

FIRE

One of the famed features of New Jersey is that vast stretch of pine land, a broad belt near the coast, from just south of Asbury Park to just north of Atlantic City. Fairly level land, covered with a growth of scrubby pine. It's vacation country, and bungalows, hotels and resort places are likely to be called - "Such-and-Such in the pines." And it's right there that the forest fire raged yesterday and today, a vicious, devouring blaze. There's been little rain down that way, and the New Jersey pines were dry and ready to burn. Somebody tossed a match, or lighted a careless fire - and soon the flames were racing. Like one giant tinder box. I've just been going over some of the movietone pictures of it -- just in - and they're terrifying.

In the middle of the afternoon the great fire was reported under control. But this evening that word is changed. The blaze has broken out again -- sweeping on, threatening, destroying. Tonight it's a repetition of the story, two thousand men fighting flames with long exhausting effort. Thus far five have lost their lives, and hundreds have had perilous escapes.

The most tragic episode occurred near Stafford Forge. There four of the five casualties occurred. C. C. C. workers were fighting the flames. They were building a back-fire. It was a new job to them. They were inexperienced in the treacherous dangers of the blazing woods. There was a sudden shift of wind that made the flames swerve abruptly. Between the forest fire and the C.C.C. back fire, the racing sweeps of blaze trapped the men. Some got away, scorched and exhausted. Four perished at Stafford Forge.

In one place twenty-three fire fighters had a miraculous escape. The flames closed in around them. They were caught between two walls of fire. Safety was a mile away - the highway. But their leader knew what he was doing. He made them crawl on their hands and knees to a ditch that led to the highway. The flames roared above them, but down in the ditch they were able to creep their way to the road. During the last few hundred feet several collapsed in the roaring heat that blasted down on them, but their comrades were able to pull them along to safety.

As for the wild life of the Pines, deer and other game have vanished before the flames.

BLACK LEGION

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The news tonight swells the Black Legion to proportions of sinister magnitude. The Michigan police all day were busy arresting and investigating. Thirteen members of the Black Hoods are charged in Detroit with the murder of the W. P. A. R worker Poole -- the case that began ~~the~~ the expose of the brotherhood of the skull and cross-bones. ^{And -} At Jackson, Michigan, twenty-five warrants were issued today for the arrest of men accused of savagely beating a relief worker. ^{Also} ~~and~~ the officials of Wayne County made five raids on homes of Black Legionnaires. They say they found supplies of fire-arms, literature about the various acts of Black Hoods and evidence of ^{violence} committed by the terrorist organization.

In ^{many} ~~various~~ places unsolved murder ^{cases} ~~cases~~ are being reopened in the supposition that they may have been Black Legion crimes. One was the killing of Howard Curtis, near Milford, Michigan. And many accusations of arson are made against the Black Hoods. They also are charged with having bombed the house of the village president of Ecorse.

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But the most sensational hint of all is that the Black Legion may have been responsible for the burning of Father Coughlin's original Shrine of the Little Flower last March. This occurred on St. Patrick's Day. The program of the Black Hoods is -- anti-red and anti-Catholic.

Sensation flared in this affair when a Black Legion officer in Ohio declared that the terrorists have something like six million members throughout the United States. We heard last night that the Black Hood order had made its way into the ranks of public officials. Today we have details, guards discharged in the Michigan State Prison because it is found that they are Black Legion members. The Jackson County prosecutor said that all of the three hundred and eighty-five prison guards of the penitentiary were solicited to join under the standard of the skull and cross-bones.

One singular turn is the discovery that on the list of members is the name of the Public Prosecutor of Detroit. He admits he may have signed an application blank, but laughs it off saying that if he did sign he didn't know

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what it was all about. The prosecutor explains that he's always accepting memberships in all sorts of organizations, just as a matter of politics. Every politician, he explains, is a professional joiner.

Everything today points to the widespread character of that terrorist society, which swears to an oath, beginning-- "In the Name of God and the Devil." -- mostly the Devil, evidently.

