



Maldistribution of Water

MALDISTRIBUTION of wealth is causing a good deal of excitement these days in legislative circles, and may be expected to cause a good deal more. But maldistribution and maladministration of wealth is only one of the harms our national body is heir to, and perhaps not the worst of them when you get right down to the bottom of things.

For wealth is visibly expressed in pieces of yellow and white metal, and in printed and written slips of paper; all of which are intrinsically almost useless, and much of which may represent only imaginary money at that. Since this kind of wealth is so largely a matter of mass mental attitude, its evils can be corrected, sometimes at any rate, by changes in the mass mind, whether through legislative fiat or by the restoration or destruction of "confidence."

But the wealths that enter into our actual needs—shelter and food, clothing and fuel—are tangible, material things, and their manipulation affects us physically and directly, for better or worse.

Of all our national wealths, probably the least regarded has been water. Ex-

cept in arid regions, we have taken water as much for granted as we have air. This is especially unfortunate, for of all our national wealths it is quite literally the most fluid circulating medium. When we waste it through floods or useless runoff from our fields, or debase it with sewage and industrial wastes, or overconcentrate it in narrow channels and thereby cause erosion, we do much more mischief to ourselves than by any imaginable maladministration of the monetary system or the industrial securities setup.

Threatening national crises in a score of such neglected aspects of water use are reviewed in the report, just issued, of the Water Planning Committee of President Roosevelt's National Planning Board. After a comprehensive survey of the national uses of water, this group of scientists, economists and engineers recommend certain far-reaching reforms

which may take years to work out but which, once effected, will promote national welfare for centuries.

This does not mean a too-Herculean effort to iron out water inequalities. Inequalities in water-wealth are obviously more nearly inevitable than inequalities in money-wealth. Tennessee can always expect a larger income of rain than falls to the lot of Nevada. But the maladministration of greater Eastern water-wealth has brought a large share of the very ills that most afflict us, and right planning with maintained administration, can remedy this maladministration and make the inequalities a source of national well-being rather than national woe.

To this problem the new report directs our attention, and to this end the efforts of the present and coming Congresses may be expected to be directed.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Accidents Killed 99,000 Persons During 1934

NINETY-NINE thousand people died in 1934 from all kinds of accidents. This is the preliminary report of the National Safety Council, nationwide clearing house organization for the study of accidents and their prevention.

The accidental death figure for the last year is an increase of 8.7 per cent. over 1933, when 91,087 died from accidental causes. The total for 1934 approaches the all-time record of 99,300 deaths in 1930.

In "win" position, leading the race with death, are traffic accidents, accounting for over one-third of all the fatalities. "Place" position goes to home accidents, causing another third of the total. "Show" position is held by occupational and public accidents.

Win, place or show, the unenviable leaders maintain the same positions of the past. Motor vehicle accidents killed 35,500 people; up 13 per cent. from 1933.

Home accidents were up ten per cent. from 30,000 in 1933 to 33,000 in 1934.

Occupational accidental deaths are estimated at 15,500; up 1,000 over 1933.

The increase in traffic deaths is only partially accounted for by increased motor travel, reports the National Safety

Council. Gasoline consumption—best index of travel—increased only 7 per cent. in 1934; yet traffic deaths climbed 13 per cent.

While motor accidents increased generally throughout the country, four large cities achieved the notable feat of decreasing deaths from this cause within their boundaries. The honor roll includes: San Francisco, a drop of 15 per cent. from 1933 totals; Pittsburgh, down 13 per cent.; Milwaukee, down 8 per cent. and New York City, down one per cent.

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INVENTION

New German Envelope Sticks Without Licking

ENVELOPES that need no licking or other moistening of the flap to make them stick securely have been produced by a German inventor. The body of the envelope bears a secondary gummed flap which can be turned up after the letter has been inserted, so that its sticky surface and that of the principal flap meet. A momentary finger-pressure, and the two surfaces stick tightly to each other.

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● RADIO

Tuesday, January 29, 4:30 p. m.
DIGGING UP HISTORY, by Horace H. F. Jayne, Director of The University Museum, Philadelphia.

Tuesday, February 5, 4:30 p. m.
WHEN THE PAST BROKE ITS SILENCE, by Prof. E. A. Speiser, Department of Semitics, University of Pennsylvania.

In the Science Service series of radio addresses given by eminent scientists over the Columbia Broadcasting System.