

CONTINUAL CARELESSNESS CAUSES CASUALTIES

SAFETY DEPARTMENT

TALLASSEE
HINK SAFETY

POWER
RACTICE SAFETY

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CAUTION SAFETY

How Do You Treat Your Hands?

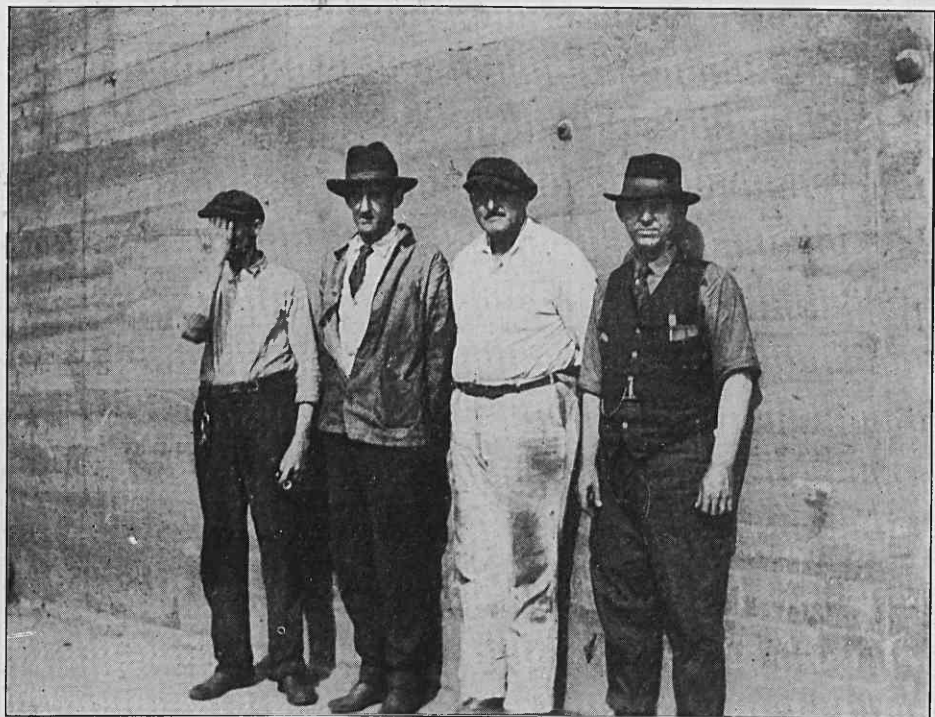
The human hand is without question the most wonderful mechanical appliance in existence. Its strength and flexibility, together with its ready adaptability to conditions of every conceivable kind, make it an invaluable instrument to the man who owns it. If there were only a few hands in existence, and they could be bought for money, the price that they would bring would doubtless exceed anything we can guess or imagine. In real life, how do we find men and women using these wonderful implements? We get them for nothing; but we can have but one pair. Do we therefore treat them with the care that we would bestow upon a watch or some other useful piece of mechanism of human construction? We do not. We take all kinds of chances with them, and allow them to become infected, bruised, mutilated, and even cut off, when to preserve them in their full efficiency we should merely have to exercise reasonable forethought in using them. Many a man takes better care of a good chisel or a good ax than he does his own right hand; and if our hands were not securely attached to our bodies some of us would no doubt leave them out in the back yard at night. Injuries to the hands head the list in the accident statistics of quite a number of industries; and in nearly all industries such accidents are prominent. To cure this state of affairs, it is important—first, to provide proper safeguards wherever they would be useful and effective; and second, to exercise greater care when using the hands. Obviously we cannot place a guard around every single object that may cause injury to the hands. We cannot guard the carpenters' hammer, saw, or ax, nor can we place a guard about the hands themselves without thereby destroying their usefulness temporarily. Another related cause of hand injuries is the habit of letting the hands wander about without direction or conscious control, as when we make gestures while talking. This is specially hazardous near electrical apparatus, because it is easy to place the hands in contact with live conductors, or bring

them close enough in the case of high tension apparatus to receive a shock without actual contact. Often the hand is placed carelessly on an object which is immediately found to be burning hot, and at other times we may thrust it against a gear wheel or some other dangerous piece of moving machinery. When we suffer an injury in this manner, we may be wholly unable to guess how our hands happened to be in the danger zone. But they get there now and then, if we do not attend to what we are doing.

The most prolific sources of accidents to the hands are probably—first, handling materials, and second, using hand tools. In the metal working industries, the handling of raw stock and partly finished product causes many hand accidents. Slivers and cuts from handling lumber, bruises and blisters from handling or mishandling brick, tile, stone, pipe, and rods may be avoided, or at all events minimized, by wearing proper

gloves, or doing the work in a rational way. Sheets of metal having sharp or jagged edges often cause cuts, and in foundries, shops, and other places, the handling of small castings, especially those having "fins," is likely to cause laceration.

Fingers are often bruised or crushed when the men are depositing heavy objects on a floor, platform, or bench. A full realization of the likelihood of injury, and the simultaneous and consequent exercise of due care, appear to be the most effective remedies for preventing accidents of this class, where heavy objects must be set down frequently. It is often a good plan, however, to nail strips of wood to the top of the platform or bench upon which they are to rest—the strips being somewhat thicker than a finger, and laid parallel to one another, with spaces of perhaps four inches between. The workman can ease a weight down upon a surface of this kind without any danger if he will give



MACHINE SHOP SAFETY COMMITTEE

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