

MOTOR NOTES.

The annual meeting of the New Zealand Automobile Union, held in Wellington, was attended by the following delegates:—Hawke's Bay, Messrs P. S. McLean (president) and Russell Duncan; Wellington, C. M. Banks and Dr C. P. Knight; Manawatu, Mr R. S. Abraham; Wairarapa, Mr C. Elgar; Marlborough, Messrs Fraser-Tyler, Gane and Thomas; Canterbury, Mr Johnston; Otago, Mr G. B. Bullock.

The report which was presented by the secretary (Mr W. Beauchamp Platts), and adopted, stated that little progress had been made in automobile legislation owing to the war. The formation of one or more main trunk roads through both islands was advocated. The various associations throughout the country were urged to consolidate their interests by affiliating with the union and supporting it in its efforts to obtain suitable legislation and in its action in questions of national importance. The chairman emphasised the usefulness of the union in regard to legislation on such topics as the licensing of drivers (which should be universal), motor traction and speed limits. The union advocated a "reasonable" speed limit. He stated that the union would probably be consulted in matters concerning motorists by the Government, and would be able to assist in the carrying of the wounded from the ships to their homes or hospitals. Several speakers regretted that the union was receiving so little support from other associations, and the hope was generally expressed that motorists would in future realise the great value of a central body.

There is a demand in England for more motor drivers. There has been an impression that the supply of motor drivers for the A.S.C., M.T., is well in advance of the number of lorries ready to be put at their disposal. The fact of the matter is that it has been necessary of late, as it were, to lay in stocks both of cars and of drivers. The moment has come when enormous numbers of men, who went into training during the first month or so of the war, are ready for active service. It is no longer merely a question of replenishing losses at the front and increasing our strength slowly and steadily. The next move must be to bring about an enormous accession of force which alone can suffice to effect any real sweeping change in the present of affairs in France and Flanders. The mechanical transport driver is presumed to be already a trained specialist. Consequently, it has not been thought necessary to enlist him until within a few weeks or days of the time when his services might reasonably be expected to be required on the Continent. In some cases, expectations have been falsified, and men have been kept waiting, and the impression consequently conveyed that there were more than enough drivers available. We have it on the very best authority that this is not the case. Skilled men are now very urgently needed. If they do not come forward, the movement of huge forces towards the front will be materially delayed. An army corps is of little use without its ammunition columns, and those who are in a position to assist, but who hesitate to do so at the present instant, must in the future class themselves with the minority of workmen who have refused to work overtime, or preferred their pleasures to their duty, and so jeopardised the adequacy of ammunition supplies. There are in the A.S.C., M.T., thousands of private motorists acting as transport drivers. The work is thoroughly interesting, and what is more is well paid at the rate of 6s. a day, to which may be added a generous separation allowance for wife and family. In some instances, the total remuneration works out at upwards of £4 per week. In any case, it is an

honest statement of fact to say that the transport driver is in reality very much better off from the pecuniary standpoint than the junior commissioned officers.

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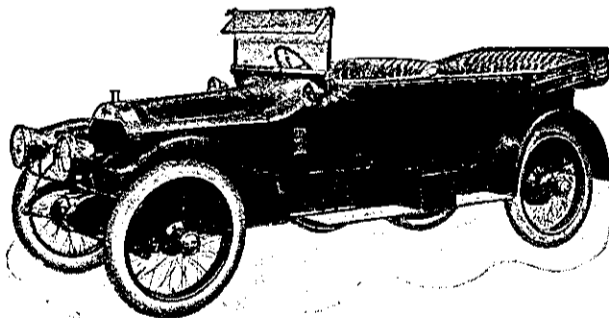
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