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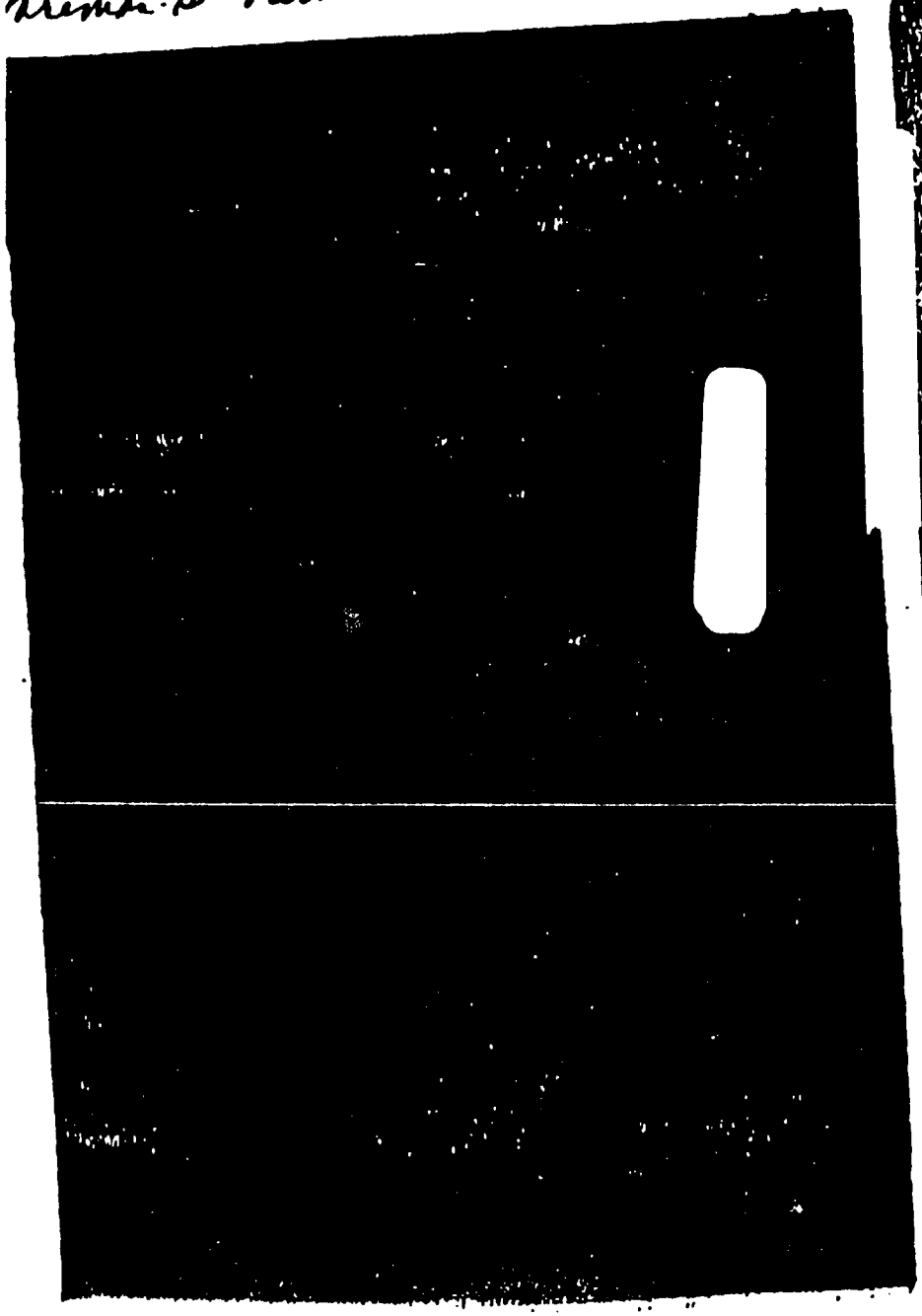

