

# FOREST FIRES COST AMERICA \$50,000,000. A YEAR

BY R.W. PULLMAN

**SEASIDE SILHOUETTE.**  
A young couple who are very much taken with each other.



SAW DUST HEAP ON FIRE ROCK PINE IN BACK GROUND



FIRE NEAR CENTRAL VALLEY NEW YORK



EFFORTS TO CHECK THE FIRES

Loss of Life—2,000 People Perished in 30 Years from Forest Fires, 65 Lives per Year.  
Monetary Loss—Average of \$50,000,000 a Year.  
Loss in 1908—Fifty Lives.  
Monetary Loss in 1908—Over \$200,000,000.

**F**OREST fires which have just laid waste whole counties in Minnesota, Michigan, and extended into Wisconsin, destroying many towns and making thousands of persons homeless, have focused the attention of both government and state forest officers on the enormous losses of forest wealth which will be checked up to the year 1908.

## FOREST FIRES!

### EXTINGUISH CAMP FIRES! REPORT FIRES TO FOREST OFFICERS!

To prevent fires Congress passed the law approved May 5, 1900, which—  
**Forbids setting fire to the woods, and  
Forbids leaving any fires unextinguished.**  
This law, for offenses against which officers of the FOREST SERVICE can arrest without warrant, provides as maximum punishment—  
**A fine of \$5,000, or imprisonment for two years, or both, if a fire is set maliciously, and  
A fine of \$1,000, or imprisonment for one year, or both, if fire results from carelessness.**  
It also provides that the money from such fines shall be paid to the school fund of the county in which the offense is committed.  
**JAMES WILSON,**  
Secretary of Agriculture.



FIRE BURNING AT HEAD OF MILLER CANYON

In the whole northern half of the United States throughout the vast territory extending from coast to coast, the reported destruction by forest fires has been terrific and it is likely that the year will go down as one of the worst in the last quarter century. It seems that no part of the country has escaped the work of the devastating flames. The latest disasters in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin are the worst of the many that have visited the lake states this year. Other sections have also suffered from forest fires during the spring and summer months, and the people of the Pacific coast, the Rocky mountain and the New England states and Canada have had a thorough, and in some cases, a continuous experience in fire fighting.

Officers in the United States forest service say that it is doubtful if this year's actual losses from forest fires in all parts of the country will ever be known, but it is certain that they will run up so high in the millions that the country will be started when a compilation of statistics at the end of the season makes it possible to give even the most conservative figures. Suffice it to say, were all the timber burned up this year in all parts of the country converted into cash, it could provide for a good sized navy of first-class battleships.

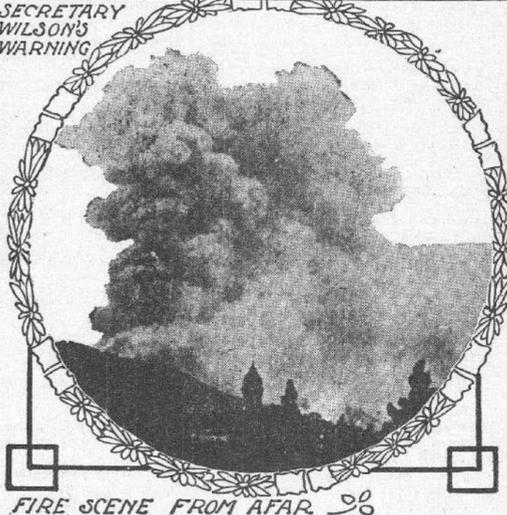
The fires have done good in one way; they have focused the people's attention on the seriousness of the forest fire problem, practical foresters say, and have started a wide-spread movement in many states to check them by adopting rational systems of fire protection. Among thinking people there has been awakened an intense interest in throwing a better protection around the forests, which grow more important as a natural resource as the timber supply dwindles.

Although the fire menace has been serious in all sections, officers of the forest service estimate that the total cost of the forest fires in the national forests for the season, exclusive of the salaries of forest officers, will not be more than \$30,000. This sum is small when it is remembered that it means putting down fires on all of the national forests, which now have an area of approximately 168,000,000 acres. The value of the timber destroyed will not be known until the fire reports are made at the end of the year, but it is estimated that it will be very much greater than in previous years because of the unusual destruction by fire in all sections. Progressive state fire wardens and forest officers, individuals and private corporations having large timber holdings have organized fire fighting forces along much the same line as the government in many cases, and in this way they have given protection to millions of acres of timber which might have been destroyed had it been left unprotected.

