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Letter: George Opp to Ida M. Tarbell, March 15, 1930

Opp, George

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THE DETROIT EDISON COMPANY

GENERAL OFFICES
2000 SECOND AVENUE

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

March 15, 1930.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
New York City, N.Y.

My dear Miss Tarbell:-

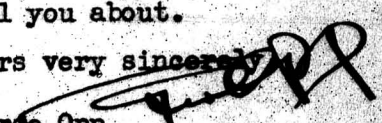
In line with the promise which I gave you on the occasion of the Executive Committee Meeting of the National Safety Council in New York City last month, I am giving you herein, a story which comes from a manufacturing concern in the public utility field, indicative of the development of the so-called "safety sense" or "sixth sense", which you so vividly described to us on the occasion of that meeting.

A test-man while making connection on new equipment, received shock by reason of the fact that a switchboard attendant ~~through~~ the wrong switch. The victim received voltage between 1000 and 2000 at 60 cycles. He had contact with both hands and both feet, so severe that he lost two toes on one foot and part of a toe on the other. Both hands were badly burned. The peculiar part about this accident is that the man did not lose consciousness. He was able to call to the switchboard operator to open the switch.

In a later interview he said that his one idea, as he fell victim to this accident, was to keep breathing, knowing that if he stopped breathing he was afraid he would pass out. The very keen desire to continue his breathing undoubtedly comes as the result of the development of a special safety sense, or perhaps it is the result of the training of the five senses to a super-acuteness, parallel to that of the woodsman, the early cave-man or jungle-man, about whom you told us.

I trust that this is a case typical of the kind of accidents that you wished us to tell you about.

Yours very sincerely,


George Opp,
Safety Engineer.

Vice-President in charge of
Territorial Councils,
National Safety Council.

GO:D