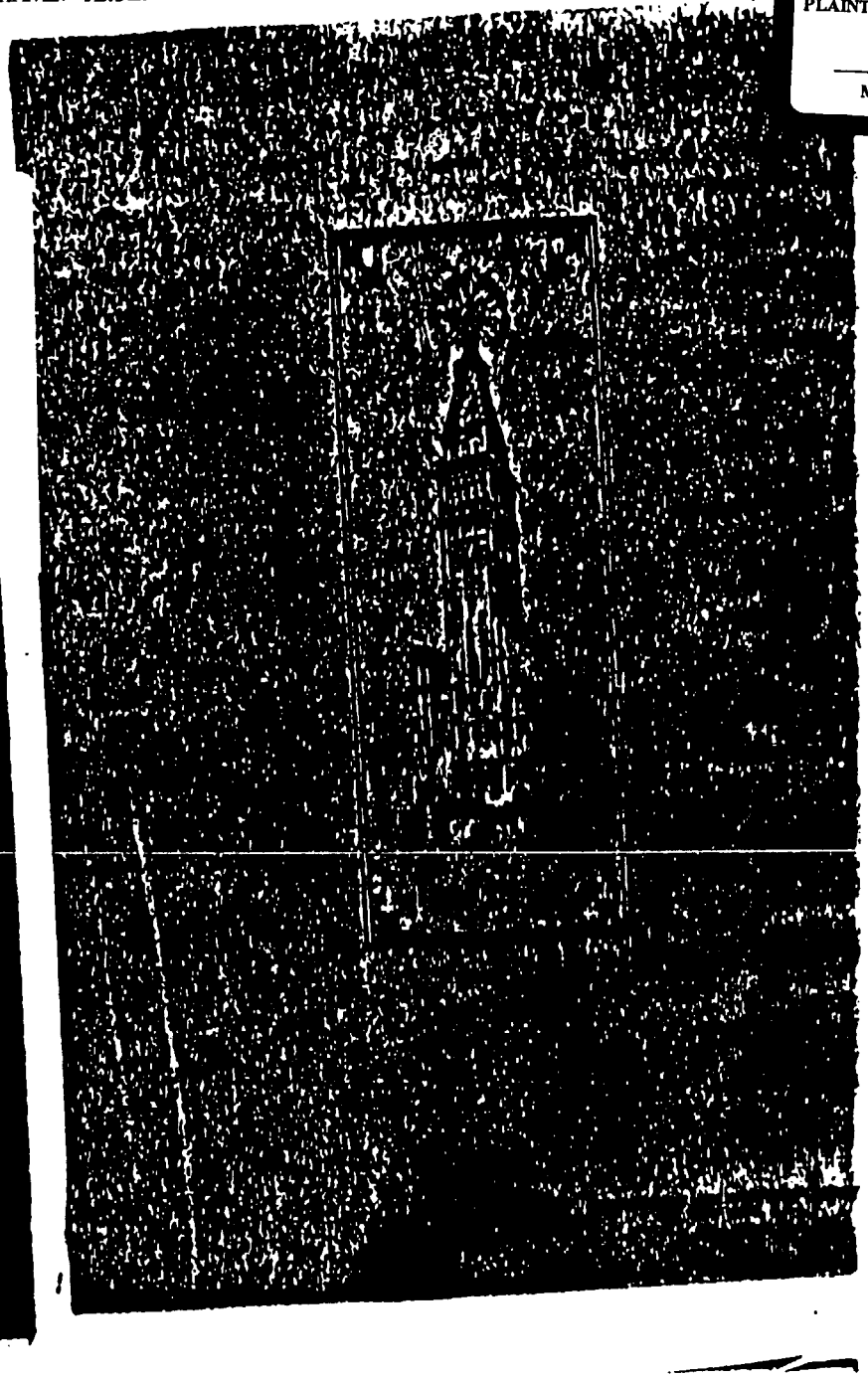

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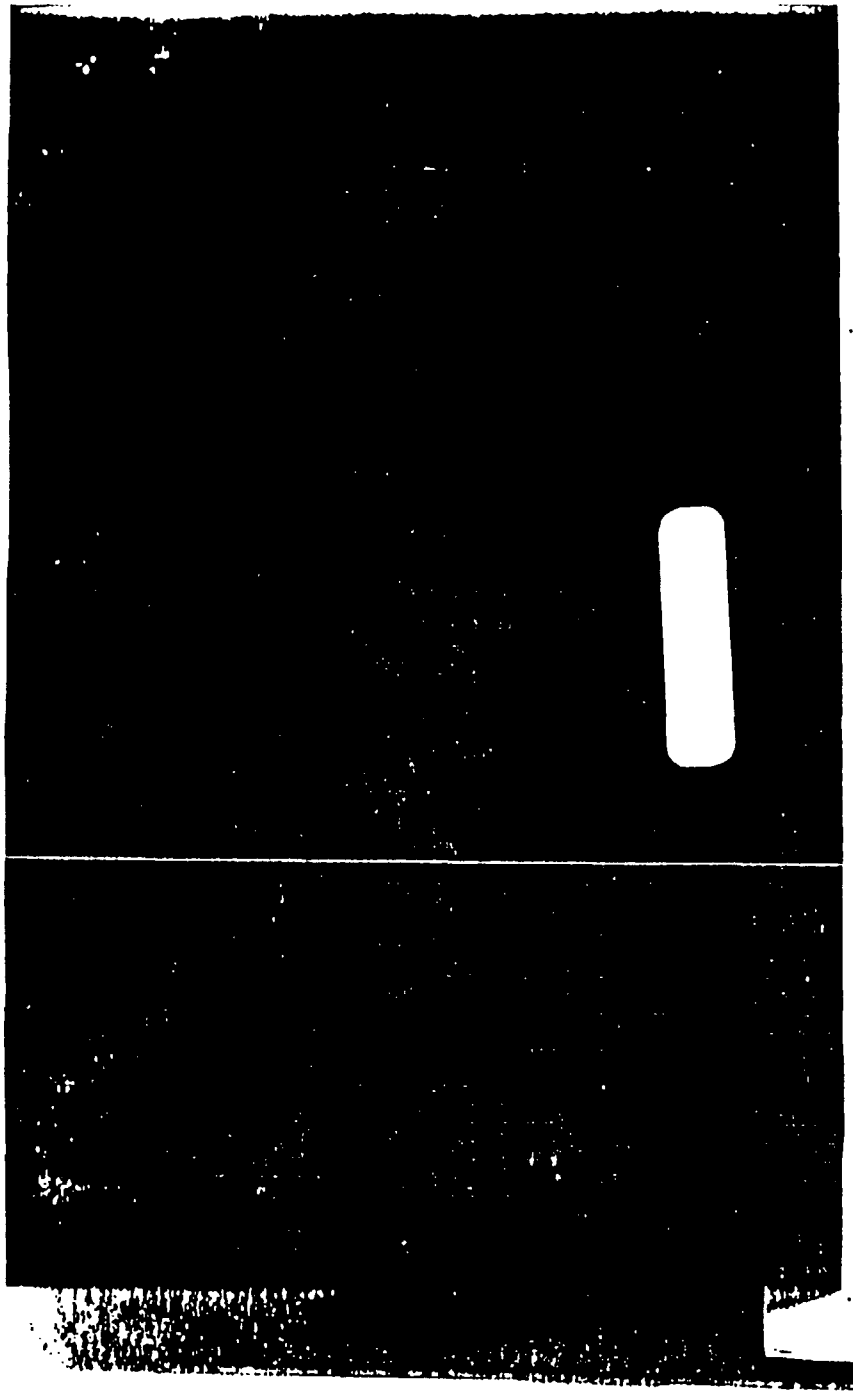


THE FOREMAN'S PART IN SAFETY

METHODS OF ENLISTING SUPERVISORY SUPPORT

INDUSTRIAL SAFETY NUMBER 1

SAFETY SECTION
METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
HOME OFFICE—NEW YORK
Pacific Coast Head Office—San Francisco
Canadian Head Office—Ottawa

The success of our accident prevention campaigns always has been and always will be chiefly dependent upon the support given them by the foremen.

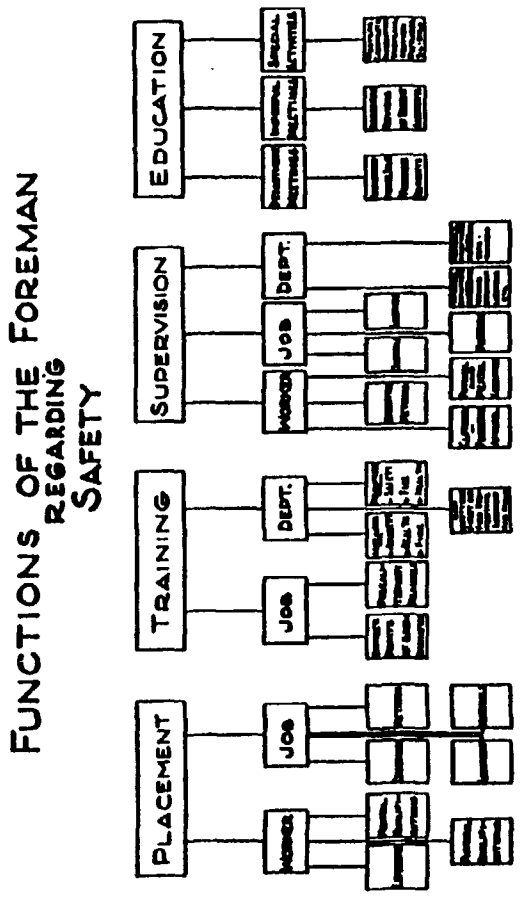
CYRUS McCORMICK, JR.

FOREWORD

TO PRESENT the principles governing successful industrial accident prevention work and to describe briefly methods of applying them, which a study of the field of safety engineering has shown to be effective, a series of Industrial Safety leaflets is being published.

The need for safety supervision and current methods of encouraging and sustaining the interest of foremen in safety are presented in this leaflet, the fourth of the series

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY



THE FOREMAN'S PART IN SAFETY

PRODUCTION WITH SAFETY

Experience has shown that efficient production requires a competent group of employees, free from personal injuries. The occurrence of accidents hampers operations, demoralizes the organization and interferes with the work of supervisors and men.

