

standpoint of actual driving, but as pedestrians, they constitute one of the most difficult-to-handle groups, because records have shown that many, many, fatal accidents occur before and after school hours, when these young people are going to and from their homes.

At this point, I think it well to say a word particularly to the younger drivers, and prospective operators. As everyone realizes, the greater majority of operators today never had scientific help in learning how to operate their cars. In most cases, if they had any preliminary training at all, it was of the sketchiest nature. The result inevitably is, that many people have been licensed to drive who did not fully understand the mechanism and handling of their cars, who are not fully versed in the laws of the State regarding driving, and who have not complete realization of the hazards that face them on the roads. By this I mean that few of them started out with the appreciation of the fact that, for instance, safety in passing another car bears a definite relation to the speed of their car, the speed of the on-coming car, and the clear space ahead. Few of them realized that when they travelled at high speeds at night, quite frequently their headlight visibility did not make it possible for them to come to a safe stop after they had sighted a doubtful object ahead.

The only factor which will make up for shortcomings in the technique of operating a car, or understanding its performance fully, is CARE. With care on the part of drivers and pedestrians, the success of our Safety campaign is assured.

During the 11 months of this year, the total of deaths from traffic accidents in the State, up to and including yesterday, was exactly the same as for the corresponding 11 months of last year, 377. For the months of October and November, during which the Maryland Traffic Safety Committee has been functioning, the death total was reduced from 88 in 1938, to 80 in 1939. This is not by any means the reduction we would like to see, but it was a reduction, however. We are not going to stop. During these two months, eight people were sent to their death on our roads, eight less families were deprived of one of their loved ones. With that encouragement, we intend to make further headway.

These comparative figures serve to indicate, and I cannot emphasize this too strongly, the necessity of determined, continuing efforts in every possible direction to hold down, and to cut down, the number of fatal accidents.

The month of December, which we are now entering, holds so much promise of happiness and good-will, because of the approaching holiday season, that it seems a travesty almost that December always ranks high, or highest, among the months of the year, in the matter of traffic deaths. During the month of the year when most families have reason to be happy, there is the most cause for grief and unhappiness, due to sudden deaths through traffic. This, of course, might be explained by the fact that nights are longer, streets are often covered with snow or ice, and during the holiday period, with visiting and parties the rule almost everywhere, there is a lessening of that care which we should all have in driving.

During December of last year, Maryland had 40 deaths from traffic accidents, which was a splendid improvement over the 72 deaths in 1937, but which still leaves much opportunity for improvement. Forty deaths from traffic, if that happens again this year, will mean 40 families bereaved at the time of the year when they should be looking forward to the greatest happiness. It