

COAST FIRE HAZARD NOW WORST OF YEAR

Simultaneous bulletins from fire-fighting headquarters throughout five states, received last Saturday by the Western Forestry and Conservation association, report the Pacific Coast entering what is usually the worst fire month of the year with odds still about even in the battle between the protective forces and the thousands whose carelessness in a season of extreme hazard is continuing to jeopardize industry, resources and human life. The acuteness of the situation in all these states is varying daily with local weather conditions. In one region, then another, are alarming outbreaks which seldom remain long out of control. But there is growing danger that control will be lost, resulting in appalling conflagrations, unless there is rain or some way found to stop the starting of man-caused fires.

Most regions, except along the ocean, have unprecedented dryness so the forests are almost explosive. Fires from logging operations are fewer because many camps are closed and others have become watchful, but smokers, vacationists, settlers, berry-pickers and incendiaries are responsible for fires that are taxing to the utmost the largest and most expensive protective organization that government, states and forest owners have ever employed. Absence of protracted winds or extreme sudden drops of humidity is aiding in controlling these outbreaks. So far timber losses for the coast as a whole have not been above normal, nor, probably, have losses of logs and equipment. The great amount of fire has been largely on open lands. But to general community property is already far above normal, as is also the damage to reforestation areas and the tremendous expenditure being incurred for patrol and fire-fighting.

Ways of emphasizing and reducing the almost unexplainable criminal carelessness with fire at such a time are engaging the attention of authorities everywhere. Although the subject has received much publicity and public opinion is generally aroused, the existence of thousands of man-caused fires is being taken as evidence that a minority cannot be reached by ordinary methods and it may become necessary to stop use of the forests if they cannot be used without destruction. Many of the government areas are already closed to visitors and in some states there is serious consideration of invoking trespass laws and of stopping hunting and fishing, that is, unless rain soon intervenes. Detected violators of the fire laws are receiving short shrift. In many instances highway travelers have been stopped and impressed to fight fire.

California is the heaviest sufferer of the season. Without figures for the last week in July that are accurate enough to include, the estimate for all classes of land burned over is 237,000 acres, with a damage of \$1,750,000.

In Oregon, outside of the national forests, only 18 million feet of timber and logs are reported lost, but equipment damage will reach \$75,000 and damage to settlers fully \$25,000. Check on the cause of over 5500 fires shows 99 to have been incendiary, 163 due to smokers, campers, berry-pickers and the like, 44 to careless brush

burners and 32 to logging and locomotives. Washington losses have somewhat exceeded those in Oregon. Idaho has had great expense and difficulty, but so far no disastrous fires. Montana has fared best of the western states.

CAMPAIGN MONEY EXPECTED TO BE RECORD AMOUNT

Plans being made for the presidential campaign this year contemplate probably the largest expenditure of money in the history of politics. The use of money in pre-election fights no longer carries with it the taint of corruption. Legitimate expenses have grown greater and greater as the years have gone by, and the high cost of living has hit the hustings as well as the home.

Senator Borah of Idaho, chairman of the special senate committee which is to report campaign expenditures, expects to have a busy time of it between now and early November, for all of the committees have decided to emulate the example of Chairman Butler of the Republicans and give Mr. Borah detailed reports from time to time as the campaign progresses. Announcement that the Independent Progressives, headed by Senator La Follette and Senator Wheeler are going to attempt to raise a campaign fund of at least \$3,000,000 gives some inkling of what the aggregate expenditures of the campaign may be. This is far more than the Democrats were able to obtain in 1920. The Democrats practically starved to death that year, while the Republicans revealed in plenty.

This year the Democrats are hopeful that things will be different. They may easily raise a campaign fund of \$5,000,000. The Republicans may raise even more, so there is reason to believe that in the national political strong box there will be gathered approximately \$15,000,000 for electioneering purposes.

