



The CANADIAN COURIER

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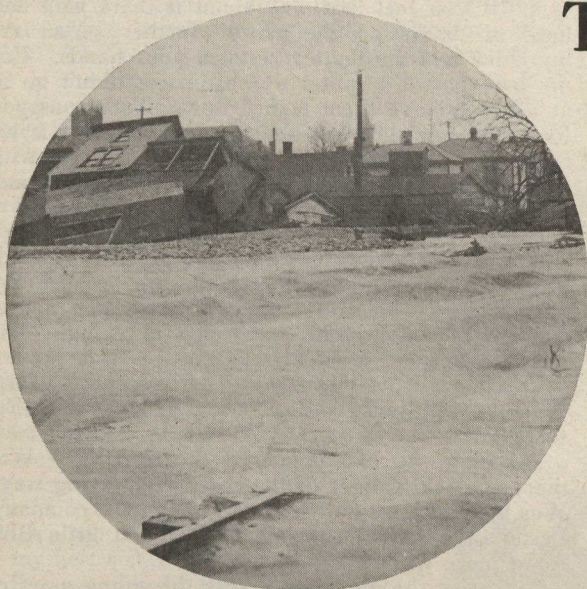


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The Miami Flood



WHERE WATER HAD THE RIGHT OF WAY.
Overturned Houses and Flooded Railway at Columbus, Ohio.



ONCE THE ABODE OF MANY.
Two-storey Tenement Carried Down Stream in Dayton.

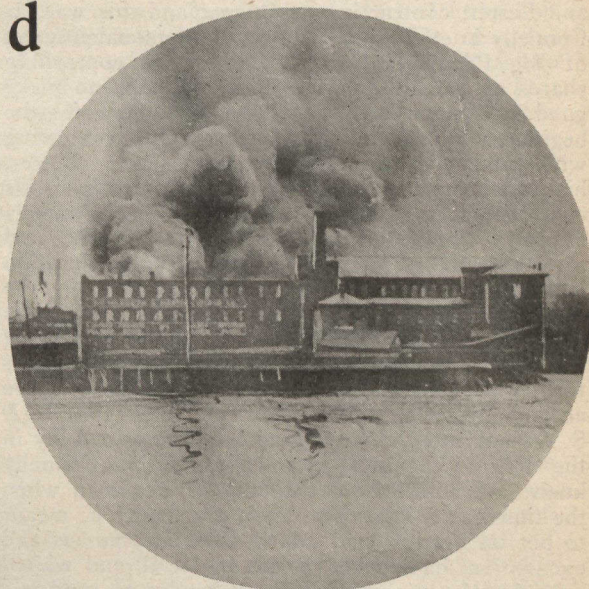


RESCUERS AND RESCUE BOATS.
Part of the Relief Force on North Main Street, Dayton.

IN the case of such calamities as the Ohio flood and the Nebraska tornado the public mind inclines to the idea of an almost supernatural outbreak of nature; as though the destruction of some hundreds of useful lives and fifty million dollars worth of property were part of a judgment of heaven. One Toronto preacher in a big downtown church asked the pertinent question—why were Dayton and other Ohio towns and Omaha and Regina visited in this way, while the wicked parts of Montreal and Toronto and other centres of population were passed over?

The people of Dayton and Columbus and Omaha are not particularly concerned over the theology of the case. Being for the most part industrious, enterprising people who enjoy life, those that survive are very much more interested in how to make home again out of a mud-hole, how to gain back the property destroyed, how to get along for the rest of life without the child or the mother or the father that was taken. In a few years the towns of Ohio and of Nebraska, like Regina and San Francisco, will be as though such a catastrophe had never happened. The joy of living and of making wealth and of building up will soon remove more than the memory of wanton destruction and of bereavement. The application of electricity along with iron and steel has transformed the world. But electricity is—nature and not man's invention. Skyscrapers have dwarfed the Pyramids of Egypt. But the cities of canyons are but the abodes of men who have learned some of the laws of equilibrium and of resistance called engineering.

THE world has undergone changes more rapid and quite as marked as the ancient transition from the stone age to successive ages; from the cave man to the house-man with his fire and his craft of wood. In America the change has been a revolution. Nowhere else in the world has the change from wood and steam to iron and electricity been so radical. Our grandfathers of yesterday lived in wooden houses, made most of their tools and implements of wood, burned wood in their fireplaces and used it in most of the utilities of civilization. They were content with the horse and an occasional ride on a train. The communities they built were simpler and less costly than the towns and cities of to-day. The people themselves lived an easier because more natural life, when a day's work was from sun to sun and man was never far removed from nature. Tornadoes and pestilences of those days were less destructive because there was much less to destroy. The outburst of the Miami, even if it could have happened in an age of forests, would have worked infinitely less damage than it did a few days ago, because there was more wealth of property and labour in Dayton and the other towns of Ohio than in the State of New York when the forests were coming down. The effect of a catastrophe must be measured by what it destroys. In the march of progress thousands of men in Ohio had been building up properties and utilities worth hundreds of millions, forgetful of the fact that nature was not less potent now than she was in the day of the bush: forgetting that when the world passed from an age of wood to an age of iron and electricity it was also passing from an era of simpler living and less danger to one where the continuance of a modern city is almost a miracle of forces held in harness. It is quite true that the deforestation of Ohio made the Miami flood possible. It is also true that the building of a city like Dayton put a tremendous aggregation of possibilities in the way of the flood for destruction of property and of human life. We do not marvel that men are killed by fast trains and wrecks such as the Titanic and automobiles, and diseases of the nerves brought about by fast living. But we come to think it a paradox that so civilized a thing as any of the towns of Ohio ever could have been devastated by so primitive a thing as a flood on the little river Miami.



FIRE IN THE MIDST OF WATER.
A Flooded Planing Mill on Fire in Columbus.



WHERE SHOPS CLOSED UP.
Business Street in Dayton Completely Under Water.



A DESERTED VILLAGE IN COLUMBUS.
Water up to the Tops of the Verandahs.