



NEWS DIGEST

of the NEW YORK HEALTH DEMONSTRATIONS

COMMUNITIES throughout the United States have of late years sought in various ways to prevent the increasing occurrence of accidents. Nevertheless the general accident rate and the rates for many specific kinds of accidents were shown to be higher in this country than in a number of foreign countries with which comparisons were drawn in a recent study made by the Committee on Public Accident Statistics of the National Safety Council.* Deaths from accidental falls, for example, reached a total of 12.8 per 100,000 population in the United States, while similar rates were 7 per 100,000 in England, 4 per 100,000 in Scotland and 6 per 100,000 in Australia. In only one instance, accidental drowning, is the United States fatality rate for a specific cause surpassed by that of

*Public Accidents—A National Problem, National Safety Council, Chicago, 1925.

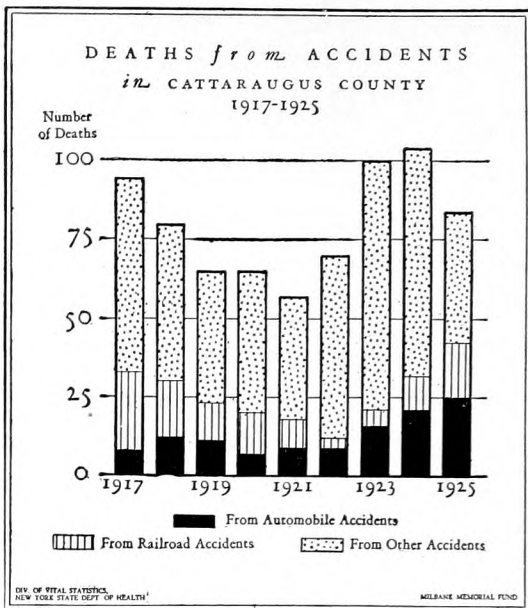
the other countries surveyed.

Unlike other countries for which comparative data are available, automobile fatalities lead the list of specific kinds of accidents in this country. The death rate charged to automobile accidents in the United States in 1923 was 14.8 per 100,000 population. In 1924, it was found that the rate was 15.7, and that over 17,000 deaths from automobile accidents had occurred in the United States during the year. Automobile fatalities, excluding collisions with street cars and railroad trains, increased to 19,800 in 1925, the death rate from this cause increasing to 17.2 per 100,000 population.

The fatality rate from automobile accidents, when computed on the basis of the number of motor vehicles registered, has been decreasing for several years, but the rate for 1925 was practically the same

as that for 1924. There were 19,954,347 automobiles registered in the United States in 1925, as against 17,591,981 registrations in 1924.

In New York State 1,891 persons lost their lives and 54,398 other people were injured as the result of 47,128 automobile accidents in 1925. In the great majority of these accidents, the automobile was reported to be in apparently good condition, and the accident occurred on a straight level road under the most favorable driving conditions. Over 38,000 of the drivers of the vehicles had had two or more years' driving experience, but in almost 23,000 cases the operator was reported to be driving inattentively. In approximately 12,500 accidents involving pedestrians, the per-



Deaths from accidents among residents in Cattaraugus County, during the five-year-period, 1917-1925.

The motor vehicle law of New York State was revised in 1924, effective provision being made for the reporting of all motor vehicle accidents in which any person was killed or injured. Failure on the part of the person operating the vehicle to make such a report was made a misdemeanor. The statistics thus gathered will provide data for use in the prevention of accidents.

AS a warning to motorists, the Cattaraugus County Board of Health, with the cooperation of the State and

sons injured were walking, running or playing in the street, and in over 5,000 instances they were crossing the street at some point other than an intersection.

County highway departments, is erecting crosses, bearing the words "Fatal Auto Accident" at every point in the County at which there has been a fatal automobile accident in the past three years.

Commenting upon the accident death rate as compared with the general death rate of the County, Dr. Stephen A. Douglass, County Health Officer, recently said:

"Accidental deaths in Cattaraugus County in 1925 outnumbered deaths from cancer, apoplexy, kidney disease, pneumonia or tuberculosis. There were eighty-four such deaths during this period and 104 in 1924. Automobile accidents were directly responsible for twenty deaths in 1925. In addition, automobile collisions with trains killed eight persons.

"If no means can be developed to control this situation, with the increasing number of fatalities caused by automobiles, accidents soon will become the leading cause of death in Cattaraugus County."



BULLETIN boards erected in the main thoroughfares of Syracuse, and lectures given in the schools and in industrial

establishments are among the educational measures being undertaken in the City to aid in the prevention of accidents. These measures are centered under the department of public safety of the Syracuse Chamber of Commerce, which is co-operating with the local Department of Health and various other official and voluntary agencies engaged in health work in the community.

Data on which an educational program in safety devices, chiefly against fire, will be based, have been obtained by means of a "home inspection" questionnaire distributed among the school children of the City.

Crosses marking the location of every fatal automobile accident in Cattaraugus County are being erected by the County Board of Health.



A STUDY of the causes of accidents in the Bellevue-Yorkville district and of the age groups in which specific kinds of accidents were most prevalent was recently made by Godias J. Drolet, Consultant on Statistics for the metropolitan health demonstration. It is planned to use the information gained by this study as the basis for a campaign of safety education in the district.

The data, which were based on the mortality returns of the Bureau of Records of the New York City Department of Health, covered the two years 1923 and 1924. While the total mortality from all causes in the district averaged a little over 3,000 deaths annually, more than 250 each year were due to accidents. During 1923, a total of 282 persons were fatally injured in the district, of whom the majority, 271, were residents of the area. In 1924, fatal injuries were sus-

tained by 241 residents and by 12 non-residents of the demonstration territory.

Of the injuries resulting fatally, it was found that 28 per cent, or almost one in every three, were injuries sustained in "street accidents"—that is, while the person was walking, driving, running or playing in the streets. Falls were responsible for 24 per cent, or about one in every four fatal accidents.

The accident rate was found to be highest among persons between the ages of forty-five and sixty-four, 36 per cent being charged to this group. The next largest number of accidents (28 per cent) occurred among persons of from twenty-five to forty-four years of age. In this group the majority were either street or industrial accidents. Eleven per cent of the accidents occurring were among school children. Of these, 72 per cent were described as street accidents.

