

convenience in doing the track work, into sections of an average length of about seven miles. To properly perform the labor of keeping the tracks in repair, there should be employed on each of these sections, a foreman, who has supervision of the work, and also there should be employed from seven to twelve workmen or section laborers. In addition to this, in order to safe-guard the lives of the men in the train service, and the traveling public, there should be employed on each section, at least two track walkers, one for the day time and one for the night time, where trains are operated at night. The day track walkers should be provided with a wrench with which to tighten loose bolts, a hammer to drive in spikes that have worked loose, and a flag with which to signal train crews and warn them of danger. The night track walker should be provided with a lantern and torpedoes, so that, if he finds dangerous places on the tracks he can signal and warn those in charge of approaching trains.

Third.—Your complainant further alleges, that by its long continued practice of not furnishing sufficient material, to keep its railway tracks in repair, the said company, has in use on a large part of its lines of railway in the state of Nebraska, rotten and decayed ties, and old and worn out rails. Instead of employing the proper number of men per section, it has on a majority of its sections only a foreman and from one to two men. It provides neither track walkers for day or night. As a result of these conditions, the said railway company is operating its trains over tracks that are extremely dangerous and unsafe for the transportation of passengers. There is constant liability to wrecks and great loss of life. Herewith your complainant files Exhibits "1 to 32" inclusive, and asks that they be made a part of the complaint. The said exhibits are photographs taken along the lines of the defendant's railway in Nebraska since the 22nd day of July, 1907. They show the general character of the dangerous conditions above referred to.

Your petitioner further alleges that the said Missouri Pacific Railway company in anticipation of the filing of this complaint, has through its officers given notice in writing, to its trackmen that "Where ties are broken in the center of the track to throw some dirt on the center of the ties so they can not be seen." Your petitioner further alleges that according to its information in some instances, the foregoing order was obeyed by the trackmen, and in other instances they refused to do as bidden and become parties to such villainy.

Wherefore, your complainant prays, that an investigation be at once made into the truth of this complaint, that an inspection of the track of the said company be forthwith made, and that the said railway company be compelled by order of your honorable board to place their said tracks in safe condition for the transportation of passengers. And that during the time necessary repairs so required are being made you direct said railway company through its proper officers to have its tracks properly patrolled both day and night, and that they move their trains until the repairs so ordered are made, at such rate of speed over said defective tracks, as will not longer endanger the lives of the men in the train service, the railway mail clerks, and the passengers, who travel thereon.

Your complainant asks that the opportunity of having its officers and agents, who took the photographs filed herewith as exhibits, present at the inspection of said company's tracks, in order that they may point out to the commis-

A SHOCKING STORY

Elsewhere in this issue The Commoner presents a series of pictures showing the dilapidated condition of a railway track over which thousands of passengers are carried every day. The half-tones were made from photographs taken by officials of the National Union of Railway Trackmen and filed with the Nebraska railroad commission. The complaint filed will be found elsewhere, together with statistics showing the loss of life and injuries sustained in railroad accidents. The pictures show the utter unconcern of the great corporation managers for the safety of life and limb. In order to increase dividends on stocks and bonds watered to the limit, they daily jeopardize the lives of millions of people. These pictures are of conditions by no means confined to the one road mentioned in the complaint; they might be pictures of actual conditions that exist on many other railroads in this country. The public should be awakened

sioners the dangerous conditions which they found to exist.
NATIONAL UNION OF RAILWAY TRACKMEN,
By H. A. Vurpia, Vice President.



RAILROAD WRECKS

Under an act of congress, approved March 3, 1901, it is the duty of railway officials on all roads engaged in interstate commerce, to make a monthly report under oath to the interstate commerce commission, of all collisions of trains, or where any train or part of a train accidentally leaves the track, and of all accidents that may occur to passengers or employes. The report must state the nature and the causes of the accident, and the circumstances connected therewith. We have taken the period from January 1, 1903, to January 1, 1907, and compiled from the accident bulletins issued by the interstate commerce commission the number of derailments on the various railroads for the period mentioned.

Below is printed a table showing result of this compilation:

	Derail.	Loss.	Killed.	Injured.
January, February and March, 1903.....	1,181	\$1,004,533	75	782
April, May and June, 1903.....	1,202	1,100,206	72	885
July, August and September, 1903.....	1,298	1,120,029	102	942
October, November and December, 1903.....	1,179	1,035,651	157	787
January, February and March, 1904.....	1,140	893,664	62	704
April, May and June, 1904.....	1,238	1,142,815	67	728
July, August and September, 1904.....	1,321	1,214,472	190	1392
October, November and December, 1904.....	1,190	929,462	57	890
January, February and March, 1905.....	1,321	1,190,171	79	1310
April, May and June, 1905.....	1,535	1,525,492	130	1244
July, August and September, 1905.....	1,530	1,256,247	109	1244
October, November and December, 1905.....	1,645	1,264,209	99	1178
January, February and March, 1906.....	1,569	1,407,242	75	1310
April, May and June, 1906.....	1,515	1,410,833	89	1034
July, August and September, 1906.....	1,781	1,557,720	105	1495
October, November and December, 1906.....	1,739	1,382,349	146	1517
Total.....	22,384	\$19,434,095	1,614	17,442

