

WARNED OF BATTERY DANGER

Auto Builder Says Experiments Often Produced Explosions.

Special to The New York Times.

DENVER, Col., Jan. 16.—Experiments made by Oliver P. Fritchle, a Denver automobile manufacturer, with the new Edison battery may throw light on the cause of the explosion aboard the United States submarine E-2 in the New York Navy Yard yesterday. Mr. Fritchle declared that in his work with Edison batteries similar to those used in the E-2 he has had frequent and sometimes dangerous explosions.

"Only a few weeks ago," said Mr. Fritchle, "a navy official and I were discussing these new batteries, and I then warned him of the danger I had discovered. The new Edison batteries generate constantly hydrogen and oxygen. The battery cells instead of being welded together are held side by side with clamps. If one becomes loosened a spark will be created, which almost invariably results in an explosion."

PLEA FOR COMPENSATION.

Federal Act Less Liberal to Accident Victims Than State Laws.

The fatal accident on the submarine E-2 emphasizes the need for a revision of the Federal compensation law, so that injured civilian employees and the families of civilian employees who are killed may be cared for at least as well as employees of private concerns are cared for in New York and other States, according to Dr. John B. Andrews of 24 Gramercy Park, Secretary of the American Association for Labor Legislation.

"Under the present Federal law," said Dr. Andrews, "that maximum that the widow of one of the civilian employees killed in this accident could receive is the year's wages of her husband, which in one of the cases, I understand, is \$600. The maximum that a laborer disabled for the rest of his life would receive is his wages for one year."

"Under the New York State law, for instance, the widow of a man killed in such an accident would receive at least 35 per cent. of his wages for the rest of her life, if she remained a widow, or for the period of her widowhood. If he left a wife and family they might receive two-thirds of his income, the amount being diminished as the children came of age, after which the widow would continue to receive 35 per cent."

"If a man is permanently disabled

in the employ of a private concern in this State, he is entitled to two-thirds of his wages for the rest of his life, instead of full wages for one year only, as the Government provides. A man losing fingers, or a limb or an eye, is compensated to a fair extent under the State law, while he would receive nothing but his wages during the actual period he was out of work from the Federal Government.

"Another fault with the Federal law is that it does not provide medical attention for the injured. The injured men in the Cumberland Street Hospital are being cared for at the expense of the city. The Federal law makes one error on the other side, in providing full pay for an injured workman who remains out of work for any period between two weeks and a year. This encourages malingering, which is discouraged under the State law providing for two-thirds wages.

"The fact that the Federal law is unscientific and inadequate is recognized by the administrative officials at Washington, who are in favor of the Kern-McGillicuddy bill, drawn by the American Association for Labor Legislation. The bill provides compensation on about the same terms as those of the New York State Workmen's Compensation act. The bill has no open opposition in Congress, but it has been held back at this and preceding sessions by the inertia of Congress.

"Secretary Daniels was urging the expenditure of \$500,000,000 in five years for preparedness in the navy at the very time that this accident occurred, and this time, when we are contemplating such large expenditures on work which involves much risk for the workmen, is also the time when we should take care that the workman is fairly treated."