

DR. METCALFE TALKS AT ROTARY MEETING

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states safety is now a part of the curriculum and through independent organizations, the importance of safe manners of work and recreation are being constantly called to the attention of our people everywhere. Many of the state governments have model traffic rules and just recently the uniform traffic committee, of which President Hoover was chairman, has completed its work and its recommendations have been made to state legislatures for approval. Many new engineering features have been introduced to give a greater latitude of safety on our streets and highways. All in all, a great work is being done to eliminate accidents. To say that these efforts have not produced the most gratifying results would be to deny the facts. On the other hand, to say that we have reached the millennium in accident prevention, or even made an approach to it, would be untrue. A great work has been done and is now going on with renewed vigor. If the task of eliminating accidents to the extent we desire has been successful, we can hardly lay the blame anywhere except on the shoulders of our citizens in their individual capacities.

In the first place, the old saying, "accidents will happen," is absolutely false. There are very few things that "just happen." There is always a cause somewhere. Right here let me say that the chief cause behind most accidents is either failure to think, carelessness, either through habit or haste, or chance-taking, which often involves disrespect for our laws. Now, while this is true in most fields of accidents, it is particularly true in the field of automobile accidents. Regardless of the fact that automobiles are being designed primarily along safety lines, in spite of our modern traffic signals, improved highways and the protection at most grade crossings, the number of automobile fatalities is steadily rising and last year, as I said before, 28,000 people lost their lives through this medium. It is estimated that these auto accidents cost the people of this country, in wages and property, close to \$700,000,000. Let us analyze for a moment those 28,000 lives which were lost last year, at least with respect to two phases upon which I want to elaborate.

Children under 15 years of age formed 27 per cent of the victims, while over 65 per cent of those killed were pedestrians. Here again is something interesting. Making an

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