

In The Automobile World

FRANCIS M. HUGO'S VIEWS

DON'T THROW WHOLE BLAME ON AUTO TRAFFIC

Consider Facts Before Condemning for Accidents, is Advice of Secretary of State—Prosecute Reckless Drivers.

(By Francis M. Hugo, New York Secretary of State)
Everyone must deplore the waste of life and limb as a result of highway accidents and would welcome any practical suggestion by which it is likely to be reduced. But no good purpose is served by attempting to throw the whole blame on the motor car traffic. It is true that of the total accidents, fatal and otherwise, last year nearly 80 per cent. were attributable to motor vehicles, and that the proportion is considerably higher than it was in the preceding year. But it is equally true that horse-drawn vehicles were responsible for 20 per cent. That fact suggests that just as the evil is not confined to motor vehicles so the measures to be taken to remedy it must not be considered with reference to them alone. It further suggests that since horse-drawn vehicles mainly fall under the category of slow traffic, the remedy is not to be found in the wholesale imposition of speed limits as is often suggested. The fallacy of the speed limit is that it acts as a sort of license permitting drivers to drive up to the speed it specifies in places in which it is enforced, whereas the safe speed is often perhaps generally a function not so much of the place as of the circumstances existing at the moment.

Prosecution for Speeders

Speed limits, in fact, tend to make the driver suspend the exercise of his own judgment and act under the sanction of a supposed authority; and the way to stop accidents is not to establish artificial restrictions which cannot meet every case, but to allow the driver freedom to use his own judgment and hold him fully responsible for whatever happens in consequences of what he does. Relentless prosecution should follow every example of dangerous, reckless and even grossly inconsiderate driving; and for really serious offenses that are proved beyond doubt, the culprit should be imprisoned without the option of a fine and should be prohibited from driving either for a substantial period or perpetually.

No doubt, as many persons complain, it is more difficult to secure a conviction for dangerous driving than for exceeding a speed limit, because in the one case it is a matter of opinion and in the other it is or should be a question of facts. But that only makes a conviction of the former kind, when secured, more valuable and effective than one for an offense which is commonly looked upon as purely nominal and which is committed by most motorists habitually and probably by all occasionally.

Consider the Facts

Those who think that speed is the great cause of street accidents might do worse than consider the possibility of establishing their case by facts instead of relying upon vague enunciations. There is room and there should be material for a systematic investigation of the subject, presumably coroner's inquests were held on each of the hundreds of deaths that were recorded last year as the result of street accidents and a critical scrutiny of the evidence given and the verdicts returned at those inquiries ought to reasonably attributable to the speed at which the vehicles concerned were traveling.

The words "careful and prudent" are inserted in the law because obviously vehicles must be allowed to move at some speed above a walking pace if they are to serve the needs of the community and if the roads are not to be hopelessly congested. Otherwise an easy method of abolishing street accidents would be to abolish traffic.

One explanation of the increase in the number of accidents caused by motor vehicles is the increase in the number of such vehicles. Whether the ration by which the mischief wrought by them has increased is or is not greater than that by which their numbers have increased it is impossible to say in the absence of proper statistics. But even if it were greater nothing is thereby proved as to their great intrinsic danger in comparison with horse-drawn vehicles.

To be worth making, the comparison must be upon equal terms and must take account of the all-important fact that the mileage of which motor vehicles are capable in the given time is far larger than that which can be accomplished by horse-drawn vehicles; or, in other words, that any single motor vehicle has much greater opportunity of damage than any single horse-drawn vehicle. If the data required were forthcoming it would become possible to make a fair comparison and to say whether or not the danger is increasing in either case.

VETERAN AUTO DESIGNER.

Heaslet, of Studebaker Plant, Built First Car Nineteen Years Ago.

James G. Heaslet, in charge of engineering and production of the Studebaker Corporation, belongs to the limited few who have been in the automobile industry practically since its inception.

It is a far cry from the first horseless carriage which Mr. Heaslet designed 19 years ago to the present highly developed series 17 Studebaker four-cylinder and six-cylinder models. Yet though all the years he has never deviated from his policy of adhering to a dignified design of the product for which he was responsible; or of designing a car, for instance, that the owner would not find

his automobile becoming obsolete in a year.

"It is my experience that people have changed their ideas of what counts for most in an automobile," says Mr. Heaslet. "They are no longer swayed by unique or novel design, but by real worth. They want the car that offers the most all-around value for the amount of money they are willing to spend, and they use common-sense methods of determining that value. They look for power, dignified design, roomy comfort, easy riding quality, good looks that do not become obsolete in a year, and the ability of the car to stand up under hard usage."

