



Why ACCIDENTS HAPPEN *to the MAN* WHO WORRIES

By Helen Welshimer

WIVES who are desirous of keeping their husbands should never nag them in the morning. Never! That is, if you want to feel reasonably sure, as you dust the chairs and make out the menu for dinner, that his car will come home with the evening traffic.

A boy who is taking his first girl to a high school party should not be given a lecture on right turns, gear shifting, operations of brakes, and curfew hours just as he looks at himself in the mirror before starting after his 16-year-old Guinevere. He wants to be master of himself and the road and he won't be master of either, if he is upset.

In brief, nagging and family troubles are some of the greatest sources of accidents with which we have to contend.

That is the opinion of A. A. Nicholson, manager of the personnel department of the Texas Company, which for more than a quarter of a century has been one of the leaders in promoting safety among employees.

The chief cause of both traffic accidents and industrial accidents can be traced to words that are said and things that occur before the party involved ever comes in contact with plant equipment and machinery, Mr. Nicholson maintains.

Highway accidents in America amount to an unbelievably large number. Car manufacturers try to make their products safe. Roads are properly designed and constructed and traffic is scientifically regulated. Yet accident after accident occurs.

Moreover, 85 per cent of these accidents occur to sane, sober citizens who want to obey the law and who are not bent upon self-destruction. Why?

Because a new baby was coming and the family exchequer couldn't stand it! Because the toast was burned, the rent was raised, the telephone rang at the moment the crucial part of a story was being reached!

THERE was the case of a certain employe. We'll call him John Brown, because that isn't his name.

"John came to work, performed his duties efficiently all morning, and at noon ate his lunch in a bit of shade along with other employes in his gang," Mr. Nicholson says. "When he finished, having part of his noon hour left, he arose, and with his mind apparently a million miles from the plant and the hazards that continually lurk in any industrial plant, he crossed the tracks directly in the path of an oncoming locomotive.



"Children going to school have a more dangerous time crossing the streets of the city than their great-grandparents did in coming through the wilderness."

"It was high noon, the track was clear and level—there was nothing to obstruct his vision. The engine was proceeding at a moderate speed; its bell was ringing continuously, piston rods clanking and making a tremendous noise, and yet this man walked directly into its path.

"The man died. I went down to his house to find out what the story was back of the accident and to give the family the information.

"I found that during the morning the man's wife had given birth to a baby. Naturally, on the job he had been considerably worried and concerned.

"All the time that he worked, he worried. When he finished eating he probably arose in a semi-daze and, without ever appreciating that he was on a railroad track, walked directly into the path of the locomotive.

"We are endeavoring to help in home life problems of this nature and assist in adjusting them so that there will be no danger of such tragedies. Every employer should accord communication facilities to his employes for emergency purposes, and the employes should be so advised that this service is



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available at their place of employment. Perhaps if this man could have called his home this accident would not have happened."

To go down a different avenue, take the case of Jack White, whose right name is something else.

He was 18. For the first time in his life he was taking a girl to a party. All the other boys had started going with the girls long ago. He had thought about it only—Shucks! With baseball and basketball and football and track he didn't have time for girls, he said.

It really wasn't the reason. He was bashful. For a long time he had wanted to take Nellie to a picture show or a picnic or something. Now, just before graduation, he had to ask a girl to go to the Senior Prom and Nellie consented.

Jack had driven a car for a long time. He was a steady, safe driver.

HOWEVER, Jack never before had taken a girl to a party in an automobile at night, so at dinner Jack's father proceeded to give him minute instructions about the technique of driving.

The elder's warnings of possible dangers made such an impression, that Jack contemplated taking a street car. He could tell Nellie the car was out of whack. The other fellows would have cars, though. Maybe he could get a taxicab. He did some swift calculating,



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"I guess I won't bother with the car, Dad," he finished, in a perfectly nice voice. "Maybe you'll be needing it, and—"

Mr. White never had been noted for holding his temper. "Well, of all the ungrateful young pups!" he snorted, throwing his napkin on the table and banging his fist on top of it. "Here I keep a car and let you have it and then—" There was much more.

"Oh, all right!" Jack said, and his face was scowling and his voice was tight.

He backed the car out of the garage. He started down the highway. Faster and faster and faster. Why couldn't his father be fair? Why did he always have to stir up a lot of trouble? Why couldn't he trust him? He guessed his father had two accidents already and he himself hadn't had any; he guessed—

There was a sudden shattering sound. The car swung over, colliding with another roadster, knocking it down a bank. Jack hadn't noticed the stop light, the oncoming car, the turn.

When his father was summoned to the hospital where the boy was having a broken arm and leg set, minor bruises and lacerations dressed, and physicians were shaking serious heads over the danger of concussion of the brain, the irate parent said: "What did I tell him? You never can trust these boys with cars!"

Safety advice is most necessary, but there is a time and a place for it.

"There are five things which interest every individual," Mr. Nicholson remarks. "In the order of importance they are himself, others, the world, where he came from and where he is going.

"We must teach people that they are reaping benefits from their safety activities. The training must not be negative. No fear of accidents must be implanted in their minds. We must stimulate safe thinking.

"I'm trying to take away the elements of fear, in the teaching of safety. Gas masks, mechanical safeguards about the machine in the shop—all these things aid in such a campaign and program.

"Wives and mothers who remain at home seldom know of the hazards that face members of their families while they are away each day. Children going to school have a more dangerous time in crossing the streets of the city than their great-grandparents did in coming through the wilderness. If the automobile drivers have no sense of responsibility, the children are at their mercy."