

## THE CALL OF THE OPEN ROAD

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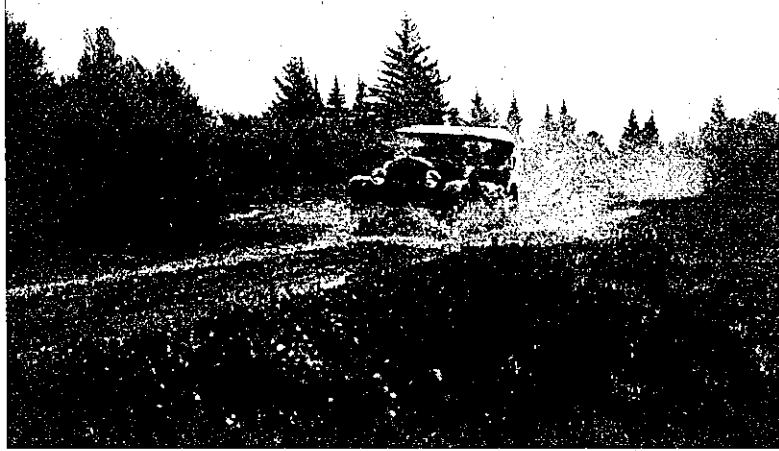
gain the placid reaches of the river beyond. At the foot of the Rapids is a whirlpool where the waters swirl in ceaseless rotation, as if weary of their hasty frolic through the narrow gorge. Herein float the luckless pieces of timber which failed to negotiate the turmoil of the frenzied torrent. Round and round they circle, and here and there a block of wood, worn smooth and rounded with the constant contact of its fellow prisoners, would make a bold bid for freedom and, reaching the outer fringes of the pool, hesitate a moment in anticipation of the liberty beyond, but the ruthless current, with wide outstretching grasp, would draw it back into the inner vortex, repeating the performance with tantalising monotony, as it must have done for ages past.

Between the Aratiatia Rapids and the Huka Falls, a side track leads off to the Karapiti Blow Hole. Amid the most desolate surroundings, this strange hole in the earth emits a continuous volume of steam at tremendous pressure. In bygone days the Maoris crossing Lake Taupo were in the habit of using this column of steam as a beacon to guide the course of their canoes.

A short distance outside the township of Taupo, a bridge spans the Waikato as it leaves the lake. As this is the only outlet, some idea may be formed of the volume of water which passes over the Huka Falls.

Lake Taupo, undoubtedly one of the beauty spots of New Zealand, is the Mecca of trout fishers, not

only from the local centres, but from lands afar. Here abound the finest rainbow trout in the world, and here the angler will find all the sport worth having. It is a common sight in the fishing season to see many sportsmen wading off the



shores within twenty feet of one another, each endeavouring to outfish the other with the largest catch of the day. We saw a most amusing incident in connection with this sport. Some anglers following the usual custom, buried their catch in the sand to keep it fresh, and mark-

ing their caché with lumps of pumice went off to catch bigger and better ones. Later in the day the errant lake breezes sent wavelets dancing up the shores and the anglers were too interested to notice that the pumice had been gradually wash-

anxious to sample the fine specimen which our angler had landed, and the inviting pink flesh sizzling in the frying pan, was enough to tempt the most fastidious appetite. We discovered that one of the most successful ways of cooking this delicious fish is to split it open, place it on a plank, and set it on the embers until cooked.

WE chose a site for our camp at a point where the Waitahanui River flows into the lake. All along the lakeside were dotted the tents of fellow travellers. At night the glowing camp fires cast their reflections over the placid waters, and now and again snatches of some popular song would come floating down the wind—a peaceful spot, full of historic memories, conjuring up visions of the old-time Maori canoes full of war-like warriors bearing down upon some rival tribe, and many other scenes of the past, both legendary and historical. In the sigh of the wind might easily be imagined the plaintive sweetness of the haunting love-song of a stalwart brave as he serenaded his dusky maiden enconced behind the barricade of some distant pah. All such romance is now for the most part lost in the atmosphere of modern civilisation. The Maoris in these parts are content to garner their harvest from the pockets of intending anglers, who pay a nominal sum for the privilege of fishing from their domain.

The southern points jutting out into the lake are picturesquely wooded with sentinel poplars and

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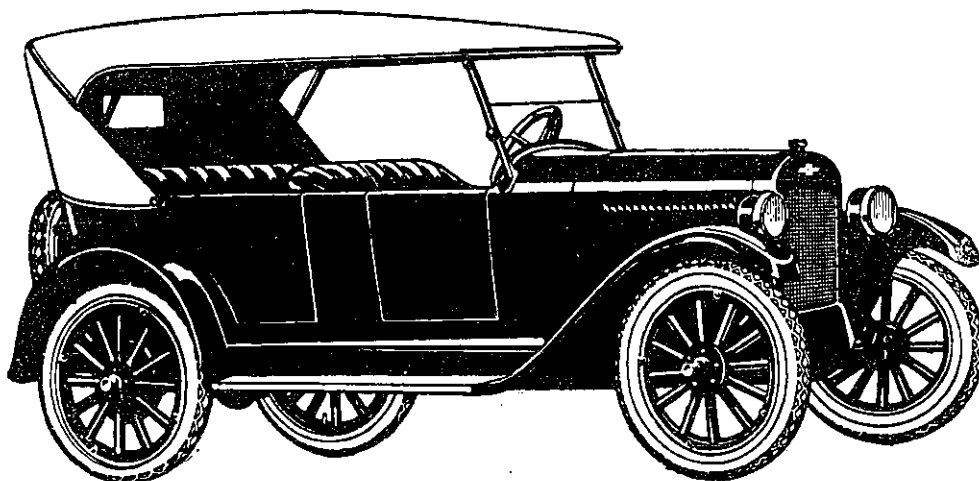
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