The official census gives the area burned by forest fires per year as 10,000,000 acres, and the division of forestry has collected records of 12,000,000 acres burned over in one year. The value of the timber destroyed was estimated at from \$25,000,000 to \$50,000,000 a year. While in 1908 the acreage of forest burned over was undoubtedly smaller, still the loss was not less than that of 1908 because the value of stumpage has increased at least five times, and, therefore, it was necessary to burn only 2,000,000 acres to cause the same amount of damage. Upon the basis of the forest service experience on the national forests on which the total administration per acre, including fire patrol, amounts to only one cent, the forest area of the United States could be patrolled and protected from fire at a cost of less than \$3,000,000. This would save an annual loss close to \$20,000,000 for timber alone, to say nothing of all other damages caused by forest fires.

That the estimate of the fire loss is not exaggerated can be seen from a few examples of individual fires. The Hinckley fire in Minnesota in 1894, for instance, burned over an area of 250 square miles, killed 418 people, and entirely apart from the vast quantities of lumber burned, destroyed \$750,000 worth of property. A fire in Washington and Oregon in 1902 destroyed \$12,000,000 worth of property. We must not forget that all the conflagrations start from small fires which, under fire patrol, would probably be checked.

Loss in new growth amounts each year to \$90,000,000. If not for forest fires, we could expect an additional growth of 20 cubic feet per acre per year, which for a forest area of 500,000,000 acres, would amount each year to 10,000,000,000 cubic feet. This is equal to 45,000,000,000 feet board measure,



FIRE SCENE FROM AFAR

SECRETARY WILSON'S WARNING

which is more than the annual consumption of saw-timber in this country. Figuring at \$2 per M, this amounts to \$90,000,000. The loss of soil fertility cannot even be estimated. Damage to river courses and adjacent farm country, due to floods and drought, is caused by the destruction of the forest by fire, and costs the nation each year many millions of dollars. Depreciation in forest wealth and value of land, which is destroying the possible prosperity of many sections, is a hindrance to business enterprise.

The forest service, by a fire patrol, reduced the burned-over area on the national forests from .66 of one per cent. in 1904, the year before the forests were put under its control, to .16 of one per cent. in 1905, .12 per cent. in 1906, and .07 per cent. in 1907. The total area burned over in 1907 was 109,410 acres, as against 388,872 acres in 1904, while during the same period the national forests have increased in area from 58,000,000 acres to 162,000,000 acres, and this at a cost far smaller than .07 per cent., which cover the entire administration.

Throughout 1908 fires have done serious damage in practically every state. The country has experienced some fires which have attained historic importance, among them those in British Columbia and the lake states.

The government has also had a lot of work in the fire fighting line on the national forests, but serious as the fires have been, careful patrol and the organization of a force to battle with the flames as soon as discovered have held the losses down to a point where they are utterly insignificant, when one considers the fearful destruction which would have come about had there been no protection.

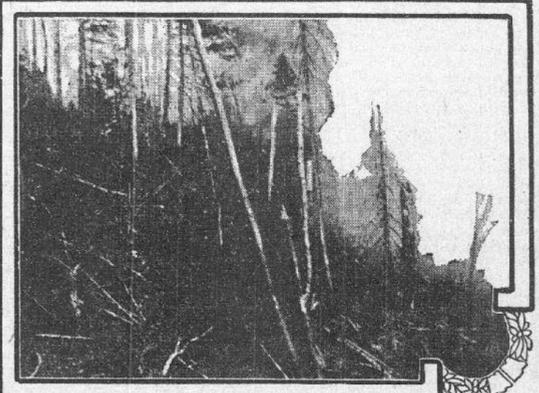
One of the chief benefits of proper forest administration is found in the decreased loss from forest fires. The importance of this statement is shown in the reports of fires on the national forests during the last three years.

For the calendar year 1905, fire burned over an area of 279,592 acres, in the national forests, destroying \$101,282 worth of timber. The cost of fighting these fires was \$12,573.52. This was the year of the transfer of the administration of the national forests from the department of the interior to the department of agriculture, and the change in the form of fire reports makes it impossible to give the number of acres on which reports were made, but the area is not thought to have been more than 80,000,000 acres.

In 1906, the area burned over was 115,416 acres—much less than one-half the area burned over the year before. The value of the timber destroyed was \$76,183, about 75 per cent. of the value of that of the previous year. The cost of fighting forest fires in 1906 was \$8,768, against \$12,573.52 in 1905. These figures are for the fires on the national forests at the end of 1906, when the total area reported on was 97,000,000 acres.

