

# MOTORING & CYCLING.

(CONTINUED.)

"If the surface of the Rimutaka road was in as good a condition as that of Paekakariki, there would be a lot more accidents on the hill, as people would drive their cars faster." So said Mr. A. D. McLeod at the Road Conference in Wellington.

Another misfortune has happened to Mr. J. Grant Mackie's seaplane at Redcliffs. The flight from the Estuary to Lyttelton was to have been attempted last week for the second time, but when testing the engine the blade of the propeller broke in half. The blade was made of five pieces of New Zealand wood, and it was fortunate that it missed the spectators.

Few experienced motor cyclists will deny that the greatest virtue which any motor cycle can possess is easy starting. The speediest, smoothest-running mount in existence becomes a brute inexpressible to run or possess if it cannot be started within twenty or thirty yards. The most noisy, harshly-driven machine becomes a thing of joy and proud possession when it starts off without trouble. A machine may be graceful, reliable, powerful, cleanly, economical, and any other adjective thinkable or unthinkable, but if it is not an easy starter all its good points go for nought in comparison with the fundamental question of efficient starting. No other virtue or galaxy of virtues can compensate on any machine which ever pleads guilty to the overwhelming crime of "non-startingitis."

A meeting of the directors of the Canterbury Petroleum Prospecting Company, Ltd., was held at Ashburton recently. The manager reported that the well at Chertsey had been drilled 1952ft., the strata being clay, with some sandstone shingle. Ninety-five additional shares were allotted, bringing the total up to 16,000. Two thousand five hundred feet of four-inch casing is under order from Canada, and should arrive in about two months. Sufficient five-inch casing is available to carry the well to 2200ft.

A project of interest to sportsmen was raised at the annual meeting of the Poverty Bay Motor Cycle Club. A letter was received from the local centre of the New Zealand Athletic and Cycling Union, advising that the championships for New Zealand had been allotted to Gisborne this year, on condition that the programme arranged was approved by the senior union. Particulars have already been published in the form of a statement made by Mr. A. E. Davy, this centre's representative at the Wellington conference. Arrangements are being made by the Motor Cycle Club for a prize list totalling about £400, and it is hoped that athletes will be attracted from all over the Dominion. It is also hoped to obtain the Auto Cycle Union's permission to hold an Australasian Handicap motor cycle race.

One of the Municipal Milk Department's five-ton motor waggons met with an accident on the Paekakariki Hill late on Saturday week. The waggon, loaded with cement, general building materials, and empty milk cans, was going up to the hill on its way to Otaki, when the outer edge of the thoroughfare, softened by the continual rains, gave way. The waggon rolled over on to its side, but fortunately was prevented from going right down the bank by a stout iron-bark telegraph pole. Luckily, the driver, a municipal employee named Lucas, his assistant, and a boy escaped without injury. Although the post actually struck by the waggon was merely knocked out of the perpendicular, the next three were pulled right out of the ground by the sudden strain, and telegraphic communication between Wellington and the west coast by that route was interrupted.

The romance of rustless steel, one of the most recent metallurgical triumphs, is given increased prominence with the removal of war restrictions. The new metal, with a bright surface and able to resist the corroding effect of air, water and acids without staining, was discovered just prior to the outbreak of war, and was immediately commandeered by the British Government for use in airplane

construction and for purposes where strength and durability, combined with rust-resisting qualities, were invaluable. The steel is a Sheffield invention, and was chanced upon largely by accident. A local metallurgist, Mr. Harry Brearly, author of numerous standard works, was experimenting in the armament shop to find a means of preventing erosion in gun tubes. After some of his experiments he noticed that certain pieces of chrome steel had not suffered from corrosive influences under conditions which would have rusted ordinary steel. He followed up this clue, and what is known as stainless steel was eventually worked out and added to Sheffield's metallurgical triumphs. There is little doubt but that rustless steel will yet be extensively used in motor, motor cycle, and bicycle construction.

What should be the carrying capacity of the standard car? Four, five, six, or seven persons? For whatever has been the number decided on by the manufacturer, that number has invariably been exceeded; and the seating of three in a two-seater, five in a four-seater, six in a five-seater, and so on, and the number of enquiries received for more capacious bodies on the comparatively low horse-powered chassis, point to the fact that it is not wise to build too large; for the resultant cramming in of the extra passengers is good for neither chassis, tyres, nor body. For the popular 16 h.p. the most suitable

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capacity would be a five-seater (driver included), seating three at the rear and dispensing with emergency seats which necessitate an extra length of bodywork, and if any extra length of wheelbase is not forthcoming this extension of the coachwork is to be deprecated. In this connection it may be remarked that the tendency is for the chassis maker to come to the coachbuilder's aid, and many post-war cars will have considerably longer wheelbases than hitherto have been the rule, but this may be in their efforts to attain good springing rather than to help the coach designer. At any rate, so long as the ultimate comfort of the passengers is arrived at, at least one of the three objectives is attained, whilst unquestionably a more beautiful and graceful carriage line can be adopted.

