So Green Was My Valley:

We have never seen the movie or read the book but the title is intriguing as an apt description of the Illinois River Valley in the lush and verdant days of spring. Oliver Goldsmith could so properly have had it in mind as he wrote that beautifully descriptive line in the Deserted Village, "where health and plenty cheered the laboring swain." But the glistening river which drains the Illinois watershed has in the past been contaminated with sewage and will scarcely command the fancy of a romantic poet unless it be kept clean and unpolluted. But thereby hangs a tale. Two score years ago, the Sanitary District of Chicago made the initial moves whereby the fair river in the heart of the state became an "open sewer with vast potentialities for menacing the health of those who lived in the lower reaches of the green valley. To flush sewage into a river requires abundant water and this water the Sanitary District procured from Lake Michigan. But in 1929, the State of Wisconsin and others filed suit to limit the amount of water that might be withdrawn from Lake Michigan because it lowered the water levels at lake ports and occasioned loss to cargo vessels that must carry a lighter load in shallower water and thereby sustained financial loss. The case came to the U. S. Supreme Court and a decree was entered providing that after 1935, not more than 5000 cubic feet of water per second as an annual average should be diverted from Lake Michigan and that after 1939, the limit of diverted water should not exceed 1500 cubic feet per second. This long period was allowed to permit the Sanitary District to complete its sewage treatment plants. Meanwhile, the War Department constructed a series of locks and dams in the Illinois River to maintain a sufficient water depth for navigation. In 1938, a bill was introduced in Congress to permit an increase in water diversion of 5000 cubic feet per second. Hearings were held for weeks. More than 70 distinguished witnesses appeared. The War Department sent a memorandum to Congress against the bill. The State Department did likewise. It appeared that at long last, the sewage issue had been disposed and that the river in the green valley might heal itself of pollution. In recent days, it has become evident that another effort will be made to secure increased water from Lake Michigan by the Sanitary District under the guise of national defense. If that permission is ever granted, we shall no longer be able to write of the valley as that serene and smiling valley "where health and plenty cheered the laboring swain." The glistening river will once more become a menace.

Dislocation

We speak of a dislocated arm as a limb that is out of joint. But the word "dislocation" finds wider use today. It is frequently applied to mass activities as we speak of dislocation of industry or of labor or of agriculture. The word is singularly apt in its application to the automobile industry. Aside from the manufacture of motor cars, there are some 44,000 dealers employing 500,000 persons who sell and service the cars which are produced. Suppose a dealer can no longer procure so much as a few cars and cannot secure tires? What of his salesmen? What of the mechanics whom he employs? What of the building which he has leased for a period of years? What of accumulating interest charges on cars in stock which might be frozen against resale by an official
order? How and where will the persons so affected be absorbed into other lines of endeavor. This is what one might very aptly call an industrial "dislocation."

POLICING THE ETHER

The mechanical "ears" of the Federal Communication Commission are policing the ether waves twenty-four hours each day and seven days each week because of the vast amount of radio propaganda bombardment which for some time has been directed at the United States. One set of mechanical "ears" is located in Maryland to pick up all manner of broadcasts directed this way from Europe and Africa; another set in Porto Rico picks out propaganda directed to Latin America; another set in Texas picks transmissions from Latin America and a fourth set at Portland, Oregon intercepts the messages which came from the Orient.

A large staff of technicians, analysts and translators work feverishly recording speeches, news broadcasts and music and make a careful examination for any clues which may foretell changes and new moves. The Federal Communications Commission reports that for eleven hours in each day Germany is broadcasting on shortwave while Japan and Italy are sending out messages more than four hours of each day. Singularly enough 75 per cent of these long range broadcasts are in languages other than English. In addition to the mechanical "ears" which pick up and examine foreign propaganda, the government is also provided with equipment to police the domestic airways and pick up transmissions and transmitters which operate in violation of emergency regulation or without a license. Two-hundred fifty-one such transmitters were located during the fiscal year 1941 and more than two score were suspended either for cause or for violation of regulations.

A FOOTNOTE TO HISTORY

The Annual Report of the Attorney General for the fiscal year 1941 contains many footnotes to history of which we select the following as rather illuminating. It is a report on a case entitled "U. S. versus Sedgwick Lee Hurd in the District of Hawaii". On April 6, 1941, just eight months and one day before Pearl Harbor, the defendant Sedgwick Lee Hurd cut wires on the mine detecting apparatus of the S. S. Keosanqua at Pearl Harbor. He was apprehended, but inasmuch, as he was a member of the personnel of the U. S. Navy, he was turned over to the Navy Department for court martial. The court found him guilty and sentenced him to imprisonment for four years together with a dishonorable discharge. Joseph Hays who was on guard duty at the time was also found guilty of neglect of duty and sentenced under military law to imprisonment for two and one-half years and to a dishonorable discharge.