

YOUNG DRIVERS SAID TO BE INCOMPETENT

Safety Council Declares Statistics Show Experience Is Necessary

The contention of the National Safety Council that children should not be permitted to operate automobiles is supported by Leon Aronowitz, statistician of the New York State Bureau of Motor Vehicles who has compiled figures showing that 10% of the accidents in which drivers between

the ages of 16 and 18 years were involved resulted fatally, whereas with the more experienced motorists, only 3% resulted fatally. Officials of the New York state motor vehicle bureau plan to have legislation enacted which will modify the law which now permits minors of the ages mentioned to drive automobiles in pursuit of the trade or occupation of their parents or to drive their parents on pleasure trips. It is the hope of the New York authorities that the modification will restrict junior operators to drive only in rural districts where, as the National Safety Council points out, there are fewer hazards and where it often is necessary that the sons of farmers be permitted to function in this manner.

He is a dangerous weapon in the hands of an inexperienced driver. All of us know that youth takes chances that maturity avoids. Some of us have had unpleasant experiences with youthful motorists. There is no denying that experience is the greatest teacher. And, if the experience of the New York state motor vehicle bureau indicate that it is not wise to allow boys of tender age to drive automobiles, it is to be hoped that the legislature will make the desired modifications in the laws regulating operators of motor vehicles. And, perhaps some other states may take a leaf out of the book of experience in the offices of statistician Aronowitz.

WHY MOTOR PRICES ARE COMING DOWN

Output and Quality Going Up; Manufacturer Gives Interesting Answer

How can motor car manufacturers cut prices, raise the quality of their product, and maintain profits? An enlightening answer to this question, so often asked by the motoring public, is given in a recent article in "Sales Management" by Harry M. Jewett, president of the Paige-Detroit Motor Car company.

"The established policy of making cars less expensive, while at the same time making them better," writes Mr. Jewett, "has been followed so consistently that cars are now priced lower than ever before. In announcing price reductions manufacturers usually state that they are able to do so because of greater volume of efficiency, but so many reductions have been made on the same grounds that some have wondered how it can be done.

"In the first place, the greater volume that enables the automobile manufacturer to effect greater economies and reduce the price of his product, also enables his source of supply to effect greater economies and reduce their prices to him. We concentrate our buying, thus giving a few sources of supply the full benefit of our great volume and enabling them to install single purpose machines, standardize their production, and meet our requirements with minimum losses occasioned by rejecting materials.

"In recent months, for example, cylinder blocks have been reduced about 12 per cent, axles about 5 per cent, glass 20 to 25 per cent, speedometers 10 per cent, and substantial reductions have been made in all body models, in transmissions and in many smaller parts. Automobiles are commonly sold on commission and everyone concerned bears his share of any price reduction. The manufacturer sells to distributors, whose commission usually is 25 per cent off the list price. If, therefore, the list price of a given model be reduced \$200, the distributor's commission is reduced \$50 and the manufacturer's reduction is \$150 instead of \$200. The distributor passes part of the reduction on to the dealer and the dealer passes part of it on to the salesman. All are glad to accept the reductions, however, because lower prices mean more sales and, in the end, more profit. If, in the foregoing example, they can sell six cars at the new price where they would have sold only five at the higher price, each one will make considerably more profit.

"The same reasoning applies even more pertinently to the manufacturer's position. More sales not only mean more profits, but the greater volume enables him to effect economies that otherwise would be impossible. Strolling through our plant, I can point out innumerable changes and improvements that have contributed to making a better product that could be sold at a lower price.

"Start on the receiving dock. It used to take six men to unload bodies; now an air hoist, operated by one man, does the work much more quickly and with fewer scratches and bumps to the bodies. Small parts formerly were loaded on hand trucks and wheeled into the plant; now tractors haul a whole train of trucks into the plant at a single trip.

