

ACCIDENTS ARE CUT BY SIGNAL SYSTEM

New Light Code Reduces Crashes in Chicago by Almost 23 Per Cent

There has been a reduction of almost 23% in the number of personal injury automobile accidents during the five months' period following the installation of the "loop" signal lights in Chicago as compared with the same period in 1925. A study made by the National Safety Council, which has its headquarters in the windy city, shows that the saving in time to cross the "loop" is more than 10% on the average.

During the period in question, there were 210 persons injured last year against 162 hurt by automobiles during the same period this year. C. E. Robb, statistician of the safety organization, reports that the greatest reduction in the number of accidents was in Randolph, Jackson, Wabash, Adams and Dearborn streets, but on La Salle, Wells, Van Buren, Monroe and Washington streets slight increases have been noted this year against 1925.

Approximately 90% of the victims of personal injury automobile accidents were pedestrians in both years. While this is to be expected, writes Mr. Robb, it indicates that the problem in the Chicago "loop" is almost entirely one of the proper relationship between pedestrians and motorists. The reduction in accidents may be attributed largely to the better movement of pedestrians but there is still room for improvement in pedestrian control, says the safety engineer.

A chart issued by the council shows the time of day when the accidents occurred in 1925 and 1926. Up to the hour of 3 p. m. the curves for the two years are somewhat similar but in 1926 there is a conspicuous absence of any hump in the curve during the 5 o'clock rush as in the 1925 curve and as might be expected under conditions existing in the loop.

Only ten persons were injured between 5 and 6 p. m. in the five months' period this year against 31 hurt between the same hours in 1925. There may be several reasons for this record. Perhaps it is due to the types of persons using the streets at this time of the day.

Most of the pedestrians then are office and store employees who spend much of their time in the downtown business district, and consequently are accustomed to the traffic conditions and are alert to the hazards of the streets. Perhaps the fact that the cycle of the lighting system is changed during the rush hour to make the traffic move somewhat more slowly than at other times when traffic is not so heavy is responsible for the reduction of accidents during this period.

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SPEED REGULATION WOULD SAVE TIRES

(Continued from page 1.)
The traffic, width and surface of the thoroughfare and of any other condition then existing, and operators of motor vehicles shall not drive at such speed as to endanger the lives, limbs and property of other motorists and pedestrians.

At present the laws of the various states vary considerably. Enforcement and enforcement of the recommendations of the Hoover conference, points out the National Safety Council, will simplify matters for drivers throughout the country. No longer will they have to study rules and regulations of scores of communities through which they intend to tour en route

to Maine, California, Florida or Canada. Passage of the suggested measure should make motoring more pleasant and safer for all drivers and passengers as well as protecting pedestrians.

Provision for the protection of school children is provided in the act, which says that motorists shall not exceed a limit of fifteen miles an hour when passing a school during school recess or while children are going to or leaving school during opening and closing hours. Last year approximately 7,000 boys and girls were killed by automobiles, laments the council, which regrets that too many drivers fail to slow down when nearing school houses.

Under the provisions of the proposed law, which the council hopes will be passed in this state, motorists shall not exceed twenty miles an hour on any highway in a business district when traffic is controlled at intersections by traffic officers or stop-and-go signals. Motorists will be allowed to drive only fifteen miles an hour on all other highways in a business district.

The council has repeatedly called the attention of motorists to the importance of not driving too fast in residential districts where thousands of children play in the streets, because often there are no nearby lots, back yards, playgrounds or recreational centers in which to romp. In hundreds of instances children have stepped suddenly into the streets and have been killed or injured by approaching automobiles whose drivers did not have time to stop before striking the youngsters.

The new law states that motorists shall not go faster than twenty miles an hour in a residence district. The same limit applies in public parks unless a different speed is fixed by the local authorities.

Speeding at a rate not to exceed thirty-five miles an hour is permitted in all other places not specified in the act.

The act states that local authorities shall have the power to increase the speed which shall be prima facie lawful upon through highways at the entrances to which vehicles are by ordinance of such officials required to stop before entering or crossing such through highways.

Any person who drives a vehicle upon a highway carelessly and heedlessly in willful disregard of the rights and safety of others, or without due caution and at a speed or in a manner so as to endanger any person or property, shall be guilty of reckless driving, and upon conviction shall be punished as provided in the act.

Thousands of persons have been killed because they did not stop and look and listen while motoring as they approached grade crossings. The Hoover conference recommendations declare that drivers shall not exceed fifteen miles an hour when approaching within fifty feet of a grade crossing, when the operator's view is obstructed. The same rate of speed is specified when motorists are approaching within fifty feet and in traversing an intersection of highways when the driver's view is obstructed. A driver's view shall be deemed obstructed when at any time during the last fifty feet of his approach to the intersection he does not have a clear view of such intersection and of the traffic upon all of the highways entering such intersection for a distance of 200 feet from said intersection. The same rate of speed is also specified for motorists in traversing or going around curves or traversing a grade upon a highway in the direction they are proceeding.

Railroad warning signals must be obeyed, says the model act, which provides that whenever motorists approach a highway and intersecting or steam railway grade crossing and clearly visible and positive signal gives warning of the immediate approach of a train or car, it shall be unlawful for drivers to fail to bring their cars to a complete stop before traversing such grade crossings.