Aside from compensation and medical expense, accidents have been found to increase overhead and production costs. Often materials are spoiled, machinery injured or tools damaged. Occasionally, as a result of accidents, orders may not be completed on schedule; machinery may stand idle; or because of the substitution of a less competent man for the injured employee, the quality of the output may be lowered. In cases of permanent disability, time and money are spent training another employee for the job, while in some cases the disabled man is kept at regular wages, although performing less skilled work.

Ability to show a record of high production at low unit cost is considered one mark of a successful foreman. The prevention of personal injuries plays an important part in making such records possible.

Efficient Production Requires the Prevention of Accidents

MENTAL ATTITUDE A FACTOR IN SAFE WORKMANSHIP

THE accident records of many companies show that most personal injuries occur because of human failure, largely the inability of individuals to adjust their working habits to the hazards of their particular jobs.

It has been found that the safeguarding of machinery and the removal of physical hazards, although essential as proof of the company's willingness to provide safe working conditions, must also be accompanied by the adoption of safer practices on the part of employees and supervisors. This often requires a change of attitude toward the job, involving greater interest in the work and the protection of fellow workers from injury.

With the expansion of industry the foreman is generally recognized as holding the key position, since a competent, productive working force rests largely upon his ability to lead and inspire confidence among those under his direction. In many cases the success of safety work also depends upon his efforts to develop among his men proper interests and attitudes regarding safe working conditions and methods.

The Worker's Attitude Toward Safety Depends Largely Upon the Foreman

THE NEED OF SAFETY SUPERVISION

STUDIES of the underlying causes of accidents reveal that the failure of employees to perform their work safely, frequently may be prevented by systematic supervision. In most cases, this demands not only a constant check upon operating methods and conditions, but also a knowledge of men, resourcefulness, tact and careful guidance on the part of the foreman.

Adequate planning and the maintenance of a clean and orderly department serve as incentives for safe and efficient working methods.

Chance-taking, unnecessary haste, hazardous "short cuts" and other unsafe practices are discouraged by strong leadership, mature judgment and proper example.

A reputation for "square dealing" and a sincere personal interest in men assist the foreman to maintain adequate departmental discipline.

When coupled with proper selection, placement and training of employees and a periodic check of physical and mental fitness, these basic requirements of good foremanship usually make for an efficient, dependable working force, practically free from personal injuries.

Accident Prevention Requires a Constant Check Upon Working Methods

PLACEMENT OF WORKERS

A NUMBER of industrial accidents have been found to result from the placement of employees at work for which they are unsuited, mentally or physically.

Occasionally, the worker is incapable of performing his job safely because of a wrong attitude toward his work, lack of experience, chronic poor judgment, or ignorance. In some instances, mental disorders such as sluggishness, distraction, excitability or violent temper are important factors in the occurrence of accidents. In others, defective vision or hearing, epilepsy, heart disease, undeveloped hernia or similar physical disability is the underlying cause of personal injuries.

Some companies, besides investigating the employment history of prospective workers, subject them to a physical examination or employ aptitude tests to measure their fitness accurately. This information makes it possible to determine whether the applicant is capable of satisfying the requirements of the job, thus insuring his placement at work for which he is best adapted.

Knowledge of Physical and Mental Fitness Is Important

EMPLOYEE TRAINING

IN ADDITION to the careful selection and placement of workers, many executives find it profitable to provide a systematic program of instruction regarding safe and efficient shop practice for new employees, as well as for those transferred from other departments.

This is accomplished in some large organizations by the conduct of a training department or apprenticeship school, where employees are taught the requirements of each operation of their work. Others prefer to appoint "instructing foremen," acting under the supervision of department heads. On smaller properties departmental foremen are held accountable for employee training, as a part of their supervisory and managerial duties. In these cases, new or transferred workers are taught by the foreman himself or are placed under the guidance of an experienced employee for a given length of time.

Regardless of the method adopted, fixed responsibility for an adequate program of instruction and follow-up has proven one of the most effective means of insuring efficient workmanship, free from personal injuries.

Instruction in Safe Practices Insures Greater Freedom from Accidents

MAKING THE DEPARTMENT SAFE

EMPLOYEES and supervisors frequently have been found to lose interest in safety work solely because the management appeared insincere by failing to authorize the correction or removal of hazardous physical or mechanical conditions.

To overcome the tendency of supervisors to neglect safeguarding because of departmental cost, some companies charge expenditures for safety improvements and guarding to a general maintenance account or to a special fund appropriated for the purpose, rather than to the maintenance account of the department in which the improvements are made. This policy usually insures prompt action when corrections are needed, thus convincing employees that the company is sincerely interested in making the plant as physically safe as possible.