"I have always taken pride in the fact that the owner of a Studebaker car would not be ashamed to drive it two or three years. In other words, Studebaker cars have never showed radical changes in appearance each year so as to make a man driving last year's model feel that he was a year behind the procession. Of course, there are people who seek novel and fadish appearance of design, but it is an element in the fast diminishing minority."

CARE OF STEERING GEAR

Is Important Task for the Auto Owner.

The overhaul of the steering gear is most important and no part of the work should be slighted. And play of the steering column can be eliminated and lost motion in the wheel corrected by reworking the gears, bringing a new section in mesh. Play in the drag link can usually be removed by adjusting the position of the plug in relation to the ball end of the arms, but extreme wear of the linkage of the tierod, yokes, &c., will require new bushings and bolts.

These parts should be lubricated and where bolts are utilized these repacked with grease. The bearings of the front wheels should be cleaned, lubricated and adjusted, and if the cones, races and balls are worn, replaced with new. Never use one or more new balls with old. After completing this work test the wheels for alignment and any error can be corrected by lengthening or shortening the tierod. A test of the alignment of the wheels should be made monthly, as wheels out of true quickly destroy tires.

The springs should be either disassembled or the leaves spread apart for cleaning lubrication. A mixture of graphite and oil, forming a thick paste, is excellent for springs and the same material can be successfully employed on the tire rims, which should be first cleaned. Worn spring bolts and hangers should be replaced with new when considerable play exists, and the spring clips set up snug. The rivets of the frame and cross members should be inspected, and the nuts and bolts retaining the fender irons and running boards gone over with the wrench, as one or more loose parts may be the cause of that annoying squeak.

EASY FOR LADY DRIVERS.

Advantages of Overland Pointed Out by President of Company.

Women are becoming more and more proficient automobile drivers. This is the opinion of John N. Willys, president of the Willys-Overland Company.

"The engineers at our big Toledo plant," said Mr. Willys, "keeping in mind the use of all our models by women as well as men, have reduced the mechanism of our cars to simplicity itself."

"Today a woman steps into the car and takes a seat with confidence. Sitting upright she presses the magneto button in the switchbox on the steering column—a feature of all Overland and Willys-Knight models—and presses the toe-button to start the motor—no cranking is needed."

"She presses the clutch pedal—only a gentle pressure—and the clutch is released. The brakes work easily. The steering wheel also works easily."

"To sound the warning signal she has only to touch another button in the switchbox just below the steering wheel and the horn sounds electrically."

"Instead of fussing around with matches to ignite oil or acetylene lamps, all that is required is a touch of another button in the switchbox."

WON ON TRACTION TREADS

Tires Gripped the Grass and Gave Driver Perfect Control

"As I told you when you were last in town, I competed in the automobile Gymkhana events with my car. Each competitor was only allowed one prize. As per the enclosed clipping, I won the 'Forward and Reverse' race, and was awarded a prize of a pair of gold cuff links. I thought you would be interested in having me call this matter to your attention inasmuch as 300 of the best and most prominent of the automobile trade attended this outing and everyone there, including myself, of course, attributed my success in winning this race to the fact that my car was equipped with the best non-skid tire of all, which was, of course, 'Dunlop Traction Tread' tires. My wheels were the only ones that did not spin and slip in the grass; in other words, I was able to start much quicker and stop much quicker, and make better time than any other car, despite the fact that I had to compete with high-grade cars. As all of the automobile trade were interested spectators of all of these events, I consider that the advertising to Dunlop Tires, of this little event, was really worth while."—(Letter to W. B. Northam, General Sales Manager of the Dunlop Rubber Co., from O. Braunworth, New York Agent for Dunlop Tires.)

Don't race the engine. You cannot abuse the motor worse than allowing it to race at high speed without a load.

