

# GRADE CROSSING ELIMINATION HAS ITS HARD TASKS

By ISRAEL KLEIN (NEA Service Writer)

Eliminating grade crossings looks easy to many automobile men, but railroad men take it more seriously than that.

From the motorist's viewpoint, all there is to this problem is the raising or lowering of railroad tracks, to keep the highway clear. But that just begins to set a problem for the railroad engineers. Eliminating grade crossings to them means:

1. Preparing for an expenditure of nearly \$20,000,000, which would gradually increase as time during the process of elimination goes on.
2. Facing the task of eliminating not only existing grade crossings, but others that are added from time to time.
3. Practically doubling present total expenditures of \$1,000,000,000 for the next 20 or more years.
4. All this for the reduction of only about 10 per cent of all automobile fatalities.

## Huge Task

Engineers don't say it isn't worth the effort for they contend they're eliminating grade crossings in the more congested districts. But they do point to the practical impossibility of the task.

At the end of 1921 there were 252,507 grade crossings in the United States. In 1922, 705 were eliminated. But in the same year, 4457 new crossings were created by the opening of new highways across railways, increasing, instead of decreasing, the total by 3732.

The cost for eliminating the 705 crossings was \$70,000,000, or about \$100,000 a crossing. Figuring only \$75,000 each, the cost of eliminating all grade crossings existing today would come close to \$20,000,000,000.

## Not Proportionate

Even if no new grade crossings were opened and all existing today were eliminated, railroad men argue, the total of auto fatalities would be reduced only one-tenth. For, according to figures, nine times as many auto fatalities occurred elsewhere than at grade crossings.

"In other words," they said, "it is proposed that the railroads spend \$20,000,000,000, which would have no effect at all on 90 per cent of the auto accidents."

## Oldfield Puts out New Eight-in-Line

(By NEA Service)

LOS ANGELES, March 21.—Barney Oldfield, once world's premier racing driver, has gone into the pleasure car business.

He's building a new eight-in-line motor, designed along racing lines. The car will be called the Oldfield. The car, designed by himself, will be one of the finest in America, he says. Although a semi-racing motor will be installed, the specifications call for a speed of only 80 miles an hour. This, however, can be increased to 100 miles.

"We are not going into it on a large scale," declared the former speed demon. "Our present idea is to build only six or eight cars a year. It will be entirely a custom build proposition."

Oldfield started work designing his motor on July 1, 1924. The first finished product will be put on the streets of Los Angeles within a few weeks.

With the success of the car practically assured, Oldfield has started work on the construction of a new factory at Monrovia, California. The new building will house a foundry, machine shop and assembly plant.

## Gas Tax Revenue

Iowa's proposed gasoline tax, of 2 cents on a gallon, is expected to bring in an annual revenue of \$5,400,000.

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# UNION OIL COMPANY LABORATORY

New Structure is Solely for Research Work in Effort to Secure Better Products for the West



After more than two years' work, the Union Oil company of California has completed a specially equipped institution devoted solely to the securing of better gasoline, oils and other products of petroleum in the west. The structure is the research laboratory and is located at the Los Angeles harbor, where the company's largest refinery is also operating.

The big experimenting institution was built at a cost exceeding \$300,000 and covers more than 40,000 square feet, all given over to laboratories and the necessary work in connection with them in which continual tests are being made to improve existing products manufactured from crude oil. It includes the most complete and advanced equipment for this work in this country.

Over the main entrance of the building the motto of the Union Oil research and development department is carved in stone—"Veritas Omnia Vincit" (Truth Conquers All), which serves to remind the chemists that all research constitutes for and using the truth.

The research building is on the same site as the Union's Los Angeles refinery, which was started in 1917 and is still being continually improved and added to. The refinery covers 250 acres and ranks with the country's best. In addition, Union Oil refineries are situated at Olean, on San Francisco Bay; Alvin, Matita, Brea and Santa Paula (in the various oil fields), and at Port Moody, British Columbia.

# CONGESTION AID CHURCH SERVICES

By ISRAEL KLEIN (NEA Service Writer)

Congestion of traffic on the highways leading in and out of the big cities is helping church attendance on Sundays.

Far fetched as this statement appears, it contains a direct relationship between Sunday touring and church going. It lies in the dread that has been developing among motorists of bucking the tie-up of automobiles leaving and entering their cities and in their decision to remain within the city limits.

As a result the church has benefited. Instead of packing a lunch and starting out early for a country trip, the motorist packs his family into his car and leaves early for religious services.

Whereas formerly churches followed the population into the suburbs, in order to keep up attendance, especially of the original congregation, the automobile is the deciding factor that has been keeping many churches in the downtown area fully attended on Sundays.