"Over here are three multiple presses that formerly were operated by three men. By moving the machines close together, we found that one man could care for all three machines. Here is a milling machine that used to require two men. By moving the fixtures closer together we increased the production of the machine 25 per cent and by rigging up a chain hoist we released one of the men. We used to have a separate machine for milling off the pump face of cylinder blocks till we found that we could do this and bore the block at the same time; result, one man and one machine less.

"Here is a machine that drills 39 holes at one operation. It cost a lot of money, but it saves a lot of labor. We used to have 18 grinders, attended by 18 men, for grinding bores; a single honing machine operated by one man, now does the same work and does it better. As the result of these changes, the cost of machining cylinder blocks has been reduced about 60 cents per block.

"We used to have four machines working night and day, sizing the width of the boss on connecting rods; now a single coin press does all this work and isn't busy all day. This relieves seven men and three machines.

"Here is the motor assembly line, where 330 men used to assemble about 75 motors a day; now 106 men assemble 175 to 200 motors a day. This saving is due primarily to a better conveyor system and to the employment of special tools such as air driven wrenches, electric nut setters and special angle tools.

"Bear in mind, too, that such

equipment not only cuts costs, but makes a better product. A man using a hand wrench all day tires and may not exert just the same force at 4:00 p. m. that he exerts at 8:00 a. m.; a tool never tires. The life of a car and the safety of the drivers are dependent in no small measure upon the security of these bolts and nuts.

"By moving the brake department and making a few changes, the force required in assembling the four-wheel brakes and putting them on the axles was reduced from six to two. Eight men were employed in connecting and oiling axle parts; these were reduced to three.

"A ground conveyor taking frames through the paint ovens until recently was considered the latest thing; we suspended two ovens, each 270 feet long, from the roof and saved 33,000 square feet of floor space.

"Until recently, we used gasoline to operate our motors on the block test stands; now we have adopted a gas mixer that enables us to use city gas, which gives just as good results and is about 75 per cent cheaper than gasoline.

"We used to sell all scrap together and get the minimum price for it. Now we separate the steel, drop forgings, copper, brass, cast iron and other materials and get the maximum price out of each lot. This comes under the head of obsolete stores, a department that is costing us about \$5,000 a year and is saving us about \$350,000 a year.

"Such changes as these are being made continuously. Our engineering department is constantly striving to improve our product, while our efficiency department and various department heads are constantly studying ways and means of reducing costs. From this it will be seen that we don't discover all at once that we are able to reduce the price of our product. All these economies find their way to the cost department from day to day; we cut a few cents here and a few cents there and all together, applied to a production of several hundred cars a day, they eventually total a considerable sum. Greater efficiency, due chiefly to large volume, enable us to cut our costs to a point where, with the cooperation of our sources of supply and our sales organization, we are able to pass these savings on to the public by reducing the price of our car."

AN EMBRYO pugilist who appeared in a preliminary event on a recent boxing card allowed himself to be beaten into a pulp resembling a raw beefsteak and received the princely sum of \$4.50 for his services. . . . What Price Gory?

NO CHANGE IN TIRE PRICE IS EXPECTED

Akron Manufacturers Predict No Sudden Fluctuations in Markets

(Automotive Daily News) AKRON, O., March 20.—A careful survey of the leading tire manufacturers in this city regarding any change in the present tire prices shows the general feeling to be that no change will occur at least for some little time, although most factory heads would give no absolute assurance one way or the other.

The present tire situation seems to be a conundrum to all, and exactly what will happen in two or three months is a mere matter of opinion. The following opinions from officials of major rubber companies here will illustrate best what conditions actually are.

L. C. Rockhill, sales manager of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber company, does not believe there will be any change in tire prices for some time at least, and explains his reasons.

"The most important point for the general public to understand is that tire prices are not directly dependent on spot market prices of crude rubber," he says. "The rubber now going into tires was purchased three months ago and consequently spot market quotations have little or no effect on the finished tire price. It should be remembered that tire prices have always followed that of crude, and even when crude reached its peak of \$1.20 a pound, tire prices were based around 80 cents as the highest average.