The responsibility for determining whether physical improvements or additional guarding is needed in a given department often is placed directly upon the supervisor in charge, acting in cooperation with the Safety Director. The latter records the necessary requirements and encourages officials to provide them promptly.

Accident Prevention First Demands Safe Working Conditions

MAINTAINING THE FOREMAN'S INTEREST

THE attitude of supervisors toward safety is generally considered as the determining factor in the success or failure of accident prevention work. This attitude is directly influenced by superintendents and operating officials, whose repeated indication of the importance attached to accident prevention by the company is highly essential.

Many organizations find it desirable for superintendents to hold monthly or semi-monthly meetings of foremen to acquaint them with problems or changes in policy. Instead of appointing foremen's safety committees or holding special meetings for foremen, accident prevention matters are frequently presented upon these occasions. This serves to maintain continual interest in the subject, as well as to convince supervisors that safety is considered a part of regular operating duties rather than as an additional activity.

When held at regular intervals, it is considered that these meetings afford excellent opportunities for superintendents to keep in close touch with the accident situation and to emphasize repeatedly the safety policies of the company.

Experience Has Shown Official Leadership as Indispensable

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE OF THE JOB

RECOGNITION of the growing importance of the foreman's position, with its many and varied responsibilities, recently has led a number of organizations to conduct systematic courses of instruction for supervisors regarding the requirements of successful foremanship.

To provide an opportunity for study and discussion of foremanship problems, as well as for the exchange of opinions and experiences regarding various phases of their jobs, special meetings of the supervisory force are held in some cases by company officials. In others, group conferences, composed of representatives of a number of local industries, are arranged under the auspices of a civic body or influential company. In some communities Foremen's Clubs are organized for a similar purpose. Correspondence courses and text study plans are also employed.

Safety is given a prominent place in some foremanship training programs. Supervisory duties in respect to safety, the effect of accidents upon production costs, causes of accidents, methods of prevention, safeguards or other related subjects are included.

Familiarity with Plant Problems Makes for Successful Foremanship

ENCOURAGING DEPARTMENTAL EFFORT

SOME organizations promoting effective safety work have deemed it highly desirable for foremen to conduct certain safety activities among their employees.

A portion of the program of departmental meetings, often called for the purpose of creating mutual interests between supervisors and workers, is devoted to safety. A short instructive talk is given by a foreman, superintendent or operating official; the department's accident experience or relative standing is reviewed and causes and remedies of serious accidents are discussed, followed by suggestions for increasing the scope of the department's safety work.

Informal, short meetings of the foreman with his men provide an opportunity to discuss intimately the safety problems of the group.

The appointment of a competent employee as his safety assistant enables the foreman in many cases to carry out the details of his accident prevention plans more efficiently.

Periodic interdepartmental safety contests serve to intensify the interest of supervisors and men.

Development of Mutual Safety Interests Between Foremen and Men Is Essential

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH FOREMEN ON THE JOB

THE success of departmental safety work depends largely upon the ability of operating officials and executives to encourage constant effort on the part of foremen. Experience has shown that this may best be accomplished by keeping in close touch with them on the job.

Periodic safety visits to operations by officials, superintendents or Safety Directors are usually made to inspect a department, to investigate the circumstances surrounding a recent accident or to confer with supervisors concerning specific safety problems or additional mechanical or physical safeguarding requirements.

Occasionally, a safety suggestion made by a member of a department is discussed with the foreman in charge to determine its merit. Visits are also frequently made to congratulate supervisors on behalf of the company for an excellent safety record, to determine the cause of excessive accident cost, to solicit cooperation in arranging for special safety activities or to encourage greater effort because of unsatisfactory accident experience.

Maximum Results Demand Frequent Safety Contacts

RECORDING THE RESULTS

OFFICIAL recognition of efficient safety work generally provides the most effective means of imbuing the supervisory force with the "safety spirit."

As a rule, the Insurance or Safety Department maintains a record of the company's accident experience. From it a monthly departmental report, showing the number of lost-time accidents, the estimated number of days lost and approximate cost, is often prepared and sent by the chief operating official to each supervisor. In some organizations, accident costs when obtainable, are charged to departmental operating accounts; and the foremen in whose departments accidents have occurred are notified accordingly. These measures serve to emphasize the effect of accidents upon operating costs and to commend or penalize supervisors for the results they have obtained.

Often bonuses are granted or prizes donated to foremen and employees of a department making an outstanding safety record or winning a safety contest. In some cases, safety as well as production records are made the basis for promotion.

