

Using the Telephone to Fight Forest Fires

The season for forest fires is about to commence. The early summer months with their days of heat and drought invariably bring with them destruction to acres and acres of timber tracts that this country can ill afford to lose.

In the national forests are about 200,000 men ready to turn out and fight the flames whenever necessary. This includes regulars and volunteers of all descriptions.

This is where the telephone comes in. Portable 'phones are made expressly for this purpose, and with their aid each ranger is kept in touch with his entire area.

Uncle Sam of course knows this, and it is interesting to see what has already been done to prevent further loss. The government exercises sway only over the national forests, principally in the far west.

In the national forests in 1908 lands exceeding 414,638 acres were burned over. The timber destroyed aggregated 232,191,000 board feet.

The Forest Service atlas figures that in the years 1906-7 for every thousand acres of national woodland .92 acres were destroyed by fire.

Fires in the forests have their origin in many causes. In the summer months dry leaves and brittle stumps are prolific sources of trouble.

It is possible to avoid one species of risk, and here New York has set a notable example. The Public Service commission for the second district of the Empire state has directed an important ruling at the railroads.

The foresters wish it were as easy to regulate hunters, who cause more trouble than railroads. New York reports that last year 103 fires of large dimensions were caused by the carelessness of amateur sportsmen.

Every one would be benefited by taking Foley's Orino Laxative for stomach and liver trouble and habitual constipation. It sweetens the stomach and breath, gently stimulates the liver and regulates the bowels.

Quite a few of these fires are started by incendiaries. The fiend who sets the torch to a forest differs very little

from his brother who explodes a bomb in a tenement. Thoughtless children are known to have been the cause of some fires. Still a larger number go unexplained.

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In one case last year a government officer summoned help 43 miles away with his portable instrument.

Forester Gifford Pinchot's latest report on this subject is dated June 30, 1908. During the year previous to that day 3500 miles of telephone lines were constructed in the national forests.

Government telephone lines have been built in Arizona, California, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The need of 'phones has not been underestimated in the past and many miles of telephone line have been constructed in the national forests.

One of these portable telephones is an interesting instrument. The case is handsomely finished in birch or mahogany and is provided with a strap to facilitate handling.

The transmitter is fastened inside the case and the receiver and the other projecting parts are mounted so that they are not likely to be caught by branches.

The Telephone Girl

The telephone girl sits still in her chair and listens to voices from everywhere. She hears all the gossip, she hears all the news, she knows who is happy and who has the blues.

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Blind Man's Buff.

By HARRIET LUMMIS SMITH. Copyrighted, 1909, by Associated Literary Press.

They had been talking some minutes over the phone—one of those protracted and intimate conversations in which girls delight and which drive to the point of frenzy the man who wishes to get the line in order to tell his wife that he is to take the 3 o'clock train for Chicago.

It was Hildegarde who broke in on her friend's account of Tuesday's german with a little dismayed shriek. "Goodness! I didn't dream it was so late. I have an engagement in five minutes, and I'm not half dressed."

"Who is it—Darrell?" It was not a question for the telephone, but Irene never allowed her discretion to stand in the way of her curiosity.

"Ye-es." The hesitating answer gave Irene the impression that her friend was blushing. Darrell's adoration of Hildegarde was the season's joke. It



"I'M NOT QUITE USED TO THIS KIND OF BLIND MAN'S BUFF."

was, however, a very suitable match. Darrell was preposterously rich and not bad looking.

"Too bad about Jack Carr, isn't it? I don't know what you mean." Hildegarde's tone was suddenly icy.

"Why, you don't mean that you have not heard of his accident?" "Accident! What accident?"

"Bentley Boynton told me about it last evening. I supposed, of course, you knew. You and Jack used to be such friends. Some workmen dropped a bag of lime beside him, and it burst and puffed up into his eyes and blinded him. Poor, dear fellow! But he's so plucky that I dare say he'll make a joke of it."

Hildegarde rang off abruptly. Her head went down on her arms. Tremors shook her bowed figure. Hot tears rained from her hidden eyes.

Jack and Hildegarde had been good friends. The worldly wisdom which belonged to their station in life, the tacit acceptance of the theory that every girl owes it to herself to marry money if she can, alone had kept them from being more.

But if Jack had kept his tongue in leash, even if his eyes had been less tractable, and had gone his way and left the field to Darrell with his millions!

And now never again would those dear eyes woo her. Never again would she watch from her window that lithe figure swinging down the street as if it walked on air.

No one has ever given an explanation of the fact that a woman's tenderness for one man is so likely to result in cruelty to another. But owing to this peculiarity of feminine psychology Darrell's sole reward for a year's devotion was the hasty note the maid brought down five minutes later:

I cannot see you this afternoon. And please do not come again till you are willing that I should be nothing more than your friend. HILDEGARDE DEVRIES.

same moment. "I'm not quite used to this sort of blind man's buff," he said in a rather breathless voice. "You must find a chair, please. Awfully good of you to look me up, I'm sure."

Hildegarde was thankful that the room was dark. In the clear daylight her courage would have failed her. "It wasn't good at all," she quavered in an uncertain voice.

"The pause that followed seemed unendurably long. "No," Jack said at last in a voice unlike his own—"no, that was no mistake. God knows."

He crossed the room and stood beside her. "Hildegarde!" he cried hoarsely. "You mean that you are ready to refuse Darrell and marry me?"

"Mr. Darrell means well," Hildegarde acknowledged with an air of wishing to give every one his due.

Hildegarde caught his hand. "Oh, dearest, that was what opened my eyes! When I heard that you were blind I couldn't bear it, and then I knew perfectly well that I couldn't live without you."

He swept her to him, and a blissful moment followed. But the mysterious sixth sense which belongs to you led Hildegarde to divine disquiet in her lover. She drew away palpitating.

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