A remarkable hill climb was recently held up "Devil's Despair Hill," at San Juan, California. The length of hill was only 500 feet, but its gradient was from 1 in 2 to 1 in 1-3. So steep was the incline that nearly every machine broke its chain, turned over backwards, and rolled to the bottom of the hill. Fifty-two riders competed, mostly with special gripping appliances attached to the driving tyre. Several riders suffered minor injuries. Fully 50 per cent. of the chains snapped immediately the way on machines, from a flying start, eased off. Two riders—D. Perkins

Thoughts in absence ever wander  
Where fond recollections cling;  
Making loyal hearts grow fonder  
Of a person, place or thing.  
Tender thoughts of dear ones vanished  
In our hearts for age endure—  
Gratitude for bad colds banished,  
And for Woods' Great Peppermint  
Cure.

(Harley-Davidson) and C. Heaton (Excelsior)—surmounted the climb, the former getting to the top in 34 4-5sec. The event drew an enormous crowd, one spectator's knee being dislocated owing to a falling machine striking him. The two successful riders received prizes totalling £150 each.

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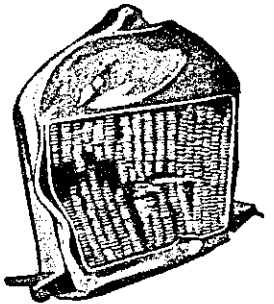
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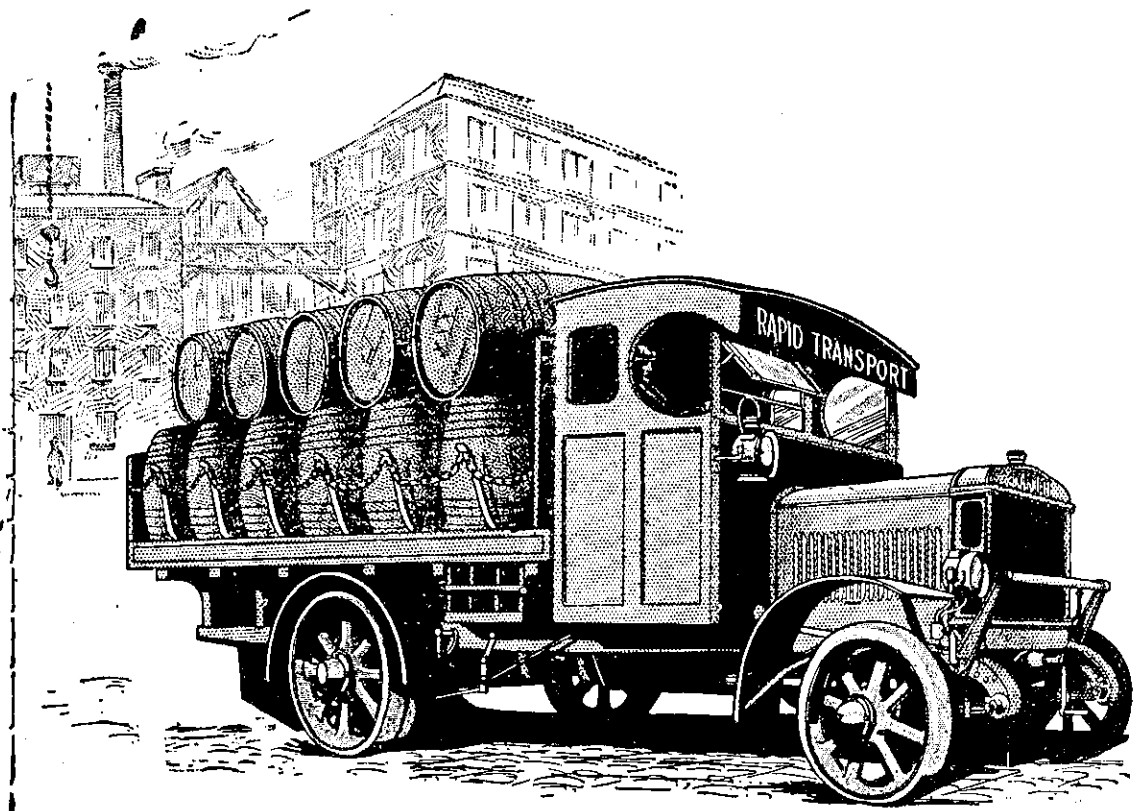
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