

found very efficacious. How far it is capable of application to all roads we do not know. But the possibilities that may be involved in these and other devices for affording greater safety to railroad passengers are surely sufficient to warrant further and exhaustive inquiry by competent authorities. It is surprising that in these days of combination for philanthropic purposes no influential league has been formed for the purpose of investigation in regard to the causes of loss of life in railway travel.

Whatever may be the case with regard to the travelling public there can scarcely be a reasonable doubt that some powerful influence is needed for the protection of railway employees. The following statistics, from a recent report of the Interstate Commerce Commission of the United States, is very suggestive on this point:

The number of railway employees killed during the year covered by the report was 2,554, being less than the number killed during the previous year. The number of employees injured, however, was in excess of the number injured during the previous year, being 28,267. The number of passengers killed was largely in excess of the number killed during the previous year, being 376 in 1892 as against 293 in 1891; while the number of passengers injured was 3,227 in 1892, as against 2,972 in 1891. An assignment of casualties to the opportunity offered for accidents shows 1 employee to have been killed for every 322 employees, and one employee to have been injured for each 29 men in the employ of the railways. A similar comparison shows 1 passenger killed for each 1,491,910 passengers carried or for each 35,542,282 passenger miles, and 1 passenger injured for each 173,833 passengers carried or each 4,140,966 passenger miles. The largest number of casualties to employees resulted from coupling and uncoupling cars, 378 employees having been killed and 10,319 injured while rendering this service. Of the total number killed in coupling and uncoupling cars 253, and of the total number injured 7,766 were trainmen. The accidents classed as "falling from cars" were in this year as in previous years responsible for the largest number of deaths among employees, the number killed in this manner being 611. Of this number 485 were trainmen. Collisions and derailments were responsible for the death of 431 employees. Of this number 336 were trainmen. This class of accidents is responsible also for the largest number of casualties to passengers. Thus 177 passengers were killed and 1,539 were injured by collisions and derailments during the year. Collisions alone were responsible for the death of 286 employees and 136 passengers.

One employee out of every 322 killed and one out of every twenty-nine injured! This is appalling. After making all due allowance for the carelessness of the men themselves—and even this is a thing from which they need to be protected—it is incredible that this slaughter is unavoidable. It must be due in large measure to want of proper regulations and safeguards, and to other preventible causes. A society which would make it its business to follow up

every case of injury or death to a railway employee, while in the discharge of his duty, with a view of ascertaining whether it was due to a non-preventible cause, or to deficient safeguards, dangerous requirements, or insufficient precautions on the part of the railway authorities, and which would bring the railway authorities to account for every failure in these respects, might accomplish much. We have no late statistics of Canadian railways at hand to which we can refer for purposes of comparison. But though we hope and believe that the Canadian railways show a much better record, we have no doubt there is room for much improvement on their part. Even this is a strong thing to say, for it is clear, as we have intimated, that every manager and every company which fails to do its utmost to save those in its employ from danger, is to the extent in which it so fails, morally, and should be legally, responsible for the suffering and death which result from such failure.

While we agree, as all our readers must, with what is clearly "X's" major premise, that nothing short of absolutely the utmost precaution and the best safeguards should satisfy either the railway companies or the public, we deem it but fair to give due weight to the doctrine of averages, which he condemns. By what other mode of conveyance of which one can conceive would it be possible to attain such safety that only one of almost one-and-a-half millions of passengers should lose his life by accident, or but one for each thirty-five-and-a-half millions of miles travelled? The same reasoning that would pronounce the invention of the locomotive a misfortune would, it seems to us, condemn the taming of the horse, for it can hardly be doubted that the percentage of fatalities in travelling by stage coach or carriage is much greater than that in travelling by rail. Of course, the fact that the latter carries men and women by the thousand instead of by the half-dozen, makes these awful catastrophes possible in the one case and impossible in the other. But all such arguments from statistics and averages do not, it seems to us, prove that travelling by rail is nearly as safe as it ought to be. On the contrary, they but suggest the possibility of making it almost absolutely safe, for there are very few of those terrible accidents which appal us which might not have been prevented by better precautions.

One of the most notable women at present in Chicago is Senora Eva Canel, who has been commissioned by the Chamber of Commerce, of Cuba, to make a report of the Exposition for its use, and who is, besides, the World's Fair correspondent for several Spanish and South American periodicals. Senora Canel is a novelist and essayist of distinguished merit, and has the distinction of being the first Spanish woman who has ever edited a political paper, having established a few years ago, in Havana, and edited with marked ability up to the time of her departure from Havana for Chicago, *La Colorra*, a satirico-political weekly. Harper's Bazar.

NOTES ON DANTE.—I.

LIFE AND TIMES.

There are many problems connected with the life of Dante which remained unsolved and which are perhaps insoluble; but there is no question whatever as to Dante's place in literature. His name remains, and will always remain, in undisputed association with those of Homer and Shakespeare. The world knows of three epics, perhaps four, the *Iliad*, the *Divine Comedy*, *Paradise Lost*, and the *Æneid* of him whom Dante called the Master, *Il Maestro*, Virgil. Among these four Dante is not lower than second.

"Homer," says Shelley, "was the first and Dante the second epic poet—that is, the second poet the series of whose creations bore a defined and intelligible relation to the knowledge and sentiment and religion of the age in which he lived, and of the ages which followed it." "Have we not," says Carlyle, "two more poets, if not deified, yet we may say beatified? Shakespeare and Dante are saints of poetry; really, if we will think of it, canonised, so that it is impiety to meddle with them. The unguided instinct of the world . . . has arrived at such result. Shakespeare and Dante are a particular two. They dwell apart, in a kind of royal solitude; none equal, none second to them; in the general feeling of the world, a certain transcendentalism, a glory as of complete perfection, invests these two."

Such being the case, it is plain that there can be no thought, on the part of any moderately modest human being, of giving any new reading or judgment of Dante's work or place. With such an one it must suffice that, at the utmost, he makes a humble endeavor to add a leaf to the ever green chaplet which adorns the brows of the mighty poet.

Dante is at once the root and the consummate flower of Italian literature. He had some predecessors of no great account; but it is he who made the Tuscan dialect the language of Italy and of literature, and it is superfluous to say that he has never been transcended.

It would be well, perhaps, for those who make any serious study of the Romance literature to gain some acquaintance with its beginning with the Troubadours of Provence, in the eleventh century, with their *langue d'oïl*, with the Trouvères of the north in the twelfth century, with their *langue d'oïl*, the basis of modern French, and with the *langue de si* of Sicily, which marks the beginning of Italian literature. Of early writers before Dante mention may be made of Sordello, Guido Guinizzelli, Brunetto Latini, Guido Cavalcanti and Frà Jacopone da Todi, several of whom are mentioned in the *Divina Commedia*. The principal sources for the life of Dante are the biographies of Villani, the well-known historian, an, a contemporary, and of Boccaccio, who was eight years old at the time of Dante's death. The latter, although an ardent admirer of Dante and a chief promoter of the study of his works, is not always to be trusted as a historian.

Dante was born in May, 1265, and died September 14, 1321. The thirteenth century in which he was born was one of the greatest ages in history. We have only to think of its most glorious architecture, of Cimabue and Giotto in painting, and of its theologians, such as S. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), Bonaventura