"If a person will only keep these facts in mind it will be seen that daily fluctuations of the crude rubber market will not affect the finished tire prices," continued Rockhill.

William O'Neil, president of the General Tire and Rubber Co., states that he is not expecting any change in the price of tires in the near future at least.

"We are protecting our dealers on prices for their one spring order," said O'Neil. "Although we are giving this protection on the single order only, the dealers' current orders being subject to current prices, protection is guaranteed up to July 1.

"A very noticeable increase in orders has been observed in general in the past two weeks," O'Neil declared, "although previ-

ous to that it is our belief that dealers were holding off ordering their spring requirements because of adverse weather conditions and also partly because of the fluctuating crude rubber market."

L. A. McQueen of the advertising and publicity department of the B. F. Goodrich company says that there is no change of tire prices under consideration at Goodrich now. What another two or three months may bring in the tire situation, however, no one can say accurately, according to McQueen.

H. L. Post, sales manager of the Seiberling Rubber company, says that prices of Seiberling tires are expected to remain about the same as now. Inasmuch as these tire prices are based on practically the

middle point between prices of crude rubber in stock and spot market crude, it can be seen that small fluctuations of spot prices will not affect the price of the finished tire.

Jacob Pfeiffer, president of the Miller Rubber company, says that it is impossible to judge with any real accuracy just what the tire price will be in the next month or so.

"Miller," he declares, "is buying as necessary, but the present rubber market seems to be more or less speculative and so the future tire prices can only be guessed."

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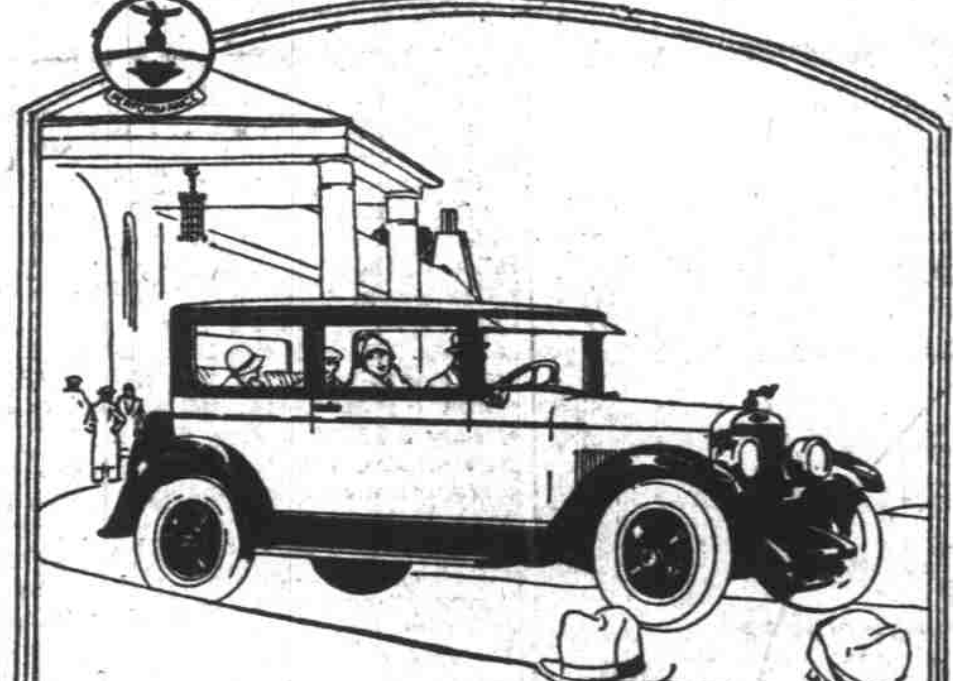
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