Official Recognition of Good Safety Work Stimulates Greater Effort

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

PREVIOUS BOOKLETS OF INDUSTRIAL SAFETY SERIES

No. 1—*Getting Results from Safety Work*

2—*Getting Facts About Accidents*

3—*Directing the Plant Safety Work*

Other Available Publications Dealing with Industrial Safety

Safety in Welding

Preventing Foundry Accidents

The Accident-Prone Employee

A Study of Safety Activities in Gas and Electric Utilities

Preventing Taxicab Accidents

Foremen's Safety Conferences

Methods of Organizing and Conducting Industrial Safety Contests

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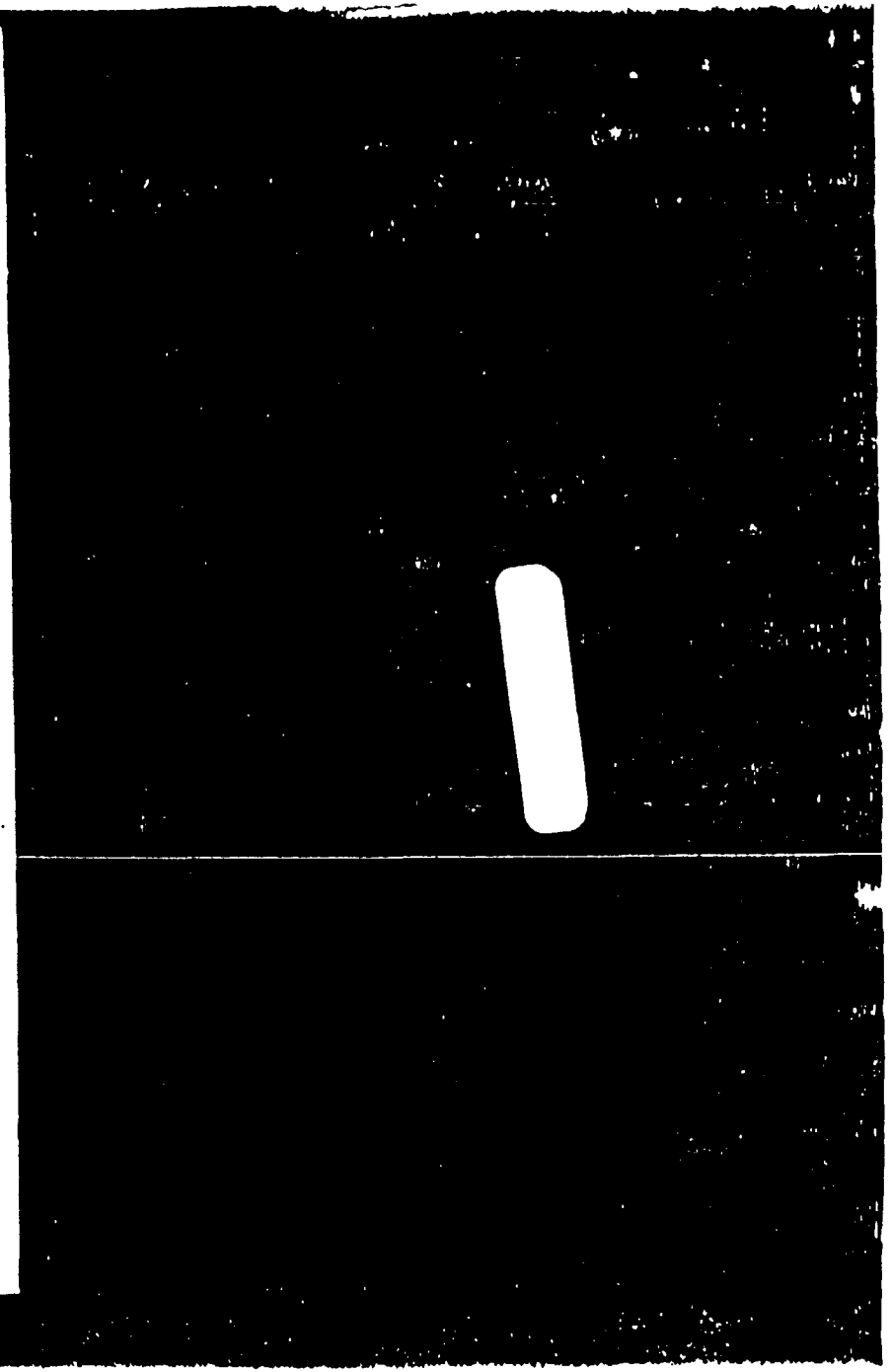

