thrown out.

While practicing in this city, Mr. Stark became interested with eastern capitalists in the promotion of the old C. R. & M. railroad, later the C. C. & L. and now the C. & O. Railway of Indiana, the connecting link of the great eastern and western Systems of the Hawley syndicate. It is understood, according to the report in circulation that Mr. Stark will go in a similar capacity with some other large railroad company.

Brain Weights. The brain of the average Scotchman is said to weigh 50 ounces; of the German, 49.6; of the English, 49.5; of the French, 47.9; of the Chinese, 47.2; of the Eskimos, 43.0.

CASE DISMISSED; PLAINTIFF PAYS

The proceedings in aid of execution in the circuit court instituted by Dr. M. F. Johnston against Susan J. Smith have been dismissed at the cost of the plaintiff. Mrs. Smith, who several years ago was awarded by a jury of the circuit court \$2,500 damages from John Vaughan for breach of promise, was awarded a small amount from estate of Harriet Fulghum, deceased. The physician brought suit and attempted to attach the claim for the amount of judgment which he had received, but as Mrs. Smith, was entitled to exemption the case was dismissed.

It sells for \$4.

Feltman's, 724 Main St.

## HYMNS WERE SUNG THEN WAR STARTS

Sunday Sitting of Missouri Lawmakers Was a Very Pugilistic One.

Jefferson City, Mo., March 20.—Song service and a fist fight were features of the first all-day Sunday session ever held by the Missouri Legislature.

The forenoon meeting closed with all the members singing "Nearer, My God, To Thee," "In the Sweet By and By" and "America."

The afternoon session ended abruptly with knock-downs and drag-outs, a riot and a panic. The floor leader, H. J. Simmons, was in the center of the fight, in which Representative David W. Stark, of Cass county, and Kirby J. Smith, a clerk for the Game warden, were the most active participants. The row was preceded by a party division on the appropriation rider, which calls on the Governor to remove Game Warden Tolerton.

Smith was on the floor when the house concurred in the senate's amendment to the contingency appropriation bill containing the Tolerton rider. Smith declared the Democrats "lacked a whole lot of getting Tolerton." Simmons ordered Smith from the floor. Smith turned on Simmons and squared off to strike him. He was standing near Representative Stark's seat. Stark says Smith insulted him and then slugged him and Simmons. Stark hit Smith a terrific blow and stumbled over Representative Swearingen's chair. He fell to his knees, and while down, Swearingen says Smith struck him three times about the head.

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## RICHMOND IS NOT ON BOYCOTT LIST

Report that C. & O. Is Discriminating Against the City Is Denied.

That the C. & O. railroad harbors any ill feeling towards Richmond or has attempted a boycott of the city by issuing an order renouncing any responsibility for supplies purchased by bridge or repair gangs and threatening the employees with discharge for any violation was unreservedly denied by Charles Blair, head ticket agent of the company here today. Mr. Blair said was unfounded. The men in the employ of the road, he said, had not been asked to refrain from local purchasing so far as he knew and no such request or demand was being contemplated.

Laughingly Mr. Blair said in regard to that part of the story which stated H. J. Simmons, was in the center of the fight, in which Representative David W. Stark, of Cass county, and Kirby J. Smith, a clerk for the Game warden, were the most active participants. The row was preceded by a party division on the appropriation rider, which calls on the Governor to remove Game Warden Tolerton.

Smith was on the floor when the house concurred in the senate's amendment to the contingency appropriation bill containing the Tolerton rider. Smith declared that so far as he knew no order to such an effect had been issued by the road and that publication of such action was without foundation. He said the story given credence in a morning paper would be investigated.

No soreness is felt by the company according to Mr. Blair, because of its defeat by the South Side Improvement Association in the petition for the opening of South N street, and it does not intend, he says, to institute any policy of "getting even." The whole idea, according to Mr. Blair, is not to be entertained for a moment.

The only action of the company that might seem to be along the line intended, said Mr. Blair, was a discontinuance by the company of boarding accounts in this city for its employees. He said this was done principally because Richmond had ceased to be a terminal point and there was no longer any occasion for out-of-town employees to board here. It was also done he said, to protect the company.

To the best of his knowledge Mr. Blair said no restaurant had been opened up by the company in the south

part of the city in order to provide meals for the employees and prevent their patronage of local eating places. The fear expressed in connection with the report of such an order that the Richmond merchants would suffer to quite an extent because of a blacklisting policy on the part of the company in regard to its employees, Mr. Blair said was unfounded. The men in the employ of the road, he said, had not been asked to refrain from local purchasing so far as he knew and no such request or demand was being contemplated.

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