

ago, is forcing Canadians, in ever growing numbers, in a not dissimilar direction.

Perhaps it is all to the good. We have needed something like the experiences of these latter years to shake off the hypnotic spell which a century of new and rapid wealth getting has cast over us. A new sobriety of thought grounded in an understanding of economic realities can only result in a strengthening of the national character. Self-help, rather than a reliance upon the vagaries of government or the paternalism of the rich, is a quality worthy of emulation and much to be encouraged.

The present widening interest in the co-operative idea is therefore a bright sign on the Canadian horizon. The future is still too beclouded with uncertainties to predict what may yet be before us. But there is some glimmer of hope when Canadians from all strata of society, who are not too deeply inhibited in retrospect by the seductive nature of pre-1929 prosperity, nor romanticized by the myth of its inevitable resurgence are turning in thoughtful enquiry to such methods as are represented in the co-operative ideal.

Prevention of Highway Accidents

By ARTHUR H. ROWAN

IN spite of rigid traffic regulations and constant educational campaigns to promote safer conditions, motor vehicle accidents remain one of the chief causes of death in Canada, in fact, only about ten diseases cause more deaths. Motor accidents, as a by-product of the most widely-used mode of transportation in this country, have thus become everyone's problem, for no active citizen today can avoid exposure to the hazards of the highway. But while we might well shudder at the annual waste of life, health and property were it concentrated into one calamity, the fact that it is diffused in time and place to a point where the majority have never witnessed a serious accident, is at least one reason that the tendency to treat the accident problem with indifference or apathy exists.

During the years that have elapsed since the inception of the motor vehicle we have witnessed tremendous improvements in the design and construction of motor vehicles and highways but because of the rapidity with which this form of transportation has been thrust into our

hands our demands for better cars and highways have been more insistent than our demand for safer transportation.

Unlike the locomotive which was an entirely new contrivance, requiring a special road, the first motor vehicle was a horseless carriage. In the beginning this vehicle was simply a carriage without a horse—clumsy and ungraceful in appearance and so much a product of the horse-and- buggy age that one early model was even equipped with a whipsocket. But while such vehicles would appear the height of incongruity on the roads today, many of the cars still in use bear a striking resemblance to the milk-wagon with its box-like rear and a horse out front with a radiator cap for ears and louvres to simulate the horse's ribs. The development of the motor car has thus been handicapped by either precedent or fashion.

But unlike the locomotive, the horseless carriage was adaptable to the carriage-ways used by its horse-hauled predecessor. As its advantages gained growing recognition, however, there came a demand for better roadways—the cry was 'get us out of the mud.' Subsequently came the demand for gravelled surfaces and wider roads. Later, in very recent years has come the demand for dustless, hard-

surfaced highways, banked curves, and reduced grades. In most cases, however, these improvements were applied to the old carriage-ways and despite the rapidity with which the changes were made, they lagged behind the improvements made in the speed and comfort of the motor vehicle and failed to keep pace with the extensive and intensive growth in its use.

But it is now recognized that present cars, with their speed and power, bear a greater resemblance to locomotives than to carriages and the most modern trend in highway design provides for the divided-way with independent lanes of travel as used by the railroads, as a means of reducing the possibility of conflict.

With every added mile of such highway, engineering will assume a more important position alongside the other 'E's' of safety—Education and Enforcement. But each such mile also brings us face-to-face with that far from insignificant fourth 'E'—Expense. The cost of right of way, and the cost of construction places the divided highway with its clover-leaf intersections beyond the present budgets of most highway departments and our accident situation must therefore be assessed and considered in terms of the roads we are using today—the type of road which we shall have to be content to use for some time to come. The larger share of preventive activities, as far as the highways are concerned, must therefore be directed towards the proper maintenance of roadways and the removal of various physical hazards and the provision of adequate signs and signals. Such work must be largely selective and directed towards correction of unfavourable physical hazards existing at high accident locations. Through the operation of compulsory accident reporting laws it is possible to maintain location files and spot maps in a central bureau to indicate points where accidents are happening with greater-than-average frequency and the use of the information thus obtained provides a proper foundation and guide for the engineer and the enforcement officer. Since many rural highways are inadequately policed it is essential that existing enforcement ac-

tivities be supported by adequate information concerning the time and location of greatest accident frequency and also the types of offence giving the greatest difficulty. By getting the facts about accidents—how many, where, how and why—we are in a better position to analyse the hazards of dangerous locations, to install signs or signals, to devise regulations and to apply them on the basis of scientific study rather than guesswork.

A short time ago we had reason to question the traffic department of an Ontario city in connection with an accident record which was considerably worse than that of a neighbouring city of corresponding size. The reason for the unfavourable record was said to have been due to the heavy volume of traffic on one of the main streets. On checking our records, however, it was found that a large share of the accidents were in the residential sections; also, that a large percentage of the accidents involved juvenile pedestrians. The neighbouring city had to a large degree overcome their child accident problem by a very comprehensive system of safety training in the schools and it was quite manifest that their better record was due to this activity which was lacking in the other city. Many other instances are to be found which emphasize the need for proper data when planning the safety programme.

Since our highways with their shortcomings in the light of present day traffic, will be in use for many years to come, the need for education is of primary importance. Such work in the schools is best carried out by including safety in the curriculum and providing the teachers with proper materials for teaching this subject. The problem of adult education presents greater difficulties of approach. Ontario pioneered in the use of newspaper and magazine advertising in safety education and for many years widespread campaigns using these methods as well as radio broadcasting, motion and talking pictures, billboards and other media have carried safety messages to all parts of the Province. Regular bulletins from the Motor

Vehicles Branch have been used as a means of sustaining the interest developed by the publicity campaigns. Local safety councils, because of their closeness to the situation can do much to augment the work of a highway department or other central authority in work of this kind and should with the co-operation of the public accept a greater responsibility for the application of remedial measures than is generally the case today.