Directing Plant Safety Work

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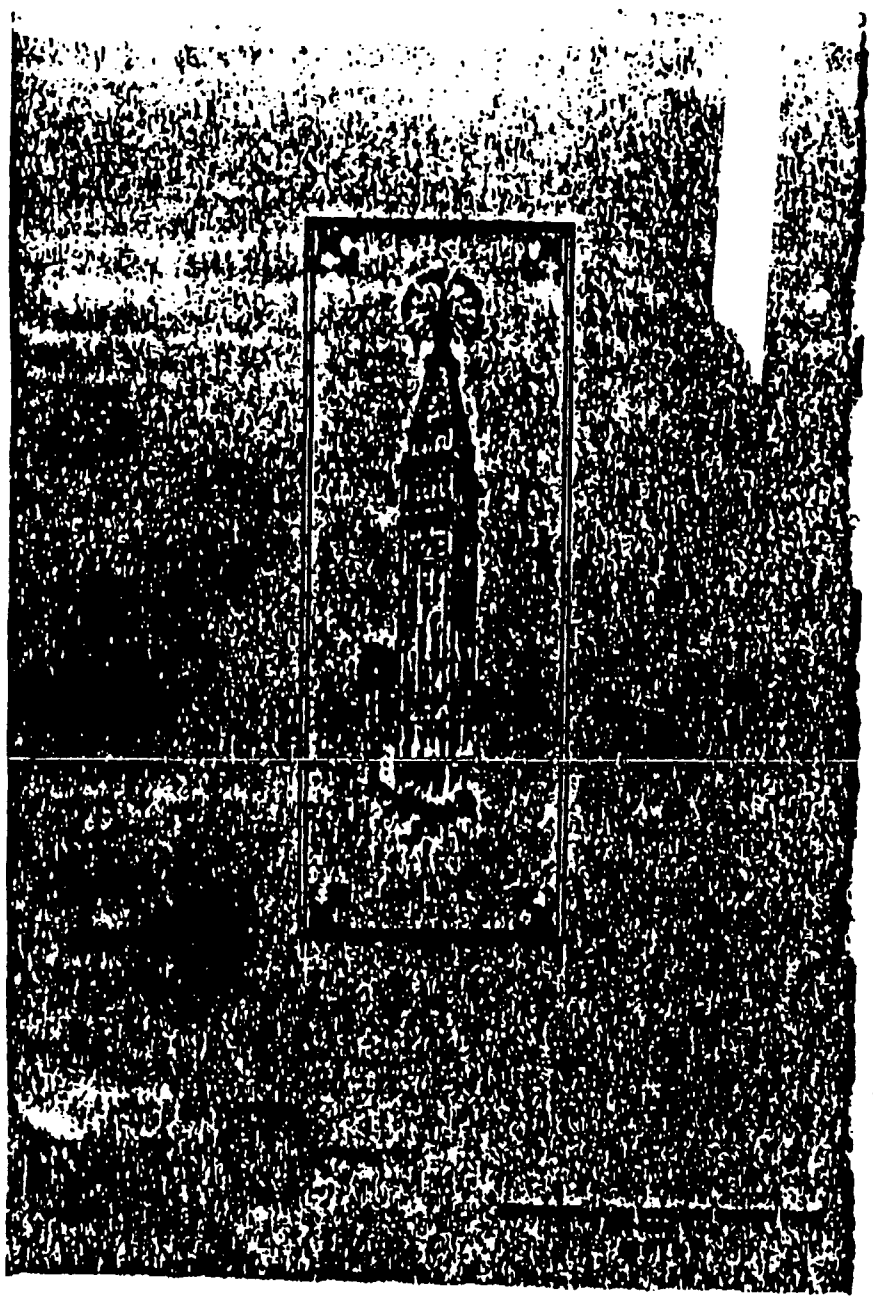