The state highway commission is authorized in the model law to designate particularly dangerous grade crossings and to erect signs notifying motorists to come to a complete stop before crossing the tracks.

New Gear Shift Worked From the Steering Post

Small Quadrant Takes Place of Awkward Lever on Car That Started From Boston on a Test Trip to Atlantic City; Works by Pressure of Finger

A great deal has been said and written lately about the automobile of the future, about its motor, its body, its springs, its tires, and its fittings, but little has been made public about what has been done with that obviously crude part of the present day motor car—the gear shift.

A device which may prove an answer to this question was given its first public showing in Boston when George L. Sexton, of Larchmont, N. Y., introduced the vacuum gear shift to a few interested onlookers at Copley Square and started Fred C. Schwendler on a drive from Boston to Atlantic City, N. J., at the wheel of a machine equipped with the new idea. The usual lever was absent from the car. Instead a small aluminum quadrant was affixed on the steering column, just below the wheel, and around this quadrant moved a little lever at the pressure of a finger, exactly like the throttle lever on an automobile of about 1910.

It is not the first time some device, mechanical or electrical, has been offered to take hold of the gear box and put the little cogwheels where they were wanted. Many motorists have looked forward to a magnetic transmission which would do away with gears entirely, which would seem to be the ideal solution and a European, George Constantinesco, has developed what he calls a torque converter, taking the place of the gear box, with an infinite range of speed. But the vacuum device appears to be the most workable mechanism yet tried out in America.

The new device utilizes the suction from the motor intake manifold to "build up" a vacuum in two 3 1/2 inch cylinders attached to the top of the gearbox in place of the shifting lever. When the driver sets the little lever on the quadrant at its position for first speed nothing happens but the air valves are set ready so that the instant the driver presses down the clutch pedal the change is made.

The makers of the apparatus claim there is no possibility of stripping gears because the moving gear indicator while the car is running or standing has no effect until the clutch is released. Then the meshing of the new gear is synchronized to a fraction of a second as the clutch takes hold again. In tests the gear has been changed from "high" to "reverse" at a driving speed of more than 30 miles an hour. Mr. Sexton said, to act as an emergency brake, with the result that a rear axle was twisted off but not a gear stripped.

The mechanism is the invention of Alvin Craig of New Haven, Conn. It has undergone four years of perfecting and adaptations to various types of cars. The Vacuum Gear Shift corporation, of which Mr. Sexton is president, is now preparing, he said, to put it into factory production as an attachment for cars now in use. Negotiations are being made with three or four manufacturers, one of whom may adopt it as standard equipment.

The first model of the device occupied nearly four inches of space above the gearbox. Mr. Sexton said. Few cars have this much room under the footboards. By re-designing it has been reduced to 5-8 of an inch in thickness, and in that size is adaptable to every make of automobile. Cars of three makes, all so equipped were in the party which started from Boston. Mr. Schwendler drove a Chrysler, while a Hupmobile and a Studebaker, vacuum-controlled, accompanied him. Tests have been made on 600 cars altogether, representing 26 makes, according to Mr. Sexton.

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ell. Three years ago when the national brake inspection movement was launched police officials, safety councils and motor clubs which conducted "test your brakes" drives found that in some cities as many as 50 per cent of the cars had faulty brakes. During the present summer, the number has been between 10 and 30 per cent.

Approximately 200,000 automobiles were inspected during the examination of brakes in Pittsburgh, Detroit and Portland, Oregon. More cities are holding brake campaigns than ever before. Some communities have these tests regularly, staging them every year or semi-annually. Marcus A. Dow, past president of the National Safety Council, opened the war on faulty brakes several years ago when he was executive secretary of the New York City Department of Public Safety. Other cities were quick to appreciate the value of these campaigns and the movement quickly spread from coast to coast.

The brake inspection movement has been "put over" with practically no legislation being enacted. Most of the local campaigns have been "invitation tests," that is, motorists have been invited to have their cars examined free of charge and when their machines have been found to have defective apparatus have been glad to have the necessary adjustments made.

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PAIGE-JEWETT HAVE RECORD SIX MONTHS

Shipments Exceed Previous High Record, Which Was Made in 1923

DETROIT, Aug. 14.—Shipments of Paige and Jewett cars during the first six months of the year established a new high record for

the Paige-Detroit Motor Car company. The total shipments were 27,015 cars, surpassing materially the company's previous best record for six months, made in the first half of 1923, when the total cars shipped were 24,996.

Commenting on the company's record, H. M. Jewett, president, predicted continued success. "The outlook for the future is excellent," he said, "and it is the opinion of the management that we will have better business during the last six months of 1926 than we ever enjoyed during the second half of any previous year." The increased shipments are a reflection of the quick recognition

that was won by Paige models, the brougham and cabriolet roadster, which scored instant success.

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A Chevrolet driven by an amateur lowered train time between Los Angeles and Omaha by two hours.

FAULTY BRAKES ARE FEWER REPORT SAYS

Recent Tests Indicate Drivers Are Keeping Stopping Systems in Repair

Recent tests of automobile brakes demonstrate that owners of motor vehicles are keeping the control apparatus of their machines in much better condition than they did several years ago, rejoices the National Safety Council.

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