In addition to 'wholesale' control, which is the purpose of education, some means of applying individual control is necessary. Control of the right to obtain a license; control of the right to retain a license once it has been issued; and control of the driver on the highway, are the three methods by which individual control may be exercised.

The first and frequently the last opportunity of assessing a driver's ability is when he applies for a license and every effort should be made to ascertain his capabilities both as regards his physical condition and his knowledge, skill and understanding. The driver's attitude or willingness to observe the rules and regulations cannot be measured satisfactorily by a driving test or demonstration and there must therefore be some record system maintained to permit our doing so. In Ontario, individual records are compiled showing the convictions, accidents, complaints or warnings received by the driver. Each time an additional entry is made on the record the case is reviewed and the action thought necessary is taken. Depending upon the nature of the record, the driver is required to submit to driving, vision or physical tests, is warned or his license is suspended or revoked. The police and courts are required to report accidents, convictions and warnings and the general public are asked to report dangerous or unsafe driving actions they observe. Through an arrangement with the Department of Health we have in recent years been able to deal more satisfactorily with persons suffering from mental or other conditions which might affect their operation of a car. In such cases it is our practice to withhold driving privileges until we have

been assured that normal health has been recovered.

At the present time we have on file the records of over 300,000 of the 900,000 drivers registered in Ontario. Of these about 130,000 are drivers who have been involved in one or more accidents since 1930, and the remainder include drivers who have been convicted of some driving offence, and operators who have been warned or suspended. In addition to the attention given to accident repeaters, an attempt is made to check the behaviour of drivers whose records indicate frequent or flagrant disregard of the traffic regulations, regardless of whether they have been involved in accidents. By requiring proof of financial responsibility when a record reaches a certain degree of seriousness we have been able to instill a greater degree of responsibility since insurance companies are reluctant to insure drivers who show reckless tendencies and the driver soon realizes that he must retain the good will of the company, as well as that of the Department if he is to remain in possession of his driving privileges.

In addition to our efforts to control in the case of persons having accumulated records, we have in the past five years been giving greater attention to drivers involved in their first accident. Persons who have had less than one year's driving experience and persons over sixty-five years of age, if involved in an accident, are required to submit to driving and vision tests. Drivers involved in fatal accidents are also required to submit to re-examination before they are permitted to drive again. Our purpose in re-examining drivers in the higher age groups is to determine if they are competent under present traffic conditions and also to determine whether they have suffered any physical deterioration which might interfere with their safe operation of a motor vehicle. A fatal accident frequently results in severe shock to the driver concerned, and our aim in requiring re-examination is to find out, among other things, whether the operator suffers from any shock or nervousness that might affect his driving. In many cases the

Department has found it necessary to withhold the license until the driver has recovered from the effects of the accident.

As mentioned before, further achievements in providing safety factors in cars and in highways are necessary, but an equally important part of our problem is to make people safer for themselves—either as drivers or pedestrians. Since practically the entire population must be reached, its attention aroused and sustained, no one person or single group of persons can accomplish the task. Considerable attention up to the present has been given to education to the point of telling people what they should and should not do but insufficient emphasis has been directed to the development of an appreciation of why such behaviour is necessary. In the majority of cases, people are not reckless because of any malicious intent or because they have no regard for their

own or others safety but rather because they have never been imbued with a true sense and understanding of their responsibility and of the need for restraint in their use of the roads. The problem of discipline, restraint or control in human relationships is, of course, extremely complicated, but when that relationship involves not only the human factor but a very mobile mechanical factor it becomes even more complicated.

Since the accident problem is essentially a social problem, progress in eliminating abuses will come slowly, but the significant fact that this problem is becoming better understood gives hope for future improvement. The interpretation of it by many agencies involved is developing a deeper interest and stability and the principles and techniques already known need only to be persistently and continuously expanded to have safety become an integral part of our every-day living.

Municipal Services in England

By LADY (ERNEST) SIMON,

UNLIKE the national Civil service, the entrance to all grades of which is by competitive examination, there is no recognised mode of entry to the municipal service. The tenacity with which local councils cling to their autonomy and freedom from central control, makes them suspicious of any suggestion that the municipal service should be unified.

Each local authority is left free to decide upon qualifications for entrants, except of the technical officers. All doctors, engineers, architects, lawyers, nurses, etc., must possess the standard qualifications, and it is true that these officials play a greater part in the municipal than in the national civil service.

In the latter, these technical officials are all under the administrative official who is the permanent head of the department, but in the municipal service the head of a department is, in the majority of cases, a technician. The medical officer of health is a doctor, the chief of the electricity department an electrical engineer, and it is becoming increasingly common for the director of Education to have been a teacher. The chief official of all—the Town Clerk—is, in the vast majority of cases, a lawyer, although there is no statutory requirement that he should be one. I will return to this point later. The rest of the staff, the administrative section, is usually recruited at the age of between fourteen and sixteen.

Some authorities insist upon a minimum age of sixteen, and the possession of a school leaving age certificate, others

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lady Simon the wife of the former Lord Mayor of Manchester, England, is a well known expert on municipal government and a frequent contributor to the British journal *Public Administration*.