

Murder on the Highways

Ken Spraetz

THREE years ago I was a reckless and wild driver who might have harmed some innocent little child forever. In 1953 a close friend of mine who has been a state trooper for five years came to see me one bright, sunny afternoon. I thought he wanted to visit, but he did not. He had something on his mind—something terribly important. Being blunt and coming right to the point as most troopers do, he told me that I was a maniac behind the wheel, a criminal in disguise, and that I would not remain his friend unless I corrected my driving manners. He went on to say that there was only one cure for anyone who drove as I did, and he showed me what that cure was. He asked me to accompany him on a few investigations which he had to make, and to be a witness to “murder on the highways.”

That afternoon we had only one investigation. It was enough to cure me for a lifetime. It actually was what he called “murder” on the highway. A man, his wife, and their four children were driving in a car that had a blowout. The man pulled as far to the right as he could and, with the help of his sixteen-year-old son, began to change the tire. An automobile going nearly ninety miles per hour came zooming along that road, hit the man and his son, and carried them one hundred fifty feet across the center esplanade.

I saw those two corpses. The young boy's intestines had been torn from his body, and the man's head was crushed. The driver of the car which had hit them had spent the evening in a bar—and wound up with a prison sentence. What happened to the widow and her three other children? They also received a sentence from which there was no parole. They lost that which cannot be replaced, a husband and father and a son and brother. Death is inevitable, but to see people killed as a result of one's carelessness is no joke. Driving a car is a job which requires many things; most of all it requires a clear mind and enough intelligence to drive correctly. That fine sunny afternoon I learned a lesson, one that I shall never have to learn again. I was a witness to murder on the highways.

Humility

Anne Laughlin

IN August of 1955 my parents and I took a trip to Maine, where we visited a distant but very dear cousin of my mother. I cannot say that anything I did or saw during my stay near Bar Harbor effected any great change in my life. However, I derived one bit of wisdom from my experience there.

I regarded my family's idea of a Maine vacation with something less than enthusiasm; I thought that I was a little too grown-up for