

gist can do so, 10% sodium perborate is used, or 2% potassium periodate. These two substances come in crystals which should be ground into powder first because the crystals will not mix well with the cream. The vanishing cream should be made first and then the chemical added, otherwise the chemical will react with other ingredients of the vanishing cream and the result will not be satisfactory. The cream should be freshly prepared at least once in two weeks to avoid deterioration.

The cream acts by filling the pores of the skin and forming a protective cover-

ing which prevents much of the ivy poison from penetrating the skin.

As perspiration comes in contact with the vanishing cream in the pores of the skin a soap is formed and in addition to washing the poison ivy off and out of the skin, the alkalinity of the soap liberates nascent oxygen from either the sodium perborate or the potassium periodate. This oxygen neutralizes the ivy poison. Tests made by Dr. Schwartz and associates showed that an alkali alone will not neutralize the ivy poison.

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FORESTRY

Forest Service Prepares For Worst Fire Season in Years

Conditions Worse Than Since 1934; Fire Fighters Experimenting With Parachutists Dropped on Fires

See Front Cover

THE U. S. Forest Service is preparing for the worst forest fire season in recent years.

Losses are not heavy so far because serious fires now raging in Oregon and Washington are mostly in logging slash and are outside the national forests. High, drying winds prevailing throughout the western part of the country during June, however, have made conditions favorable for fires to do terrific damage if they should happen to get started. The season is just about a month advanced by weather conditions.

Logging operations have been stopped in the area along the Columbia River below Portland, enforcing a law designed to reduce the fire hazard. It is not thought by experts that this action will affect the Government's defense plans. Although spruce was used extensively in airplanes ordered by the French, planes for American use depend more on metal. It is not known yet in Washington whether the area in which logging has been stopped is a spruce-bearing region, but it is not thought likely. Spruce usually grow in moister areas where fire danger is not so great.

This year, when fire conditions are worse than they have been for six years, the U. S. Forest Service is experimenting with new devices which, it is hoped, will greatly speed up the fighting of fires before they get beyond control.

Parachute troops, dressed in fire-resistant, padded suits are being trained to drop down on the fires from airplanes. With them is dropped food, fire-fighting equipment, and a portable radio. This radio, weighing only six pounds including antenna and batteries, enables the fire fighter to report back to headquarters within eight and a half minutes after he drops.

Parachutists are being taught to land in trees. This is not considered ideal for actual fire fighting. But since it might be necessary under some conditions, the men are being taught how. And they like it—call it a feather-bed landing. They carry a specially contrived rope device for letting them down from their perch and they are now able to get down in from eight to ten minutes.

Accuracy of "aim" has been perfected so that it is much greater than has ever been achieved with chemical dropped on a fire. First a ten-pound weight is dropped so that the wind drift can be observed. Then the parachutist takes off, using a special technique for leaving the plane so that he lands in an upright position that will avoid injury. Equipment is dropped separately on burlap parachutes.

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The drumming of the *ruffed grouse* was supposedly due to the bird's wings beating its body or a log, until motion pictures showed that the bird drums by fanning the air.

PSYCHOLOGY

Frustrated Forest Folk Set Fires for Excitement

MILES of forest fire running free in the South every year, destroying great treasures of woods and wildlife, are a burning signal of dangerous impoverishment in the lives of hundreds of thousands of American people.

Nine out of ten of these great, hazardous forest fires of the Southland are set by human hands, most of them deliberately.

The fire-setters would tell you that they burn the woods to kill snakes, to keep down the ticks, to destroy boll weevils. But the answer lies much deeper, it is revealed by a sociological - psychological study of the men and women in a typical forest-fire region just conducted for the U. S. Forest Service by Dr. John P. Shea.

The lives of these people are boresome. Families of as many as eleven persons live in three-room unpainted cabins, and their family income is about \$12 a month. They go undernourished and poorly clothed.

Psychologically, they are just as impoverished. Their education is equivalent to only third or fourth grade. Exhaustion of game and fish deprived them of their two main recreations. Music, even fiddling, is conspicuous by its absence. Only a few do basket weaving.

They whittle. They talk. And they just "set."

Living constantly on the verge of dangerous frustration, they crave the excitement of fire with all the unusual activity of those who try to put it out.

Remedies urged by Dr. Shea in the current *American Forests* include: Securing the cooperation of a few "Pappies" in a locality, make it possible for them to build a community center suitable for movies and dances. Supply it with soft pine sticks for whittling, also with cupidors.

Provide simple games and contests such as horseshoe pitching and a shooting range. Organize 4-H clubs and local fish and game organizations. Let them feel that all these activities as well as any educational demonstrations are their own and not imposed on them by any external agency.

These Americans are willing to get their excitement in less destructive ways in they are available, and the forest fires may be looked upon as their unconscious signal for aid.

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