SeNATOR

The new member of the United States Senate, appointed today, is not a politician of eminence. His public career has been devoted, ~~not~~ not to the gathering of votes, but to the battle against crime. Scott Marion Loftin, of Kacksonville, Florida, is a emember of Attorney General Cumming's committee for the suppression of the lawless. And he has been directing the campaign of the American Bar Association for the suppression of crime and criminals.

Today the Governor of Florida appointed Scott Marion Loftin to succeed the late United States Senator Park Trammell. The new member of the Upper House will serve the unfilled term until there's a regular Senatorial election in Florida next January.

He'll join a Congress more tangled than ever over the Townsend affair with two colleagues of the Doctor refusing to testify.

PALESTINE.

Today there's a flashing bit of incident in the news, well worth telling for its own drama and significance. For me it has a redoubled interest, because it calls vividly to memory a scene of nearly twenty years ago. World War daysm the Arab town of Akaba on the verge of the desert. The revolt of the Bedouin in full blast under the leadership of Lawrence of Arabia. I was sitting with Lawrence at the door of his tent, and the air was crackling with the sound of shots. A new tribe had come in to join Lawrence's army, - Auda Abu Tayi and his Howeitat brethren - and they were firing their rifles all over the place - just in celebration.

The "Uncrowned King of the Desert" ~~xx~~ was telling me something about his exploits - particularly train-wrecking. A large part of his raiding campaign consisted of disrupting Turkish communication, Blowing up the railroad. Damascus-Medina Pilgrims. railroad. In fact Allenby, the eastern Commander-in-Chief, had said to me that Lawrence had made train-wrecking the national sport of Arabia. A rather sinister remark - a dangerous sport for the Arabs to learn. It was as if in answer to this ticklish point that Lawrence was speaking, as we sat there at the door

of his desert tent. He told me that on train-wrecking raids, he himself always planted the charges of dynamite, the "tulips" as he called them. Did it personally, never allowing an Arab to have a hand at the job. Because, said he, it would be a bad idea to teach the Nomads how to use high explosive for wrecking trains - it might become a habit. When peace came, they'd go ahead doing it as a sport, or for robbery, or out of discontent. A far-seeing mind was Lawrence of Arabia!

Now about the news today which evokes this reminiscence. It tells us of a railroad track in Palestine near the town of Tulkarem. A policeman on patrol. A train with a string of ~~xx~~ passenger coaches, coming, whizzing along. That policeman noticed a wisp of smoke curling above the rails. With swift action, he waved to the train and stopped it, dashed to the smoke, and dragged out a burning fuse. Planted under the rails were sticks and sticks of dynamite - all primed to blow up tracks and train.

So no wonder Lawrence had misgivings about teaching the Arabs the noisy art of train-wrecking.

At Gaza, - of Samson & Delilah fame the British troops

have taken over the railroad station to keep Arab malcontents from tampering with the trains. Communication between Gaza and Jerusalem is entirely by radio, because the insurgents have cut the telegraph wires. In the streets of the city, mobs are battling with the police. Barricades up, shooting on all sides. British families have had to clear out of their houses and take refuge in the police station. And the magic of the past is summoned, for that police station was once the headquarters of Napoleon, during his fantastic campaign of adventure in Egypt and the East.

And mightier memories are summoned, when we hear of an Arab attack - at Nazareth. Two hundred Arabs stormed a British patrol near the historic place that was the home of the Saviour. They were driven off. There was another encounter, to the East of Nazareth, at the foot of Mount Tabor, where the transfiguration of Jesus occurred. There, the British police sustained a reverse. They fought as long as they could against a powerful force of Arab insurgents. But - they ran out of

ammunition, as a band of two hundred fanatical Mohammedans made a wild charge and threatened to ~~XX~~ surround them. The British forces were compelled to retire to Mount Tabor and Nazareth.