Radio, an entirely new expense in national campaigns, will get the lion's share of the expenditure, according to present plans. The broadcasting companies are going to reap a real harvest and get back some of the heavy sums they have spent in developing this newest art of communication. Thus far there has been no attempt to standardize the political charges for broadcasting other than a preliminary statement by the American Telephone & Telegraph company that it expected to get \$10 a minute and to limit speeches to 10 minutes' duration.

This time limit is proposed, not alone for the benefit of the listeners, but for the politicians as well. The broadcasting agencies know their invisible audiences. They know they will not listen patiently to any person for much more than 10 minutes. In all political audiences there is a large percentage of persons who walk out on the candidate soon after he begins to talk. How much easier it would be for the radio listeners to turn the knob and cut short the best of the orators. The radio people believe they can give the politicians the best value by limiting them sharply in the amount of time they can consume on the air.

Furthermore, it is feared that too much politics would drive the listeners from the head phones and the loud speakers. Radio audiences crave variety and will seek for it all around the dial. A too liberal mixture of political addresses in the program would defeat the purpose of the po-

LIQUOR SICKNESS CURES IMBIBERS

One of the most original ways of curing the habitual drunkard is that practiced in the "inebrates" homes" of Norway. And, according to report, it is one of the most effectual.

When brought to the "home" the "case" is allowed nothing but wine to drink. Not only this, but all food supplied to inmates is flavored with, or dipped in, wine.

For a day or two there are "no complaints." But gradually the wine and wine-flavored food begin to pall, until presently even the most thorough-going drunkard begins to wonder what virtues the grape can possibly possess. So quickly does the treatment work, indeed, it is claimed even the worst cases can be cured.

Political chiefs and make their expenditures useless.

Word has reached Democratic headquarters that John W. Davis is leaning more and more toward a radio campaign rather than to take the two big swings around the circle which were suggested to him. Mr. Davis feels he can reach more people by radio than he can by train. His managers, however, are desirous that he should meet the people face to face, so far as possible. They are anxious to sell his personality and while a certain amount of personality will express itself through the microphone, it is not to be compared to personal contact.

Already it has been arranged that President Coolidge shall do some of his political campaigning over the radio.

The presidential broadcasting, however, is not likely to cost the Republican national committee very heavily, for Mr. Coolidge will speak most of the time in connection with some public event which would warrant the speech regardless of the campaign. Such an event was that of Friday night when Mr. Coolidge spoke by radio to a company of boy scouts gathered at a dinner in New York prior to sailing for Europe in July. When the president announced he would speak to the boys there was a catch in his voice which told more, far more, than the black silk band on his left arm.

Both of the older parties are going to try to make their campaign funds as popular as possible, but neither side will limit the amount that an individual may give. Will Hays attempted to do that in 1920 and piled up a deficit of something like \$2,000,000 before the ballots were cast.

"Wall street" may contribute heavily to both Democratic and Republican chests, but Mr. La Follette and his followers will have to go elsewhere.

"KEEP THE HOME FIRES BURNING WITHOUT BURNING THE HOME"

"Keep the Home Fires Burning Without Burning the Home" is one of the bottom-of-the-page slogans, which appears on the bulletin "Chimneys, Flues and Fireplaces," just published by the National Lumber Manufacturers association.

The bulletin is issued by this association to assist in the effort to reduce fire losses resulting from structural defects in dwelling house con-

struction. It advocates a regular test of chimneys and urges architects to write into specifications as a requirement that the contractor who builds the chimney should make a smoke test before his scaffolding is taken down. The present practice it says, of expecting the heating engineer to make the test is faulty since he usually comes on the job after the scaffolding has been removed. Under such conditions, the smoke test is often omitted or not thoroughly made.

The low birth rate of France remains an unsolved problem. The births for 39,000,000 people in 1923 were only 761,861, against 759,846 for 1922. Because of the lowest death rate ever recorded in France the excess of births over deaths last year was 94,871. Various theories have been advanced, but the underlying cause for the low birth rate of France has never been satisfactorily explained.