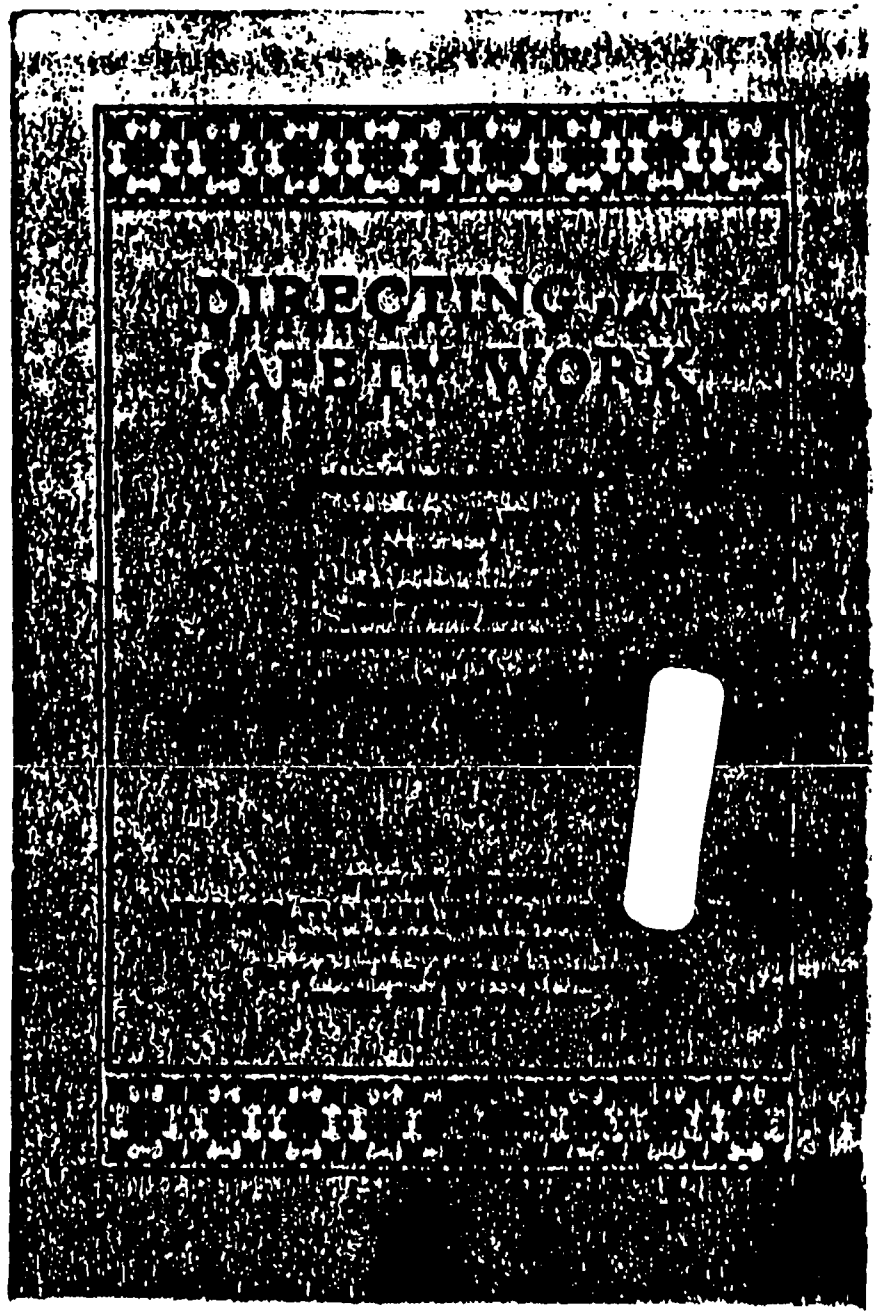

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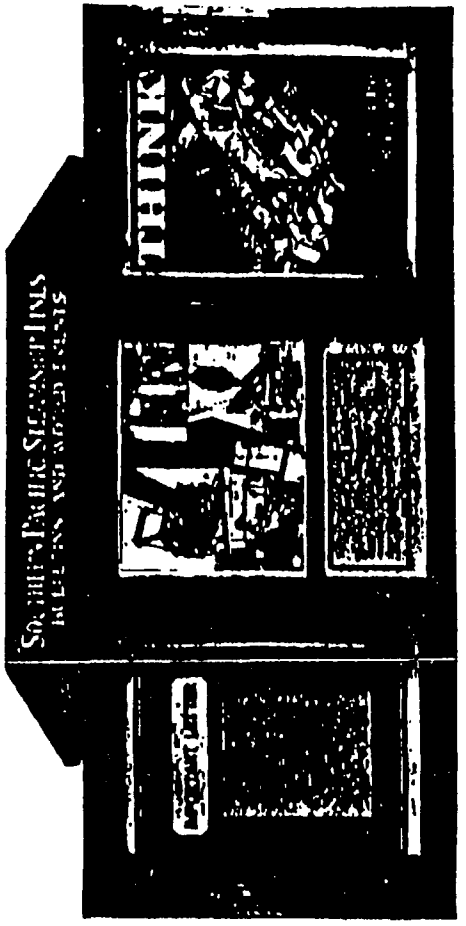

An Effective Bulletin Board Display

SAFETY ADVERTISING

PRINCIPLES OF ADVERTISING

ADVERTISING is commonly recognized by industrial and commercial executives as indispensable to maximum sales production. It serves as a process of education to keep the public informed regarding the merits of the commodity or idea, and by constant repetition, gradually to establish an association between the subject with which it deals and the needs of the public.

To obtain best results, advertisements are usually designed first to attract the reader by means of an appeal to certain inherent instincts he possesses, and then to stimulate definite action by arousing desire or interest and by creating confidence in the statements that are made.

The value of an advertisement has been found to depend largely upon the number of mental impressions the message produces. As this is governed by the length of time it retains attention, display material of "high-attention" quality is regarded as essential. The methods adopted in providing for these requirements have proved equally effective when applied to advertising in non-commercial fields.

Advertising Plays a Major Part in the Success of Many Undertakings