

The Motor Omnibus on Trial.

GROWING POPULARITY IN SPITE OF FAULTS.

360,000 PEOPLE CARRIED DAILY IN LONDON.

THE motor omnibus of to-day, speedy, cheap, convenient, the supplanter of the old horse omnibus and the tramway car, the serious rival of the suburban train, is on trial for incidental faults before its tens of thousands of admirers.

People go on using it while they criticise, but they ask that its lessening noise shall entirely disappear, that its evil smelling vapours shall be seen and smelt no more that its comparative safety shall be made safer. The motor omnibus has in a little more than one year made itself indispensable to London; London now asks that it shall make itself agreeable as well as swift and cheap.

The terrible disaster to the motor omnibus on Handcross Hill recently shook the nerves of Londoners a little, and for a few days there were fewer passengers on the motor omnibuses in the streets. But an isolated accident, shocking as it may be, was not sufficient to frighten permanently the people who have found the vehicles of such value. A striking effect of the Handcross tragedy has been the caution and exceeding care which the drivers of the motor omnibuses have since been showing.

ACTION BY THE POLICE.

Noise and smell are two of the complaints against the motor omnibus which the Chief Commissioner of Police is giving his immediate attention, and a Select Committee of the House of

360,000 PASSENGERS DAILY

But these are only indications of the benefits to be conferred on outer London. At present it is calculated that the 400 motor omnibuses in London carry 360,000 passengers daily. The number of vehicles will be greatly increased in the next few months.

The motor-omnibus companies and the drivers seem to have been put on their mettle by the criticisms which are being directed against them, and a very determined effort is being made to improve matters. The men are in effect driving "on honour"

In reply to a question by Mr Channing the Home Secretary gave the following list of motor-omnibus accidents in the metropolitan police district in May and June—

	May.	June
Accidents caused by motor omnibuses	400	390
Number of accidents causing personal injury	62	80
Number of accidents which proved fatal	2	3

Motor 'Buses v. Tramcars.

By A. J. WILSON IN *Autocar*

THE epoch-marking discussion aroused by Mr Manville's address to the London Automobile Club, which we recently printed, appeared to me to miss two points of great importance, both of which tell in favour of the motor 'bus. Firstly, not a word was said about the frightful dislocation of traffic occasioned by the laying of a tramway, especially a conduit tramway such as those which

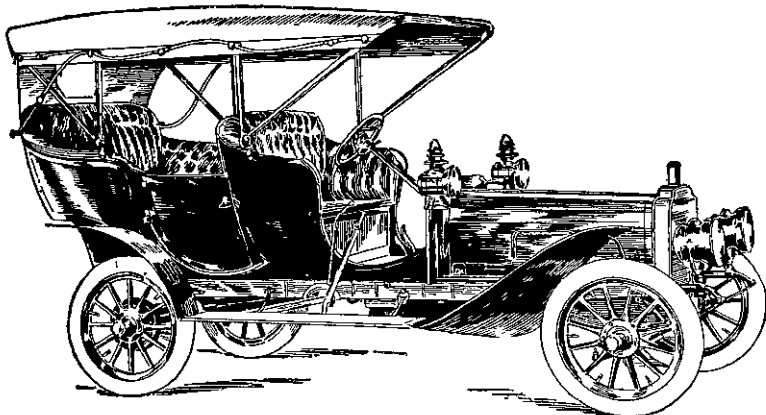
centre of the road. The horse-omnibus driver keeps to the middle of the road, in utter unconcern of faster traffic, because he likes to run his iron-tired wheels on the smooth tram lines, and thus save his horse power, but with tram lines absent and with an abundance of surplus power the motor 'busman will obey the rule of the road by keeping to the left, thus leaving the centre of the road free for faster traffic.

A Comfortable Solid Tyre.

