



F. G. Radcliffe, photo

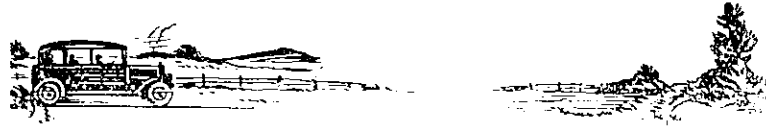
RUSSELL, BAY OF ISLANDS

From "N.Z. in Picture," Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd.

The King's Highway

A Motoring Causerie

By Sancho



With another summer looming ahead, the car-owner will do well at this season to make sure that all is well with the works. Now-a-days the motor-car is a more or less owner-proof vehicle, and few people give their cars the laborious personal attention that was customary a few years back. Nevertheless, a thorough look-over of all working parts at least once a year by a good, honest garage man is sound economy. The engine, gear-box, and differential are, of course, the most vital parts of the outfit, and should be given a good clean out and inspection for wear.

Front-wheel bearings are similarly worth looking to and as one's life depends on the efficiency of the steering mechanism it should be carefully examined throughout and worn pins, kingbolts, etc., replaced. The electrical equipment deserves a run over and wiring with frayed insulations should also be given attention. It will probably be found that the radiator can do with a good clean out and run through with washing soda. The springs should be carefully inspected and greased if necessary, and worn spring shackles replaced. In the course of this examination all bolts and nuts through the chassis will incidentally be tested for tightness, the whole of the bolts securing the body to the

chassis being gone over in particular.

There is no doubt that most of us scamp looking after our cars. The very fact that the modern motor will go on running with so little attention and will stand so much neglect is in itself a temptation to carelessness. In the end Nemesis overtakes the careless owner with a failure usually at the most inconvenient time a dark road, say, miles from anywhere, on a wet night when everyone is tired and anxious to be abed. Then with the rain trickling down our necks, and minus the torch, forgotten at home, or with an inspection lamp with a dead bulb, we grope for the toolkit and stub our fingers and our temper, searching vainly for the cause of trouble.

These are the sort of trying experiences one avoids by always keeping the car in good nick. Few of us enjoy fussing around in over-

alls, and most of us can spend a long time with a spanner in hand achieving very little. The best way out in most cases, I think, would be to turn the car in to an honest, dependable garage man to spend an hour on it once a week or once a fortnight, according to the amount one uses it. But perhaps, after all, this solution is not as simple as it sounds, for the ideally dependable garage man, alas, does not grow on every gooseberry bush. Such a one discovered is a jewel to be treasured.

I hear a rumour that the Main Highways Board is increasing its staff so as to enable its engineer, Mr. A. Tyndall, to be up and about the country. At present Mr. Tyndall is tied to his desk in Wellington with routine work. The highways Board is handing out to the local bodies about half a million a year for the purpose of improving the roads, but at the moment it does not seem to be anybody's very special business to hop around and see

just what results that expenditure is producing. Nominally this responsibility rests on the district engineers of the Public Works Department. As most of these district engineers have railway construction works, hydro-electric works, and heaven only knows what else to look after, the amount of time left on their hands for perambulating the 6000 miles of main highways is not over-large. Systematic personal inspection by the board's engineer should help a lot in stirring the laggard counties from their slumbers.

A still-born movement buried more or less in a pigeon-hole in the biggest wooden building in the world in Wellington deserves a helping hand from the motoring organisations. This is the scheme initiated some years ago for the marking of historic spots, and the preservation of historic monuments. On tour it is always interesting to know about these places, and the youngsters in a family party can achieve a lot of history without tears when father is able to point out to them the site of some historic episode in the Maori wars. Especially is this the case if there is a cairn or obelisk with an inscribed tablet to freshen up everybody's memory as to what actually took place.

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