

THE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY MOVEMENT

more than a pious wish on the part of management. It demanded the creation of a corps of specialists in the field of accident prevention. It demanded outlets for the exchange of knowledge among such specialists. It demanded the development of a body of literature dealing with the subject.

From this need grew the loosely knit body of devoted men and women who make up what is called the "safety movement." From this need grew such agencies as the National Safety Council and such books as this Manual.

The practical, measurable effects of the work of the safety movement over the years have been amazingly great. Probably, the pioneers of safety could not imagine, and thus did not hope for, the level of safety performance which has become routine in industrial plants in less than a lifetime.

This success has produced still another revolution in thinking. What had once been a move to alleviate financial hardship caused by accidents soon became a determined effort to eliminate accidents themselves.

Today the safety movement does not think in limited terms. So much has been done by so few so quickly that professional safety men and industrial managers now "think big" about the job of accident prevention.

It may be that somewhere in the future there will be encountered a sort of barrier—an irreducible hard core of unavoidable accidents. But the magnitude of past progress, the trends of immediate experience, and the greatly increased resources available for the work all suggest that the greatest achievements still lie ahead.

In summary, here are the reasons for a continuing and militant effort to prevent accidents:

- 1 Needless destruction of life and health is a moral evil.
- 2 Failure to take necessary precautions against predictable accidents involves moral responsibility for those accidents.
- 3 Accidents severely limit efficiency and productivity.
- 4 Accidents produce far-reaching social harm.
- 5 The safety movement has already demonstrated that its techniques are effective in reducing accident rates and promoting efficiency.



Fig 1-3. Give the man a cigar . . . or (in summer) a fly swatter! This 1913 display used by the Joliet Works of Illinois Steel Company, the first plant to organize a safety committee, offers a variety of safety incentives: watch fobs, paper weights, cigars, and a calendar.

6 Nothing in the available data suggests that safety people are near a limit in their ability to extend the moral, and practical values of accident prevention.

Safety personnel have at their fingertips a tremendous body of knowledge, an effective, nationwide safety organization, enhanced prestige, great economic resources, and a sound basis for confidence in their methods.

In a word, members of the safety movement stand at a period of safety history in which much is given them—and in which much is justly demanded of them.

Origin of the Safety Movement

Since this Manual is not designed for scholars but for practical men in the safety movement, the remote history of that movement need not be considered here. Of concern is the nearer past, beginning with the last half of the 19th Century.

American industry was expanding greatly,