WHAT THE TABLES SHOW

The proceeds from the state income tax do not apply towards a reduction of county and local taxes. These taxes are determined and levied by the people themselves or their most intimate and direct representatives. Yet during the 1923-1924 tax year the average increase in taxes for general county and local purposes in Oregon counties was 6.02 per cent. In Multnomah county the 6.35 per cent decrease in 1923-1924 taxes exceeded the average increase for other counties.

Taxes raised for strictly county purposes increased in greater degree than did the combined county and local levies. In counties outside of Multnomah the increase in 1924 over 1923 averaged 14.62 per cent, in some cases exceeding a 100 per cent increase.

County expenditures for roads and road bonds for 1924 show the least increase over similar 1923 expenditures. The average increase is only 2.46 per cent. Fourteen of the thirty-six counties of Oregon registered a decrease in their 1924 county road and road bond levies. Does this portend a growing dominance of the State Highway Commission over the development of roads in Oregon due possibly in part of the unexpected increases in automobile license and gas tax revenues?—Oregon Voter.

School children at the big logging camps near Bend expect rapid changes and think nothing of seeing their school house, containing desks, books, stove and everything but the teacher and themselves, hoisted twenty feet into the air by a huge crane and settled on a railway flat-car, to be moved with the rest of the camp to fresh timber, according to Miss Althea Stoneman, Bend school nurse, who is taking courses in the Portland summer session of the University of Oregon. Moves are made on Saturdays or Sundays so that students need miss no working days.

PROHIBITION FINES BRING IN LARGE SUM

Fines amounting to \$77,607.49, and a total of 12,188 days in jail were obtained by the state prohibition commission between January 1 and July 1, according to the semi-annual report of G. L. Cleaver, prohibition commissioner, which has been filed with the governor's office. In addition, 8854 gallons of liquor were seized and destroyed. Disbursements during this period were \$15,451.37, of which \$7,421.63 were for wages and expenses; \$5,040 for salaries and \$1,126.76 for legal expenses. Incidental connected with the operation of the commission made up the balance of the amount. The commission received \$12,561.21 from the state treasurer prohibition fund and \$2890.16 from the state treasurer narcotics fund.

There were 372 arrests made during the period covered by the report 24 stills seized and destroyed and 13 automobiles confiscated.

Various receipts enables the department to show \$2465.28 in a statement of cash on hand in the special fund account, as is shown by books kept by the department.

Closing of a contract with the United States government for the preparing and packing of approximately 39,000,000 pounds of explosives at the Puget Sound plant of E. I. du Pont has been announced. In terms of present prices for commercial explosives this would be valued at approximately \$5,850,000. The entire contract with the government entered into by the du Pont concern calls for 100,000,000 pounds and the Puget Sound plant will take care of 39 per cent of this amount.

The explosive is a new type called pyrotol developed by the United States Bureau of Mines and is adapted for land clearing and similar work. Pyrotol will be made from war materials remaining in the government's hands and turned over to the department of agriculture for preparation, cartridgeing, packing and selling to farmers and others throughout the country at a low cost.

The West Coast States and Alaska will be supplied from the Puget Sound plant. Pyrotol will be packed in a 1 1/4 by 8 inch cartridges in cases containing fifty pounds or approximately 158 cartridges to the case. The government announces that this will be the last of this kind of governmental distribution of commercial explosives.

The same procedure will be followed as to shipping and selling as was used in disposing of Sodotol, another explosive made from war materials and which was distributed to consumers through the country agents. This explosive, it is declared, has now all been disposed of.

It is expected the government soon

will announce the price on Pyrotol but due to the fact that is necessary to provide materials other than excess war materials and due to the higher cost of preparation, Pyrotol, it is declared, will be sold at a higher figure than Sodotol but much less than the cost of commercial explosives.

The du Pont concern is declared to have been the lowest bidder for this government contract, largely owing to the fact that it is the only company

that has the necessary machinery already installed to handle this class of work. Production will be started immediately and, it is declared, will continue for about five years before the entire contract is filled and the last Pyrotol is in the hands of the consumers.

State highway commission awards \$24,615 contract for bridge over Illinois river on Redwood highway in Josephine county.

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