

evil record. An accumulation of grass, twigs, slash and leaves now is dry as tinder. The second danger season usually is during the fading weeks of summer, when the protective rains taper off. At this time, therefore, *The Quarterly* is pleased to publish, and commends to its readers, the article titled "Forest Fire!" which starts at p. 343 in this issue.

The author tells graphically of the valiant but unequal battle to halt a blaze that roared over great sections of northern Cape Breton Island last August. The grey desolation left in the wake of that conflagration will hideously scar the country-side for generations to come, and it is not enough for us to read about it and dismiss it lightly as just one of those things. Scores of fires like that one gobble up our forest riches every year and we, you and I, should do something about it. For these terrifying infernos racing onwards over miles-long fronts with gangs of fire fighters in hopeless retreat before them are all too often attributable to picnickers' neglect.

Now is the time of year to make resolutions about good forest habits, and to keep them, for like road accidents the vast majority of forest fires are avoidable. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is true a thousand times over in the case of forest fires, and to beget a proper fire-prevention sense all of us should develop a serious form of forest sentiment, take rudimentary precautions to guard the God-given treasure that our forests represent. Full public cooperation is essential.

Once we acquire consciousness of the hazard common sense will dictate the rest. One good way to stop the red demon from breaking loose is to be frightened of it beforehand, to realize that though it is easy to kindle a flame it is not always possible to quench it. What matters the extra minute or so it takes to make sure a fire is out, against the havoc a single forest blaze can bring?

Let us brand the fiery marauder of our woodlands as Public Enemy No. 1, determine to banish it from our midst. When next you enter Nature's garden take that personal pledge, and bear in mind that only God can make a tree.

* * * * *

A major causative factor in crime must be the criminal's faith in his ability to evade the consequences of his act. Canada's sparse population, wide spaces and other geographical

features present problems in transport for the police that doubtless contribute to this faith by enabling the criminal to escape from the scene of his depredations. On the other side of the scales, police work often depends for success on how soon after the crime's commission the investigator reaches the scene to pick up and follow the clues that will bring the offender to justice. Speed may here, too, make all the difference between prompt success and lengthy delay or failure.

Long an instrument perverted to criminal ends, the automobile has held sway as the recognized means for effecting the quick getaway, and while the policeman and the criminal both relied solely on this mode of travel the latter by reason of his head start had the advantage though the policeman by calling upon the skills and techniques of his profession has more than kept pace with him. Concurrently with the increased tempo in crime the forces of law and order have pepped up their methods until today a hundred different aids to criminal investigation stack the cards heavily in their favour. In police work as in most forms of social and business activity the air age has quickened our way of life, and the latest innovation in the Force—in many ways the most spectacular one—is the Aviation Section.

The Quarterly's cover picture this issue illustrates the earliest and latest modes of transportation used by the Force and appropriately ties in with the 75th anniversary this year of the Force's inception. In 1873 and for many years thereafter the only means of travel was the horse—in fact the whole life of the N.W.M.P. seemed to revolve about the trusty mount; but though this finest of animals still plays an essential role in the training and other R.C.M.P. duties, and doubtless will continue to do so, his uses now are definitely limited compared to what they were.

Despite the war and other interruptions which caused severe labour pains in its gradual birth more than a decade ago the R.C.M.P. Aviation Section has matured into a lusty healthy youngster. Besides its many other advantages over ground transport, the