Goodyear's Offers You Lower Tire-Cost Per Mile

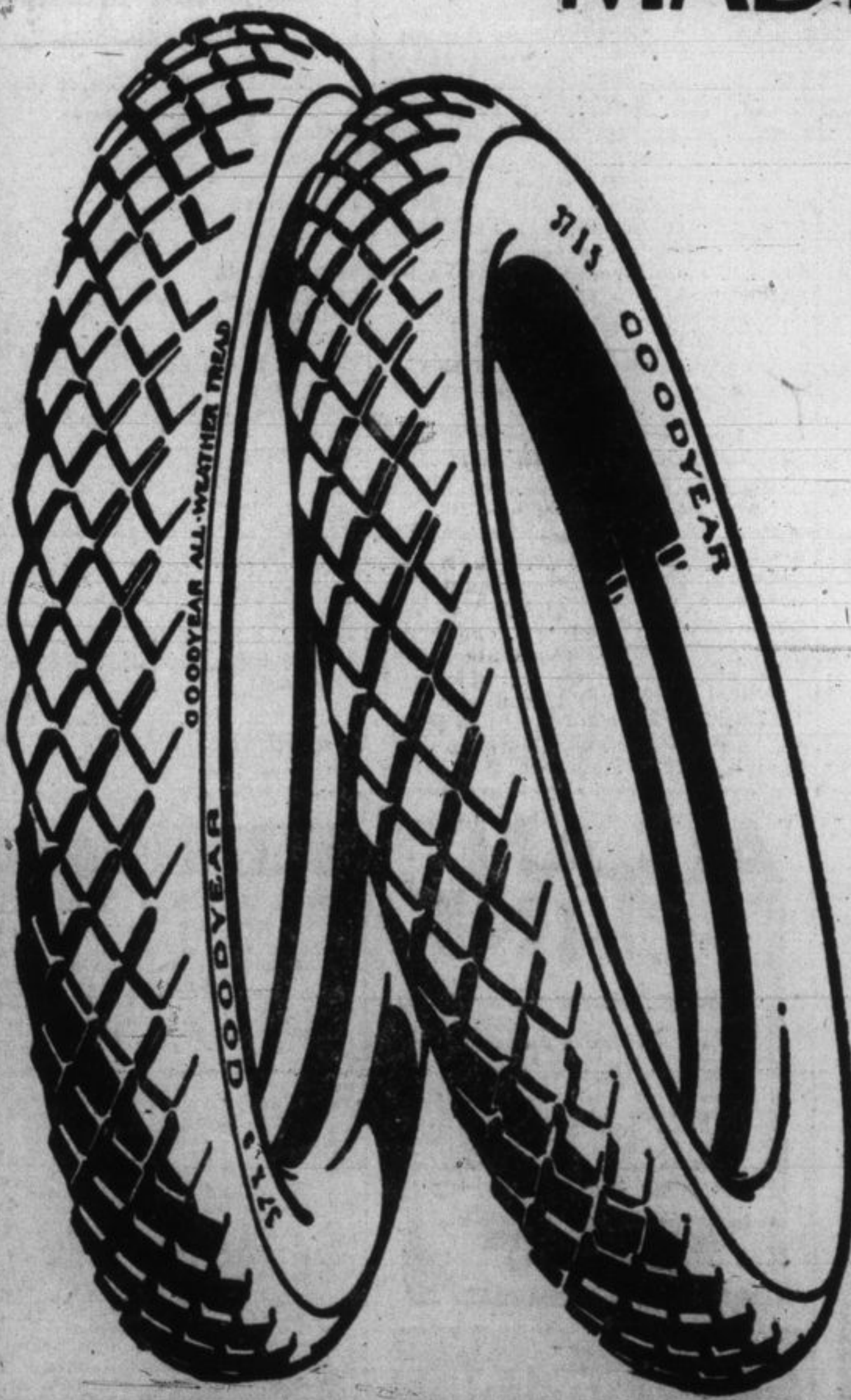
The cost of tires may be figured in two ways — the original purchase price, and that alone — or the number of-miles per dollar the tire gives.

Were the first method right, all motorists would favor those dealers who give a discount from a more or less fictitious price list.

But cost per mile is the only sensible basis on which to pay for tires. And on this basis Goodyear Tires have won overwhelming favor with tire users.

Goodyear Tires are sold at the lowest possible price for such high quality. The Goodyear dealer makes only a fair profit, and should he give a discount he would not be able to stay in business. But by selling at one price to all he is able to render Goodyear Service, which greatly increases the mileage from your tires.

GOODYEAR MADE IN CANADA TIRES



The Goodyear Service Station Dealer Will :

See that you use tires of proper size, and provide proper inflation; test wheel alignments; guard you against tire abuses which you may innocently inflict; give you the benefit of all their experience and all our experience in getting the greatest mileage from Goodyear Tires; help make your decreased tire cost per mile offset your increased gasoline cost per mile.

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