James J. Coale, secretary for the presbytery of Baltimore on the committee of national missions, points this out in an article for the American Academy of Political and Social Science.

"The downtown church has found it easier to remain with the coming of the automobile," he says. "The flight of the churches to the suburbs has by no means been stopped, but it has been noticeably checked."

So far as attendance goes, Coale says, "no motor car facilitates attendance by the whole family."

In the country, the small village church has found a new lease on life with the aid of the automobile. Especially if situated on a main highway and with a lot for parking nearby, the church has been well attended.

# INVENTOR ADVISES CROSSING STOPPER

(By NEA Service)

BALTIMORE, Md., March 21.—The way to stop automobile accidents at grade crossings and other dangerous points is to stop the automobiles by an appliance beyond the driver's control.

With this conviction, Charles Adler Jr., inventor of railroad warnings and signals, offers a plan that he says would be positive in its action and would not depend on the alertness and care of automobile drivers.

Adler's plan would involve the enforced application of a magnetic device to every automobile in the country, placing of a similar instrument in the roadbed near each dangerous crossing and the enforcement of a 15-mile speed limit at these points.

In the roadbed to the right side approaching the crossing would be a permanent magnet. Attached to the forward part of the car, by legal compulsion, would be a magnetic instrument which, when actuated by the road magnet, would shut off the car's ignition.

If the car went only 15 miles an hour, there wouldn't be sufficient electromotive force generated by the magnets to shut off ignition. But at greater speeds, considered unsafe at crossings, the power generated by the engine, when combined with the magnet's force, would stop the car.

To start his car again, the motorist would have to get out, life up the hood and adjust the magnetic device.

# State Reciprocity For Autos Sought

(By NEA Service)

WASHINGTON, March 21. The American Automobile association has started a campaign to obtain unlimited touring privileges in all states.

This is to be had through the abolition of the present system of limited freedom from payment of new license and registration fees when a tourist enters another state.

The association's reason for this campaign is its contention that this

# Big Bus Service

New York passenger busses last year carried 161,000,000 passengers. In Detroit they carried 20,000,000 and in St. Louis 13,000,000.

**What Delco Ignition does for your FORD**

The new Delco Ignition for Fords brings to your Ford all the advantages of the world's finest electrical system. It delivers a far, hot spark—keeps plugs from fouling—spark advances automatically with your speed—combustion is better—you get more power and more mileage from gasoline. Delco will make a Ford engine run smoother at any speed.

A simple device permits accurate adjustment of timing to keep your engine always in tune. Delco will last for years.

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Delco's quickly and easily installed in place of the present Ford timer. The price is only \$15—Delco will install for Fords, \$25 extra. Both prices include tax.

# NECESSITY FORCES BIG DEVELOPMENT IN AUTO INDUSTRY

(By NEA Service)

LONDON, March 21.—Necessity has forced Great Britain, and the rest of Europe for that matter, far ahead of America in automobile development.

High taxes, high maintenance costs have driven the engineer to design a car that will cost as little as possible and could be driven as the cheapest expense.

The result is a drove of small automobiles of even as low as seven horsepower, running about the streets of London, Paris and Berlin.

The British Morris is an example. It is designed in three models, ranging from a 12-horsepower car costing less than \$1000 to an 18-horsepower vehicle selling for \$2400. Even the smallest model has equipment equal to many good cars in America.

Fully Equipped

There is a 12-volt ignition system with five lamps, a speedometer, an eight-day clock, oil and gasoline gauges on the dashboard, and a complete and efficient side curtain equipment for inclement weather.

Some of the smaller cars, like the British Austin, or the French Mathis, are of only seven-horsepower. Yet they are designed to carry two passengers comfortably and go up to 45 miles an hour. Their gasoline requirements are low.

Opposed to these attempts at economy are some of the most gorgeous affairs ever seen on the streets of London—or New York. And even these are included merely for the colorful prizes of India and other Asiatic countries, where lavishness and display persist.

A Compromise

The Maharajah of Alwar, for instance, has had a Lanchester made especially for him. It looks more like an old-time horse-drawn coach than a modern automobile. But it is so constructed as to give its owner the height of comfort and pleasure.

The coach body is built apart from the engine, so that an occupant could hardly believe he is being drawn by modern motive methods. It is said actually to float along, despite rocky and rutty roads.

The engine is of the six-cylinder 40-horsepower type, and the chassis has a wheelbase of 178 inches, almost twice the length of a Ford. The body is elaborately ornamented.

The Maharajah of Rewa has a Lanchester sedan just as elaborately ornamented and specially equipped system so the maharajah may keep this car has a special ventilating cool under the hottest rays of the Indian sun.

Even the windows are made of a special type of glass which is opaque only from the outside, keeping out the sun and the vision of curiosity seekers.

