

\$50,000,000 to PROTECT HUMAN LIVES

The Cost of Standard Appliances Which the Interstate Commerce Commission Has Deemed Necessary for the Protection of Trainmen and Travelers

FIFTY millions of dollars, it has been estimated, is the price that must be paid for the safety of persons traveling or working on railways.

After years of squabbling, the safety appliances to be used in cars and engines have been standardized. The railway men and the interstate commerce commission have buried the hatchet.

Orders have already been issued by the commission, and they are to be complied with, not made the subject of endless litigation.

Thus, briefly, is stated one of the most far-reaching developments of the dying year.

With characteristic indifference, the great American public has been more interested in the growing speed of locomotives than in the lives that have been crushed out through carelessness and neglect. Business men have been far more taken up with the commission's actions in cases applying to freight rates than to the steady endeavor to stop the slaughter that was fast becoming one of the greatest national disgraces.

Along with the growth of transportation facilities has come a corresponding increase in the veritable army of harmless men, women and children who are doomed to suffer more than the miseries of death because of the shameless neglect of those whose duty it is to safeguard them. The giant locomotives and the endless trains they draw have grown to be instruments of torture and devastators of homes.

A great army of maimed and shattered human beings could be organized from the victims of "man's inhumanity to man." To such an appalling extent has the casualty list grown that one trainman in eight is wounded every year.

So terrible is the story here told that the very figures seem to suffer.

DURING the ten years that preceded the present, 1900-09, there were 95,894 persons killed and the appalling total of 823,615 wounded on American railways.

During the civil war, in the Union army there were killed in battle 67,058 men.

The last six years of peace, therefore, have been about as deadly on the railways as four years of rebel bullets.

After the smoke of battle had died away, 43,012 other soldiers succumbed to their wounds, bringing the total of those lost directly in battle to 110,070. Even this is only about 15,000 more than were killed on the nation's railways in the last decade.

And, perhaps, if it could be determined how many of that vast army of nearly a million souls who were hurt or maimed had been so weakened that they afterward succumbed to disease, the railway casualty list would be ahead of the Union army's.

So startling as to be beyond comprehension are these figures. Here they are, however, as compiled from the interstate commerce commission's reports:

| Year | Killed | Injured |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1900 | 7,899 | 56,239 |
| 1901 | 8,455 | 62,209 |
| 1902 | 8,593 | 64,607 |
| 1903 | 9,849 | 76,355 |
| 1904 | 10,046 | 81,155 |
| 1905 | 9,793 | 86,008 |
| 1906 | 10,618 | 97,706 |
| 1907 | 11,839 | 111,616 |
| 1908 | 10,188 | 104,200 |
| 1909 | 8,722 | 85,420 |
| Total | 95,894 | 823,615 |

Suppose that all those killed were put out of their misery immediately, which was far from being the case; then attempt to imagine the sufferings of the more than two-thirds of a million people who were banged about in battered-up cars, crushed, scalded, burned and broken almost into bits.

When you have pictured to yourself these harrowing wreck scenes, try hard to realize what hard hearts and soft heads have for several decades stood in the way of improvements that will wipe out this unnecessary suffering and, incidentally, save many more dollars than they cost by avoiding the paying out of such tremendous sums as are devoted each year to the settlement of damage claims.

Every one knows that wrecks are expensive. And the most progressive of railway men are



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him. There is no slouchiness, surliness or neglect. Every man on his train is right "up on the bit." Whatever happens, the right thing is pretty certain to be done at the right time.

Again, this flyer is quite likely to be composed of all-steel coaches, that won't burn and are practically impossible to break. Provided they don't fall into a river, their passengers are reasonably secure from anything worse than a bad shaking up.

Once more, notice the freight trains on this same road. Many will be of steel and all will be equipped

making them comparatively infrequent, not only on principle, but as a matter of business.

Last year, for example, four railways went through the twelvemonth without a passenger being killed. Those on the roll of honor were the Pennsylvania, the Burlington, the Northwestern and the Santa Fe. Quite a number of things contributed to the safe carrying of the 100,000,000 passengers who traveled over these lines—automatic block signals, safety devices on cars and the like. But, as much as or more potent than any of these was the superior discipline and efficiency of the operating forces.

In the old days—in fact, until comparatively recent years—the moment a railway man went off duty he struck for one of the saloons that was pretty certain to be found close to every yard or station. There he ate and drank as much as he pleased. Often he could hardly be blamed for "throwing in a few," because he might have been on duty from eighteen to twenty-four hours, possibly in rain or snow, and reached the "life-saving station" so tired in mind and body that he cared for nothing but to lull his senses into temporary oblivion.

RAISING THE QUALITY OF MEN

Now the principal railway lines are insisting that their operating forces shall be strictly temperate. They are too sensible to trust trainloads of people to fogged or befuddled brains. Not only this, but the scale of wages has risen, pension systems have been instituted and everything possible done to attract the highest possible class of men. On some lines this has resulted in setting standards that not a decade or so ago would have been altogether impossible.

Notice, for instance, the conductor of a flyer—a thro... express that literally annihilates space. Ten chances to one, he will look like a man of affairs—natty, courteous, clean featured; if anything, a shade above the majority of his passengers in point of intelligence. Like the captain of an ocean liner, he commands respect. His personality is reflected in the men, under

with airbrakes, hand brakes and all sorts of safety appliances.

Lastly, take a look at such portions of this line's ledgers as are made public at the end of its fiscal year. You are morally certain to see a fine balance on the profit side and a fat sum put by for further improvements.

This is the sort of railroading that pays. There is no need to force the officers of lines that afford such service to protect either their men or their passengers. They do it as a matter not only of moral, but of business principle. It's only natural that people should want to ride on the safest system and should send freight the same way.

Opposed to this, however, is a sorry picture—such a one as has been a thorn in the side of the interstate commerce commission for this last ten years.

It is of a line that hasn't paid or that has been promoted to death; whose stock is sometimes worth less than the paper it is written on, and that drags out a sorry existence in the hope that times will improve or that some one will buy it.

Naturally wages are low. The equipment is poor. A losing venture has to do the best it can with the worst facilities.

Or, perhaps, there is so much water in the stock that it puts a damper on improvements. The managers must pay tremendous dividends on what was but a comparatively small investment. Oftener than not, that means that trainmen must be mighty watchful to avoid accidents, and even then are not always able to keep their skins whole.

As far back as March 3, 1901, under an accident law then passed, the interstate commerce commission began to tackle the problem. Even then the great increase in the volume of traffic and the speed at which it was handled was driving up the casualty list, which was considered "a disgrace to the American people, painful to every careful observer."

In spite of everything that could be done, however, the numbers of killed and injured continued to increase at ratios most appalling. And even in later years, when the necessity for stopping the slaughter has been apparent, there has been a slight decrease in the sacrifice of life, but a continual growth in the numbers of those maimed or otherwise battered up.

For instance, take tables of the proportions of those killed and injured, as prepared by the

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