Fire! In the early afternoon of April 30th fire broke out at the base of Hemlock Hill. Fanned by a stiff wind, it ran up the south-east face of the hill, ruining a fine plantation of Japanese Yews and leaving an ugly scar on the hillside before it was finally subdued. During the last few years the thrifty grove of young Hemlocks at the base of the cliff has been a lovely sight the year round. It will take skillful replanting and ten years of care before this part of the Arboretum can be restored to its former beauty. The fire was fortunately far enough around the base of the hill so that the damage is not visible from the South Street Entrance.

Disheartening as is such a fire to those who are interested in preserving and developing the beauty of the Arboretum, the complete record for the year is far more alarming. While the fire of April 30th was somewhat more spectacular than the average, it was only one of ten major fires this spring. All of these caused some damage, yet all were avoidable and some of them were deliberately set. In spite of the vigilance of the Superintendent, in spite of a special fire guard and patrol truck with fire-fighting apparatus, there have been over twenty-five fires in the Arboretum in the last six months. A partial record for this period is as follows:

Fall of 1931. South Street Nursery. Small fire built in the nursery by boys playing about the pond. Killed several Willows.

Oak Woods. Leaf fire in the Oak woods back of the Dawson house. Large area burned over but little actual damage to important specimens. This fire was deliberately set by four boys who were seen but escaped in the confusion.

Bussey Meadow. Several fires, one of which was set, and one of which spread from a brush fire on adjoining property. Relatively little damage.

Pinetum. A fire back of the Thuja collection. Probably caused by a careless smoker.
Peters Hill. Grass fire. Several trees badly scorched.

Bussey Dormitory. Grass fire near the public footpath. Apparently started by a careless smoker.

**Spring of 1932.** Corner of Bussey and South Streets, April 12. Killed the lower branches of several Hemlocks. Of unknown origin.

Walter Street Meadow. Grass fire started by boys. Damaged several young Larches.

Oak Woods and Pinetum, April 18. Four fires deliberately set by a gang of boys, who threw matches and leaves into the grass as they walked through. They were seen by two students but escaped. One of the fires damaged the collection of young Chinese Pines.

Hemlock Hill, April 30. The fire described above.

Bussey Dormitory, March and April. Three fires in the shrubbery along the Arboretum border. One apparently started accidently by smokers. The other two, which occurred on the same day, had every appearance of being deliberately set. A fine southern Yellow-wood was ruined and the fire had ignited the house before the firemen arrived.

Oak Woods, May 21. Two small fires, apparently set. Little damage. One grass fire near the railroad on the same day.

Vandalism in the Arboretum has reached a point where friends of the institution need to know the damage that is being done and the danger to which we are exposed. Only a very few of those who come here for recreation misuse that privilege, but these few cause damage which is mounting into the tens of thousands of dollars. These hoodlums hold midnight carousals on Hemlock Hill, littering the ground with broken glass. They deliberately twist off the metal labels from trees and shrubs, so that valuable information is sometimes lost forever and the yearly replacement bill is terrific. They break hundreds of unopened flower buds off the Rhododendrons in the early spring. They throw stones through the windows of the Administration Building for the pure joy of breaking glass. Fire is, at present, their most dangerous ally. A single fire, backed by a strong wind could ruin Hemlock Hill. It has taken nature at least a thousand years to produce this outdoor cathedral. One hoodlum, one irresponsible youth, who likes to see the fire engines, may some day destroy it in half an hour.

So much for the problem. What can be done about it? The Arboretum is doing its best by both direct and indirect methods to save the Arboretum from a small percentage of the public for the public at large. Two hundred and sixty acres are not readily guarded, either by city police or hired watchmen. During "fire weather" a truck equipped with fire-fighting apparatus is on constant duty. Four members of the staff have homes in or near the Arboretum and these homes serve as watch towers in preventing vandalism and in reporting fires in
Before and After: Two views of Hemlock Hill demonstrating the effect of the recent fire.
their early stages. In the last year the busy housewives in these four homes have turned in the alarms for at least half of the fires in the Arboretum.

It may eventually be possible to develop a system of Sunday and holiday patrol in cooperation with the Boy Scouts. A promising start in that direction has been made this spring. A knowledge of what the Arboretum is and what kind of work it is doing, diffused through the immediate neighborhood, may eventually prove a deterrent force.

One weapon which can be used against hoodlumism is public opinion and it is for that reason that a whole number of the Bulletin has been devoted to the subject. The Arboretum is located in Jamaica Plain but it is known throughout the world. It belongs to Boston and to the country at large. It serves the public everywhere. It must not be kept at the mercy of a few irresponsible youths.

EDGAR ANDERSON.

Plants of Current Interest. With the first week of June, spring has suddenly given way to summer in the Arboretum. The Cherries and the Crabapples are gone, the Lilacs are rapidly going, but the Rhododendrons and the late Azaleas are here to take their places. One of the most unusual trees in flower at the moment is the "Empress Tree" (Paulownia tomentosa), of which a splendid specimen can be seen near the Centre Street Gate. Originally from China, it has long been in cultivation in the Orient and was long ago introduced into southern gardens. It has made itself very much at home in the southern states and has run wild to such an extent that it might easily be taken for a native American tree. Its showy violet-colored flowers are seldom seen in Boston, for the tree is not quite hardy here and is at its best only after a succession of mild winters.

The display of named varieties of the common lilac is rapidly passing by, but many of the later-flowered species are just opening their flowers and will be in fine condition for at least another week. In the Legume collection below the Lilacs the Rose Acacias, Laburnums, and Black Locusts are in splendid condition. The flowers of all three are essentially similar in shape but those of the Black Locust are pure white, those of the Laburnums are brilliant yellow, and those of the Rose Acacias are soft pink.

Visitors with limited time at their disposal are advised to spend most of it in the neighborhood of the South Street Entrance. On the slopes of Bussey Hill are to be found Azaleas in a rainbow planting of pink, yellow, white, orange, purple, and scarlet. At the foot of Hemlock Hill the Rhododendron collection is already full of color. Under the hemlocks and among the red cedars the ferns are rapidly unfolding and their light green fronds contrast handsomely with the darker shades of the conifers.

EXPLANATION OF THE PLATE

Two views of the eastern slope of Hemlock Hill. Above: The undamaged northeast face. Below: A portion of the fire-scarred area.