Last year's report shows that fire burned over 212,850 acres of land in the national forests. Fire reports were received on 150,000,000 acres, against 97,000,000 acres in 1906. The increase of 53,000,000 is accounted for by the increase in the area of the national forests during 1906. The fact that the 1907 figure shows that 212,850 acres of land were burned over is somewhat misleading, because it takes into account three large grass fires on the Dismal River National Forest in Nebraska; the Garden City National Forest in Kansas, and the Wichita National Forest in Oklahoma. After eliminat-

ing these fires, which were confined to grass covered areas aggregating 103,440 acres, from the total area reported for, there would be left only 109,410 acres of average forest land which was burned over. Thus it is seen that the forest land burned over last year was actually more than 4,000 acres less than in 1906, although the national forest area reported on was greater by 53,000,000 acres. The timbered area burned over was only 26,365 acres, of which 11,500 acres were in a place in the Chiricahua National Forest, Arizona, where only 100 board feet per acre were destroyed. The value of the timber



FOREST FIRE, NORTHERN WISCONSIN

destroyed by the year's fires was only \$31,580, against \$76,183 in 1906. The cost of fire fighting (which is always figured exclusive of forest officers' salaries) was only \$3,610 against \$8,768 in 1906. Although the fire menace has been serious in all sections, officers of the forest service estimate that the total cost of fighting fires on the national forests for the season, exclusive of the salaries of forest officers, will not be more than \$30,000. This sum is small when it is remembered that it means putting down fires on all of the national forests, which now have an area of approximately 168,000,000 acres. The value of the timber destroyed will not be known until the fire reports are made at the end of the year, but it is estimated that it will be very much greater than in previous years, because of the unusual destruction by fire in all sections.

Anyone who knows of the fearful damage wrought by forest fires on private and unprotected public lands each year, will see that through fire patrol, such as is maintained on our national forests, the losses can be reduced to the minimum.

These results have come about through the increased efficiency in fire patrol and methods of fighting fire, and through the co-operation of settlers and users of forests who now understand that the forests are their property and a loss from fire is a personal loss. By posting fire notices and giving advice the forest service has secured the co-operation from the outside, which may be said to be as important an agency in reducing the loss from forest fires as the perfection of machinery for fighting these fires.

Fire is the forest's worst enemy and every means is taken on the national forests to prevent it. During the past year extensive improvement work in the way of construction of roads, trails, bridges and telephone lines has put many of the forests in a condition where the work of fire fighting will be very much facilitated.

It is hard and practically impossible to figure losses accurately at this time, and it will be weeks before even an approximate estimate that is final can be made. Cruisers will have to be sent over the burn-over areas before close figures can be obtained and the timber owners say that it is absolutely useless to do anything in this line until a heavy rain comes and the end of the fires is assured.

Putting the losses low, to be on the safe side, they are commonly agreed to be \$5,000,000 to \$10,000,000. The majority of people say about \$5,000,000. This is considered a conservative estimate by those who have been over most of the ground. At five per cent. interest the amount of capital lost would yield \$250,000 a year. This is worth contrasting with what the state forestry board now has to spend for protection. It has an appropriation of \$11,500.

The burning of the prosperous little town of Chisholm on the Mesabi iron range nearly three weeks ago is the item of loss which figures most prominently in conversations with all who have anything to say about the forest fire destruction to date. The people in this country are used to fires, and hardly feel at home unless there is the smell of smoke in the air. Until the flames menace a town or a very valuable stand of timber they are fairly indifferent to the danger.

A striking evidence of this over-confident feeling of safety was given on the day of the Chisholm fire, the losses in which are now conservatively estimated at \$1,250,000 to \$1,500,000, including real property, stocks of merchandise, and every other item of direct loss. The same fire that destroyed the town had been burning in the forests nearby for more than a week. It was at five o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, September 5, that the fire entered the city in the clutch of a gale from the northwest and laid the place in ruins in less time than it takes to tell it. Up to within a half hour before the flames caught the town the people were confident that there was no danger, and, with few exceptions, went about their business as usual.

When the fire came all were panic-stricken, and grabbing the few things nearest at hand, which in numerous cases were not articles of the greatest usefulness, fled the town, many making for the iron mines nearby. Had ordinary precautions been taken even as fate as the forenoon of the fire, it is said that the place could have been saved. As it was, all that was spared by the flames were the two churches, the beautiful \$125,000 high school, the grammar school, and two blocks of dwellings on opposite sides of town, which were saved because of a peculiar shifting of the wind.

