

The opening session was called to order by Chairman Charles E. Hill, General Safety Agent, New York Central Lines, New York City. The invocation was given by the Very Reverend Gerald Gratton Moore, Dean of St. Luke's Pro-Cathedral, of Evanston, Ill. The report of J. C. Caviston, Secretary of the Association, was presented; and the chairman then called upon the first speaker.

Report of the Committee on Education

By L. G. BENTLEY

General Safety Agent, Chesapeake & Ohio Railway, Richmond, Va.

After presenting figures on the distribution of educational literature under the supervision of his committee, the speaker said in part: The committee on education believes that in producing educational matter for the consumption of the men back home there are three kinds of ideas that can be presented. There is the inspirational, which puts the minds of men to work on their moral responsibilities for the safety of their fellow men; there is the informative, which tells the men over the country how the work is progressing; and there is the educational, which gets right down into the heart of accident causes and remedies and seeks to plant in the minds of those who direct and those who work a knowledge of the manner in which they can prevent men from getting hurt.

It has been said that the day of the inspirational appeal is past, that safety today is altogether a matter of supervision and obedience to rules. Is this true? Is the day of sentimental appeal gone? Have we forgotten that man is his brother's keeper?

The answer to these questions seems to be conclusive, when we find that during the last year our distribution of inspirational posters greatly exceeded in volume the distribution of any other type of educational material. Although both our informative posters and our strictly educational posters were well received, the inspirational posters led all the rest.

But are we doing all that we can with these products? Do you know that there are 430,000 miles of track on our railroads and that we sold but 2,000 copies of our educational poster entitled "A Bum Stroke," or one poster for 215 miles of rails? On the very best distribution that we were able to effect, we sold only one for 43 miles of track. A man would have to travel a long way to see such a poster.

If I were the executive of a railroad, what would be my attitude toward the safety of my men? Would it be active or passive? Are you, Mr. President, satisfied to delegate the authority of carrying on the safety work to your subordinates, and then withdraw your active evidences of interest? Nothing is more discouraging to the man who is out in the field striving to accomplish, than to know that the big boss has a passive attitude toward his work.

I think the safety work on any railroad is an operating feature. Safety is operation. If there is an accident it is a criticism of the operation of that organization. Therefore, the safety department of a railroad, in my opinion, should be actively and closely associated with the operating head of the railroad; and by the same token, it seems to me that the reporting of accidents to the Interstate Commerce Commission should be done by the operating head of the railroad. They are his accidents, and if he is required to report them to the Interstate Commerce Commission, he must know all that is to be known about those accidents, how they occurred, what might have been done to prevent them, and whether or not they are proper to be reported to the Commission.

Report of Committee on Prevention of Highway Crossing Accidents

By H. A. ROWE

Manager, Claims Department, Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad, New York City

The speaker said in part: Your committee has the satisfaction of once more reporting a definite decrease in the number of railroad highway crossing accidents, fatalities and injuries throughout the nation for the calendar year 1932, this being the fourth consecutive year of recessions from the peak year of 1928. The record is as follows: 1912, 3,499 accidents, 1,526 fatalities, and 3,989 injuries; as compared with the year 1928, 5,800 accidents, 2,568 fatalities, and 6,667 injuries. The reduction therefore, in accidents was 22 per cent, in fatalities 40 per cent, and in injuries, 40 per cent.

The problem of the prevention of railroad highway crossing accidents where double or multiple tracks are concerned seems to be growing in importance. In the month from the first week in March to the first week in April, 1933, three crossing accidents occurred in widely divergent sections of our country. In each of these cases, seven persons were killed. All three tragedies happened on double tracks.

These tragedies are indicative that the present signal system at highway crossings does not convey to the public mind a proper understanding of the situation. There appears to be necessity that signal systems should speak the language of motorists rather than be regarded strictly as a railroad engineering project.

The consensus of opinion of members of this and preceding committees of your section, studying the same subject, is that approximately 95 per cent of all railroad crossing accidents are preventable by the driver of the motor vehicle. This indicates definitely the necessity of education of the individual driver.

Your committee unanimously presents the following recommendations:

That particular stress be laid upon the necessity of giving adequate and timely warning to the public of the approach of trains to a highway crossing by sounding of the crossing whistle and the ringing of engine bell;

That the warning from engine should be continued until the crossing is definitely reached;

That suitable standardized methods of protection be employed where necessary at crossings to facilitate uniformity and public understanding thereof;

That crossings be periodically inspected and continuously maintained in sound travelable condition.

Address by the Chairman

By CHARLES E. HILL

General Safety Agent, New York Central Lines, New York City

The speaker said in part: During the five-year period ending with 1913 and immediately prior to the general adoption of organized safety on American railroads, the employee casualty ratio increased at an alarming rate. In 1914 the casualty rate began to drop and there has never been a year since this downward trend in accident frequency started when the casualty rate was as high or even approached that of 1913.