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### The Band Box

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## New Safety Rules Urged by Road Builders

During every 24 hours of 1928 an estimated average of 2,360 persons are being killed or seriously injured on the streets and highways of the United States. The estimated economic loss for the first six months of 1928 was \$350,000,000 exclusive of small property damage and insurance premiums. At the present rate of increase there will be exacted a toll of 40,000 human lives in highway accidents during 1935. These figures were part of an analytical highway safety report issued today by the American Road Builders' Association.

During the first six months of 1928 the American Road Builders' Association estimates that 13,750 persons were killed and 412,500 seriously injured in highway accidents. The total for 1927

was 26,618 killed and 798,700 seriously injured, a total of 825,318 casualties. At the present rate approximately 27,500 persons will be killed by the end of 1928.

What do these figures show? Do they indicate that the American people are becoming alarmingly careless at the wheel of an automobile or while walking upon the street? Do they mean that modern cars are too fast or too inefficient to be safely operated on our system of highways?

A careful analysis of highway accident statistics will show the latter to be largely untrue. The principal causes of highway accidents, it will be shown, are discourtesy and carelessness on the part of both drivers and pedestrians. The statistics prove the following points:

First—That the most important causes of highway accidents where motorists are principally at fault are in order of their importance—inattention, speeding, traffic law violation and intoxication. Of the 26,618 killed in 1927, motorists were at fault in 11,765 fatalities and all but 1,882 were attributed to the above causes.

Second—That the most important causes of highway accidents where motorists are principally at fault are: children playing in the street or crossing in violation of traffic law, adult jay-walking, inattention, and confusion. Of the 11,367 deaths caused principally by pedestrians in 1927, all but 1,250 were attributed to these causes.

Third—That adverse physical conditions such as wet streets, defective roads, poor lights and narrow streets, caused 3,586 deaths.

Fourth—That the human factor is responsible for 95 percent of all accidents.

Fifth—That the human factor which causes highway accidents is largely the result of certain definable physical conditions such as complex traffic laws, traffic congestion, discourtesy on the part of fellow motorists, carelessness on the part of fellow motorists, fatigue, physical incompetency, lack of confidence and the improper conduct of pedestrians.

Sixth—That approximately 60 percent of all fatalities are pedestrians.

Seventh—That more than 30 percent of all fatalities are children of school age.

Eighth—That accidents involving pedestrians continue to climb in number much faster than accidents involving only motorists.

The American Road Builders' Association has collected much data related to the causes of highway accidents. The organization has used, in addition, much information already made available by other associations interested in the safety problems. The road organization has launched as a result of its studies, a national highway safety campaign based upon what it believes to be the fundamental principles of highway accident prevention. These principles are in brief:

First—That all cities and communities should undertake local campaigns to educate pedestrian traffic in the principles of courtesy and caution while on the public street or highway. The use of common sense is recommended in lieu of complex traffic rules.

Second—That all states should adopt a system of examination and licensing of motor vehicle drivers.

Third—That the adoption of the uniform codes of state and municipal traffic laws based on the report prepared by the National Conference on Street and Highway Safety is desirable.

Fourth—That the education of drivers in the principles of courtesy and caution should be undertaken in all communities.

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