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Lines Worth Preserving

THE JOY OF THE WORKING.

And only the master shall praise us,
And only the master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money,
And no one shall work for fame;
But each for the joy of the working
And each in his separate star,
Shall draw the thing as he sees it
For the God of things as they are.

—Kipling.

Our Outlook

ONE YEAR'S RAILWAY SLAUGHTER.

The report of the inter-state commerce commission just issued at Washington presents to the world the appalling fact that, in the United States, no less than 10,618 persons have been killed and 97,706 injured by railway catastrophies during the one year, ending June 30, 1906.

An approximate view of the terrible loss of life and limb involved in these figures may be obtained by comparison with one of the most destructive battles recorded in the history of all the world's wars.

At Gettysburg, the life loss on the Federal side was 2,834, and the wounded were 13,709 while the Confederate loss numbered 3,500 killed, and 14,500 wounded—the totals on both sides being 5,334 killed and 28,209 wounded.

But in one year of peace, the number of those killed and wounded by railway disasters in this country amounts to nearly double these awful figures.

Millions of Passengers.

From the same report we learn that the total number of passengers carried during that one year reached near the billion mark, the figures being 977,136,328, and no less than 1,641,374,219 tons of freight was carried being an increase on the previous year of sixty millions of passengers, and, on tons of freight, over two hundred and two millions.

The average revenue per passenger was a trifle over two cents per mile (2.002). The ratio of expenses to earnings was over 68 per cent. On the pay rolls were a total of 1,521,355 persons.

Here, then, is a great business that finds employment for over one and a half million of persons and carries an average of nearly two and three quarters of a million passengers per day.

It is but fair, therefore, when reflecting upon the loss of life and limb occasioned by this traffic to consider the comparative ratio of these accidents to the whole of the traffic. If estimated by the passengers carried and without considering those whose death or hurt occur among em-

ployees on freight trains, the ratio of deaths to the number of passengers carried is as one to 9,261.

This view of the matter may lessen the frightful significance of the first figures, but it does not remove from the railway companies the responsibility for the death of one passenger in every ten thousand or nearly thirty persons daily, and the maiming of one in every thousand or thereabouts.

It is high time that supreme attention be given to the safety of passengers, even if it should lessen the pay and the speed of one great railroad.

Level Crossings as Death Traps.

A sad case occurred last Sunday, which is fairly typical of one of the most common causes of railway slaughter.

Two girls, 17 and 18 years of age respectively, were crossing the tracks at Blue Island on their way home. The Rocky Mountain Limited was on its way toward Chicago, running at express speed. Traveling the opposite way was a freight train, and the warning whistle was sounded, which had the effect of confusing the girls, and they ran into the express, to almost instant death.

The present activity of many of the railway companies in elevating their tracks, or otherwise abandoning the level crossing, is a most desirable forward move, and it should be insisted upon as a prompt measure to be adopted on all railways throughout the United States.

WEIGHED IN FALSE BALANCES.

Crime and Wealth.

The Saturday Evening Post has made public the views of a certain sociologist, who is of opinion that this nation is on the verge of bankruptcy because the cost of crime is greater than the national increase of wealth.

In order that we may have the proposition before us in the cold figures of the Post's article we quote them as they are given:

"A sociologist has shown that we are on the verge of bankruptcy because we spend \$6,000,000,000 a year on criminals and paupers, while the national increase in wealth is only \$5,000,000,000 a year. He has the figures, some of them right out of the census, and the situation is actually much more appalling than he pictures it, for it is well known that hard times greatly increase the proportion of both paupers and criminals. Thus, when we are bankrupt, we shall have to spend \$8,000,000,000 or \$9,000,000,000 a year on those classes while the annual increase of wealth will be cut down to only \$3,000,000,000 or \$4,000,000,000, and it is as plain as the nose on your face that, in a very few years, we shall be in a state compared with which mere bankruptcy is the highest imaginable degree of opulence."

Now it is far from our thought to lessen the deepest possible concern for the state of things which is represented by such enormous figures of the cost of crime and pauperism, but it is curious to note how we may be completely befooled by a one-sided view of statistics, especially if we are

bent on confining some theory already existing in our minds.

The sociologist referred to in the Saturday Evening Post's article sees that the national increase of wealth is five billion dollars, while on the debit side of the account is an item of six billions; therefore, he argues, we are going one million a year to the bad.

If one spend—say, \$1,000 a year on an automobile for pleasure, and add only \$500 a year to his accumulated wealth fund—that may be very foolish and extravagant, but it is surely no evidence of being on the verge of bankruptcy.

We are tempted to quote the humorous lines which were copied in our "Gleanings" column last week:

The Optimist and Pessimist
The difference is droll,
The Optimist sees the dough-nut
The Pessimist sees the hole.

POSTOFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

The proposal of Postmaster-General Meyer to immediately take into practical action the subject of postal savings banks will be certainly popular.

It will meet with the opposition of bankers, especially that large number of them that has a savings department, although the adoption of the system will have the effect of increasing savings and circulating small sums which are buried, rather than to cut deeply into the savings banks' business.

The present savings banks take in the larger savings and allow three or three and a half per cent interest. The proposed postal system will deal with the smallest possible sums and will allow two per cent.

This will have the effect of increasing savings and will inculcate the spirit of saving in the young. We should say that if any class of business people need fear the postal savings bank it is that large class of store-keepers who almost wholly depend upon young people's spendings. Children spend their nickels and dimes altogether too readily for their good. The postal savings banks would encourage the opening of accounts with small sums and the saving of the pennies.

If the British system of saving by postage stamps be adopted, even the pennies may become a great source of wealth to the people.

In England, children take a card on which is twelve squares; each square may be covered by a penny (2c.) stamp, and when filled, it represents one shilling, and is received on deposit at any postoffice.

The total number of depositors in Great Britain is 9,673,717, with an amount on deposit of \$721,819,216. Other countries have adopted the system with similar results; Italy has nearly six million depositors, with a total of deposits amounting to \$218,278,893, and Japan has nearly one hundred thousand, with over twenty millions deposited.