## ALWAYS REDEEM CLASS RINGS

Custom of Naval Service Had its Origin in Esprit de Corps.  
A naval officer and a friend were strolling down Broadway one afternoon recently. The former glanced in at a pawnshop window and suddenly stopped. "Hello!" he exclaimed; "there is a naval academy class ring." He went into the shop and asked to see the ring. There could be no doubt about it, it was a ring belonging to a member of a class which graduated some years ago. The officer bought the ring and put it in his pocket.  
"Why, what can you want with that ring?" asked his friend; "is its owner a particular friend of yours?"  
The officer said he was not and then explained that it had always been a custom of the naval service for

any naval officer to redeem a naval academy class ring whenever he saw one and send it back to its owner, who, of course, makes good the loan at his earliest convenience.  
"That is why," said the officer, smilingly, "pawnshop keepers are always anxious to lend money on our class rings, and that is also one reason why a naval officer will never pawn his class ring until the worst comes to the worst."  
Unless you bear with the faults of a friend you betray your own.—Syrus.

## DEALS IN STOCK AND STOCKS

According to This, There Are Many Points of Similarity.  
"My vacation on my cousin's farm taught me a thing or two," said a broker. "In selling stock no less than in selling stocks, there are tricks to be learned."  
"My cousin jipped a cow one afternoon. To jip a cow is to paint her udder with Venetian red. That gives to her coat into a fine, sleek brilliance. Finally, for a whole day, he didn't milk her. In consequence her shrunken udder that yielded a quart or two a day, ballooned out like the udder of a blue ribbon Jersey."  
"The old cow, at the fair next day, with her shining coat, her fleck horns and her painted udder, took everybody's eye. She brought the price of a young cow. Stock and stocks, it struck me, are a good deal similar."  
Have the courage to dare to be true at all times.—Massfield.

**The Square Deal.**  
A stout and opulent man dwelling in a suburban town had borne the expense of the annual Sunday school picnic, and the superintendent, at the school, out of gratitude, asked of the benefactor to address the children. The philanthropist was not touch of a speaker, but he was a master hand at poker. When he found himself gazing into the expectant faces of a hundred and fifty children his embarrassment almost overcame him, but he managed to stammer out: "My dear children, what I want to impress upon you is that—er—er—it pays to be good. That er—er—er—a man who deals from the bottom of the pack is generally buried at the public expense."  
Insanity.  
"You admit having received a \$50,000 fee from the trust?" said the lawyer for the state.  
"I do," replied the senator, calmly. Besides, I sent it back."  
"Sent it back!"  
"I did."  
"Your honor," said the lawyer, turning to the court, "I cannot prosecute an insane man."  
Adjournment was had until some alienists could be rounded up.

**Important to Mothers.**  
Examining carefully every bottle of CASTORIA a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it bears the Signature of *Dr. J. C. Watson* in Use For Over 30 Years.  
The Kind You Have Always Bought

**They Did.**  
Uncle Henry—Nellie, I hope they observe the Sabbath at that lake resort where you spent your vacation.  
Pretty Niece—Indeed they do, uncle. On Sundays they always serve a regular four course dinner.

**Don't It Jar You?**  
To have a cough that you can't leave off—even when you go to bed? Put it away for good by using Simms' Cough Syrup. It heals inflammation of the throat and lungs—gives you rest and peaceful sleep.

**The Same Thing.**  
"Til bet your trouble isn't anything like mine. I've got a sick family."  
"Isn't it? I've got a fac simill"—  
Boston American.

**Hicks' Capudine Cures Nervousness.**  
Whether tired out, worried, sleepless or what not. It quiets and refreshes brain and nerves. It's liquid and pleasant to take. Trial bottle 10c—regular size 25c and 50c at druggists.

The dread of ridicule is apt to mar a originality at its birth.

## FACTS FOR SICK WOMEN



**LYDIA E. PINKHAM**  
No other medicine has been so successful in relieving the suffering of women or received so many genuine testimonials as has Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.  
In every community you will find women who have been restored to health by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. Almost every one you meet has either been benefited by it, or has friends who have.  
In the Pinkham Laboratory at Lynn, Mass., any woman any day may see the files containing over one million one hundred thousand letters from women seeking health, and face after face the letters in which they openly state over their own signatures that they were cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.  
Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has saved many women from surgical operations.  
Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is made from roots and herbs, without drugs, and is wholesome and harmless.  
The reason why Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is so successful is because it contains ingredients which act directly upon the feminine organism, restoring it to a healthy normal condition.  
Women who are suffering from those distressing ills peculiar to their sex should not lose sight of these facts or doubt the ability of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to restore their health.

**PISO'S**  
AN UNSURPASSED REMEDY  
Piso's Cure is an unsurpassed remedy for cough, cold, croup, whooping cough, asthma, bronchitis, and all lung affections. It is a sure cure for all these ailments, and restores healthy conditions. It can give the children of the world the best of health, and give the old people the power and freedom of youth. Famous for half a century. At all druggists.