

THE CARNAGE OF PEACE

Waldemar Kaempffert, writing in last Saturday's *Evening Post*, shows by facts and figures dug out of statistical reports and gathered in other ways, that war, deadly as it is, produces nothing like the carnage that is produced every year by the gentle arts of peace. According to his figures the annual number of casualties in the United States, in industrial pursuits, manufacturing and railroading is somewhere in the neighborhood of five hundred thousand.

More frightful statistics are furnished by railroads than by any form of American activity.

In the year ending June 30, 1907, 5000 persons were killed and 76,286 were injured by our railroads, a stupendous total of 81,286—about twenty-five times as many as the killed and wounded in the 2651 engagements of the Philippine War, lasting three years and three months. We might have carried on that Philippine conflict for eighty years before the carnage of the railroads for a single year would have been equaled.

The perils of railway travel are increasing instead of diminishing. In 1889, when the Interstate Commerce Commission made its first report, there were in all 704,783 railroad employees, of which army of men 22,000 were killed and injured during the year. In 1905 there were 1,382,196 railroad employees, whose ranks were depleted by 70,194. Stated more simply, this means that, although not twice as many are employed now as there were in 1889, over three times as many casualties occur. Out of every twenty men engaged in railroading, one must die or come to harm. It has been gruesomely computed that a railroad mail clerk stands about twenty chances to one of ending the year with a whole skin. The odds for the engineer in the cab are less favorable. His chances are 9 to 1 that he will not be injured, and 120 to 1 that he will not be killed in a twelve month. When he pulls wide the throttle lever in the cab, passengers, conductor, porters, brakemen, baggage handlers, express clerks, the boy who calls out the latest magazines, track walkers, men stationed at crossings and waving red, white and green flags, crews of freight trains sidetracked for a flying express, switchmen and yardmen—in a word, every man, woman and child on the train and on the road is held in the trembling hand of railway destiny. It is not strange that Mr. J. J. Hill, himself a railway official, is reported to have said: "Every time I undertake a railroad journey I wonder whether it is to be my last." Yet he spoke only from the passenger's standpoint.

Two Killed, Five Hurt every Working Day

Less complete than the railway reports of the Inter-state Commerce Commission, the records of the coal-producing States at least are sufficiently voluminous to give one a glimpse of the conditions that prevail throughout all American mines. Mr. Frederick L. Hoffman, a well-known insurance statistician, has made a special study of coal-mine accidents—a study which leads him to fix the number of coal-miners killed at 2078 for the year 1906, and the number for the decade ending 1906 at 16,273, with the grim reservation that these latter figures fall short by several thousand of the actual number killed. He ventures the opinion that "with the reasonable attention to approved methods of safeguarding the lives of coal miners, a rate of 2 per 1000 should not be exceeded in the United States. According to earlier returns such a rate was seldom exceeded in the past, and for illustration, in 1897, out of 19 coal-producing States, nine returned a fatality rate of 2 or less per 1000." The fatal accident rate of 3.16 per 1000 for the entire coalfield in 1906, and 3.11 per 1000 in 1905, seems to bear out John Mitchell's assertion that, in the anthracite mines alone, two are killed and five injured every working-day in the year.

The Cost of Coal in Flesh and Blood

Comparison with the corresponding European conditions again brings home our culpable indifference. Briefly, there are twice as many fatalities among

American coal-miners as among English, the proportion being 2.64 here to 1.27. Fifty years ago five men in every thousand perished in English mines. The introduction of safety appliances and a more vigorous governmental inspection have reduced that ratio to 1.40.

Some time ago John Mitchell, while president of the United Mine Workers, stated that coal-mining was no more dangerous than other forms of mining. Thirty States of the Union are mining States. Of these, fifteen keep records of their dead and injured miners. In these fifteen States 5986 miners were killed in 1904; in the other fifteen, Mr. Mitchell estimates the killed at 2000, the maimed at 4000. In an average year 11,968, or roughly 12,000 men, will either die or come to harm in the iron, gold, silver, copper, lead and coal mines and in the quarries of the United States.

Nor is this all. In the textile trades and particularly among the industrial soldiers of mid-air the carnage is even greater.

The Bridge and Structural Ironworkers' Union of Chicago had a total membership of 1358 men in 1906. Of that regiment of skilled men 156 either lost their lives or were disabled. Perched on a slim, cold piece of steel a hundred feet above safety, armed only with pneumatic tools and rivets, these industrial soldiers run more risks than if they carried guns and wore cartridge belts stamped with the letters U.S.A. Men sometimes slip, drop through false-work, to be buffeted from one bracing to another, only to reach the ground a lifeless mass. I have been informed by the secretary and treasurer of the International Association of Bridge and Structural Ironworkers that ninety per cent. of the deaths occurring among members of the association are due to accident. In the period beginning with July, 1907, and ending with March, 1908, \$14,000 was paid out of the association treasury for a hundred and forty funeral claims. So hazardous is a bridge-builder's calling that few insurance companies will take the risk of issuing a policy on his life.

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An honest farmer who lived near Greenville, N. Y., in the forties was congratulating himself over the freedom of his cattle from the epizootic which at that time was raging in that county when a herdsman ran up breathless and reported that one of his best oxen was dead, dead of the epizootic. "So he's dead, is he, Bill, Wal, always was a cantankerous old beast. Take his hide off and sell it at the tannery for what you can get."

Half an hour later another ox died of the plague and the fact was reported. "Wal, that there old ox always was a god darned stubborn critter," said the farmer. "He wouldn't gee and he wouldn't haw. Take his hide off and sell it at the tannery, Bill, for what you can get."

Soon after another ox died and then another and another. Things began to look serious and even the old man's optimism waned. The last announcement left him silently shaking his head.

His wife had heard the ill news. She was of a stern, self-condemning style of morality and she soothed her husband by telling him that this affliction was a judgment of Heaven on him for his wickedness.

The farmer turned this thought over in his mind, heaved a sigh and observed: "Wal, maybe you're right, Martha. Maybe you're right. I am a wicked man. But if I owe Heaven a judgment and it's collecting the debt, all I can say is it's the cheapest and coolest way for me to settle I know of."

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Mr. B. E. Porter, a graduate of Iowa Agricultural College, has just been elected professor of animal husbandry in the Hawaii Agricultural College.

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