In addition to the magic of history and sacred legend we have the cold fact that the Arab riots against the Jews, the Mohammedan reaction against the building of the Zionist homeland, is turning into a full fledged war against British military domination. And for the first time the British are organizing the Zionist colonists to fight against the Arabs - lining them up for self-defense.

All of this is of the most perilous point in the world crisis. The British are blaming Italian propaganda for the disturbances in both Egypt and Palestine. Foreign Minister Anthony Eden repeats the charge

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in open Parliament. And today there's a statement from London, putting a large share of blame on the Italian radio station at the City of Bari, from which regular broadcasts ~~are~~^{are} flashed - in Arabic. Bari is a famous old town at the heel of the Italian boot, that heel of the peninsula which points directly at Palestine, ~~This is~~ a most convenient place from which to shoot broadcasts to the Near East, and the British claim that those Arabic radio ~~broadcasts~~^{programs} from Bari have been full of anti-British propaganda. So - London is angry.

CRISIS

And Rome is angry - about the way London is receiving Haile Selassie. Today, Italian opinion became still more resentful. Mussolini's men say that Great Britain is paying royal honors to the one-time King of Kings, by lending him a cruiser to go as far as Gibraltar - thereby recognizing him as still Emperor of Ethiopia.

How sharply Rome feels about this point of propriety, is shown by the way the Italian newspapers are styling Haile Selassie. They call him "Signor Tafari", referring to the fact that his name was Ras Tafari before he became Emperor. What Mussolini feels ^{are} is that the dethroned monarch in London will be a focus for a new blaze of anti-Italian agitation, and that this will make it all the harder to come to an agreement and get the sanctions lifted.

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So we have - London angry and Rome angry. That's a simple way of saying that British-Italian tension is ^{again} approaching ~~a~~ danger point. Threats of war - sombre visions of ultra-modern battle, cannon, tanks, fighting planes, and poison gas.

We have a note about poison gas here in own own

country, about a Danish chemist in America, who has conducted some successful experiments with the deadliest of those deadly vapors. Dr. Louis Clement took three of the most destructive of poison gases - lachrymating (tear gas), sternutating (sneezing gas), and zescicant (skin burning gas).. He tossed them together in a tricky laboratory way. Did he get something to kill in a terrific fashion? Not at all. He got something to cleanse, disinfect, sanitize. Instead of beating swords into plough shares, it's a case of turning poison gas into ^{health,} ~~help~~. Don't kill - sanitize. Put a drop of that terrific war gas mixture on a woman's powder puff, and toss the powder puff into a heap of refuse - and, presto! everything is disinfected! The murderous ~~fx~~ vapors of battle ~~are~~ useful for murdering germs, in a hat band or a shaving brush, and for waging war on cockroaches.

CURIE-JOLIOT

The report that the new Socialist Government in France is planning to name a woman as Under-Secretary of State has its elements of paradox. Of course Madame Curie-Joliot is the most distinguished French woman alive. Her father and mother were the co-discoverers of radium, in the fame of which Madame Curie lived a long life. They got the Nobel Prize. The daughter, herself, is an eminent scientist, working with her husband, as her mother did. And she and her husband got the Nobel Prize. But women in France have no vote, don't seem to care about it particularly. French women have never gone in for suffrage in a big way.

Moreover, Madame Curie-Joliot is not the kind of French woman that we commonly think of, chic, smartly dressed, adept in the art of fascinating. The lady ~~of~~ of science is tall, and boney in build, with bushy hair. Her forehead is high and broad, and her eyes dark and brooding. The expression on her face is one of intense seriousness. At work in her laboratory she wears white overalls. She likes to walk, not saunter jauntily down the boulevard, but take long hikes at night.

You hardly expect to find Madame Cabinet Minister in a nation where the women have no vote. And when French men do put a lady in a high post of government, you might expect them to chose someone with a touch of the ooh-la-la. However, fact is often stranger than expectation. And,

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.