# Auto Theft Rate Declining Despite Increase in Cars

(By NEA Service)

ST. LOUIS, Mo., March 21.—Despite the increased number of automobiles caused by better police vigilance and certificate of title laws.

The percentage of automobiles recovered after theft has increased annually.

This, according to the National Automobile Dealers' association, is caused by better police vigilance and certificate of title laws.

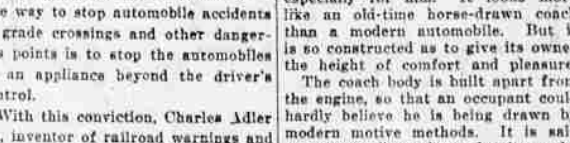
Activities of automobile thieves, last year, were nearly 50 per cent greater than in 1923 and 100 per cent above those of 1918 in the 28 major cities in which the N. A. D. A. has completed statistics. In these cities a total of 37,771 autos were stolen last year. Only 17 per cent of those, or 6547 were not recovered.

Although this number of unrecovered cars is higher than the 7228 that were not recovered in 1923, the percentage has been decreased. Considering the addition of new automobiles through the year, the proportion of cars stolen altogether is lower than that of previous years.

"The tremendous number of automobile thefts," says C. A. Vane, general manager of the association, "shows the need for adequate certificate of title laws, for added precautions on the part of car owners, for greater police supervision of questionable service stations which in reality are merely fences for organized motor thefts."

# Most Expensive Highway in United States

What is considered the most expensive and most difficult piece of highway in the United States is being built to the summit of Cheyenne mountain, 10,000 feet up, at Colorado Springs, Colo. The white line shows how the road will wind its way up the steep incline. Six miles of this road, it is estimated, will cost \$350,000.



# STATE TESTS ITS WATER SUPPLIES

(By NEA Service)

HARRISBURG, Pa., March 21.—Motorists traveling through the state of Pennsylvania may be assured of a sanitary and disease-proof water supply.

The assurance comes from efforts of the state department of health to keep all sources of water supply along the state highways in a healthful condition. These efforts have been directed toward inspection of the sources and approval of those found healthful.

Signs are now distributed along the roads, telling motorists where they may find sanitary water supply. Further inspection and testing of the water so that more sources of such supply may be afforded motorists.

Few Approved

According to Dr. W. G. Turnbull, deputy secretary of health, 876 water supplies were examined last year by traveling sanitary inspectors and bacteriologists. Of these only 88 per cent were found satisfactory.

A placard marked, "Safe Water Supply," has been set up at these approved spots.

"With increased information as to the meaning and intent of the safe water signs," says Dr. Turnbull, "the traveling public will make it unprofitable for any wayside eating house to maintain an unapproved supply."

Close Examination

The water supply system is first examined by a sanitary engineer, who pays particular attention to physical surroundings, drainage, character and protection of the well or spring. If he approves the source on these points he tacks up a red card with a serial number.

Following him come a laboratory on a truck, with two bacteriologists in it. These test the sources approved by the sanitary inspector for the presence of harmful germs.

The supply getting approval both of the inspector and of the bacteriologists gets official approval, and an enamelled metal sign bearing the words, "Safe Water Supply," with date of approval, is set up.

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**Oldsmobile Six Gains 63% During 1924**

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**301 More Registered Sales In Oregon Over 1923**

During 1924 most cars showed a decrease in sales

**OLDSMOBILE GAINS IN SALES**

This further proves that the Public wants a high grade, light weight, six cylinder car. The new refined OLDSMOBILE is a sturdy powerful easy riding car, making better than 20 miles on a gallon of gasoline.

Roadster . . . . . \$1080	Coach . . . . . \$1290
Touring . . . . . 1080	Coach, 4-pas. . . . . 1385
Sport Touring . . . . . 1210	Sedan . . . . . 1515
Business Coupe . . . . . 1245	De Luxe Sedan . . . . . 1625

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# Few Auto Lights Found Satisfactory

(By NEA Service)

ALBANY, N. Y., March 21.—Only about seven per cent of the automobiles of the country have satisfactory headlights, according to A. W. Devine, chief of the division of head lamp inspection for New York state.

Devine reached this estimate after inspecting nearly 200 automobiles as they came along on a road near Albany. He found only 7 per cent with proper headlights. Seven per cent had no approved non-glare device.

Fifteen per cent had twisted lenses. In 39 per cent, reflectors were defective. In 80 per cent lights were out of focus. In 20 per cent the light sources were inadequate.

# 55,000,000 Tires

This year will see the production of 55,000,000 tires, or 10 per cent above that of 1924, government specialists estimate. This is based on the large production and sale of cars in 1923, for which a large replacement of tires is expected this year.

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