

THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR FORESTS

A TWENTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLAR FIRE

Ten days before the great Minnesota underbrush fire, which did \$25,000,000 property damage in that State, began to burn, according to "Fire Protection," one of the State Forest Rangers wrote to his State Headquarters that fires were being started faster than he could get to them, and "if the present weather continues, the fire question will soon be beyond all control so far as we are concerned. In a few days there will be just one continuous fire through this district."



Take precautions with bonfires.

In the thirty days previous to the fire, five convictions were secured by one ranger in the forestry service for violation of the State order prohibiting starting of fires without permission of the Forestry Service.

The forest rangers' system in Minnesota was excellent as far as it went, but it was pitifully inadequate. Some rangers have been compelled to patrol as many as forty-five townships.

There is not the slightest foundation yet discovered for believing that the fire was caused by fire bugs.

Hundreds of lives were lost! Millions in property destroyed!

The people is the Government. The people have been indifferent. The people have been careless. *The people have paid.*

PREVENTION OF FOREST FIRES

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Forest regions, in a new country, always present serious problems from the standpoint of fire prevention. The physical condition of the virgin forest with years of accumulated *debris* creates a serious fire hazard. Add to this natural condition the slash caused by timber, tie and pulp operators, and we find a fire hazard in some regions which is unsurpassed in magnitude.

Within the last decade enormous areas in northern Ontario have been opened up by new railway lines. These railways have passed through virgin forest regions opening them to settlers, prospectors, and timber men, all carrying in their wake serious problems of forest fire prevention.

The protection of forest areas has made considerable advance in Canada during the past decade. Ontario now employs over 1,000 rangers or patrol men during the maximum dry period.