A RECORD OF DESTRUCTION

Directing attention to this table the Trackman, published at Fort Scott, Kan., says:

"What a record of destruction and death. Pestilence, famine and war combined would be required to equal this tale of carnage. The country is rapidly being filled with widows and fatherless children, while the army of maimed and crippled is growing to enormous proportions. What can be done to remedy such a sad state of affairs? Surely there must be a way to prevent such slaughter. On every page of the Trackman is printed evidences of the main cause of this deplorable and criminal condition which confronts the people who travel on railroads.

"The pictures published here are reproduced from photographs taken in Missouri and Kansas on the main lines of railroad. We are trying to give this matter as wide a circulation as possible, so that all the people will know as much about the situation as we do. If we had the time to devote to the matter we could procure pictures enough like those published herein to fill every page of the Trackman for the next ten thousand years. We have neither the time, the inclination nor the money to devote more effort to the procurement of the photographs. We have enough for this and one or two succeeding issues. These samples will be sufficient to warn the people and cause them to investigate.

to the fact that those who travel upon the railroads are absolutely dependent for safety upon that class of railroad men who are the poorest paid in the service—the trackmen, or "section men" as they are better known. If these trackmen are not provided with material and given ample time, it follows that the track becomes unsafe. Material and men cost money which managers want to divide in the shape of dividends, therefore the track is left to become unsafe and often hurl scores of people to their death. This utter unconcern for the public safety seems to be characteristic of American railway managers. It is of a piece with the unconcern for the public health disclosed in the beef trust investigation.

It is time to cease juggling with words in referring to these conditions. They are criminal. The men responsible for them are criminals and should be dealt with as such. The life dashed out because of an accident due to

"The conditions that exist in this department are not caused by the recent railroad agitation; they have continued to exist for a period of years and they have now become unendurable. The trouble is that no railroad owner today knows whether he will be a railroad owner tomorrow or not. A sudden turn in the stock market may oust any or all of them. Each general manager feels that he must make a record, and when he is either discharged or promoted, the next one must make a record for economy, as his predecessor did. A succession of general managers, each making his own record, in a large measure destroys the railway property. If the economizing in the track department continues for a sufficient length of time, as it has done on some roads, the property is ready for the junk pile. Rails and ties must be replaced occasionally to have any railroad at all. There must be a sufficient number of good men employed to keep the track in good condition, even when the rails and ties are good. We make the statement boldly and without fear of successful contradiction, that there is not a railway in the United States today that employes enough men

to properly do the repairing and keeping in repair its railway tracks. We make the further charge that when they desire to make a saving they always attack the track department. They do this because the men are unorganized and will stand for any kind of mistreatment. The men in the track departments of the railroads of our country are the most poverty stricken class of laborers we have. Their wages are not sufficient to decently and properly house, feed and clothe their families. While vast millions are being made every year by railway owners and squandered oftentimes in riotous living, the men who are engaged in trying to keep the railway tracks safe for travel are poorly fed, poorly housed and poorly clothed, underpaid, and overworked. The treatment which they receive has grown to be a national disgrace and scandal. Surely the people of this country will come to their senses and take steps to right the wrongs of these poor laborers and compel the railway companies of the country to place their tracks in safe condition for travel and keep them so. Undoubtedly many of those who read this will ride to their death on defective railway tracks before we secure safe conditions. The tracks have been so long neglected and have in many instances deteriorated so far that a long period of time must necessarily elapse, from the very nature of things, before they can be put in a proper state of efficiency, no matter how vigorous the campaign for these changes may be."

unsafe track caused by a desire for dividends greater than a desire to safeguard life and limb is as much a murder as the life dashed out by the bludgeon of the highwayman. Pilate may have thought he washed the blood of the Nazarene from his hands, but the time came when he realized his mistake. Coroner's juries may exonerate railway managers from all blame for accidents due to greed and rapacity, but guilt remains, and sooner or later they will be called to an accounting which they can not evade.

The pictures here presented tell a shocking story of disregard for human life in the race for material wealth. They portray conditions which must be changed quickly if this country would not come to the position of regarding human life as of utterly no value when compared with wealth or power. The National Union of Railway Trackmen, made up of the humble workmen who shovel dirt, tamp ties and spike rails, is doing the traveling public an immense favor by calling attention to the facts.