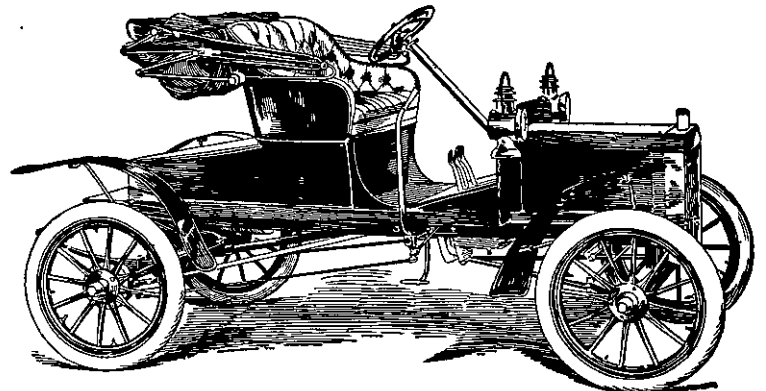
The maker of nearly every rubber tyre is only too ready to persuade a likely purchaser that his tyre is equal to a pneumatic. Though we would not for a moment suggest that any solid tyre is equal to the pneumatic, we must admit that the Swinehart solid tyre goes very near the mark. During a twenty miles spin (part of it being over granite sets) which we had recently, the comfort and lack of vibration was a very pleasing feature. The height of the rubber and its resilience will commend it to anyone who has a knowledge of this material—*The Motor*.

A Bid for French Trade.

M. Henric Fournier is establishing a series of international garages and repair shops in London, Rome, New York, Berlin, Cannes, and Nice to link up the Paris establishment with other leading capitals. Cars, spares, and accessories of all sorts will be sold at these various centres at a uniform price, and the motor tourist will be welcomed with open and helpful arms at any of these International garages.



THE FORD 6-CYLINDER TOURING CAR, MODEL "K."



THE FORD 4-CYLINDER TOURING CAR, MODEL "N."

Commons is considering regulations which he has drawn up. Meanwhile, the authorities are well aware that the manufacturers fully appreciate the shortcomings of the present type of omnibus, and will be able before long to place in the streets vehicles much less noisy and better fitted in all respects for traffic.

Despite these incidental evils it is agreed on all sides that the motor omnibus is destined to play a large part in the evolution of London.

The new London will be an ever-widening circle, stretching far into the country, the central parts being reserved more and more for the day work of the hundreds of thousands who live on the fringes, and travel backwards and forwards night and morning. The quicker and the cheaper the means of locomotion between the suburbs and the working centre of London the better it will be for the workers. They will be able to live further afield in fresher air, will have better houses, and will pay less for them.

SUBURBS NEARER.

Some of the outlying suburbs have hitherto been almost impossible as places of residence for thousands of workers, because of inaccessibility. The daily fares by train were also often a heavy item in a humble household. Now, however, the handicap of time and expense is being minimised by the motor omnibus. "The new vehicle," said Mr Duff, the manager of the Road Car Company, "will add two miles to the London omnibus radius." That is to say that, assuming the present omnibus radius from Charing Cross to be roughly from four to five miles, it will become by the use of the motor omnibus a radius of from six to seven miles. It is obvious that new, swift and cheap locomotion to and from this vast outlying circle of London must not only afford conveniences of residence to armies of workers, but must also greatly increase the value of all property tapped by the omnibus.

have been during recent years and are now being laid in and around London. Even a short length of line such as that from the Angel at Islington to Southampton Row, where the line dives underground to Aldwych, had the effect of upsetting and diverting traffic in the district for nearly a twelvemonth. While Rosebery Avenue and Theobald's Road were impassable, Holborn and the Strand were shockingly congested for many months, and business men found it actually quicker to walk than to drive in any kind of vehicle. Motor 'buses do not entail such inconvenience. The other point is common to all tram lines, whether horsed or electric in perpetuity, and in my own experience the Angel at Islington, again is an object lesson, since I pass this spot every morning and evening on my way into and out of town. A number of omnibus routes as well as three tramway routes are squeezed into this neck of street, and the public vehicles proceeding away from the city all stop at the Angel itself. There are generally from two to seven omnibuses drawn up in a line at the kerb setting down and picking up passengers, and seldom less than three tramcars alongside them. There is no space between 'buses and tramcars so that all other traffic has to crawl and stop behind the tramcars, and not only the tramcars coming in the opposite direction, but also the omnibuses (which will keep to the middle of the road instead of keeping to their left) interfere with this occasional possibility. So the road is clogged, and the ratepayers employ extra policemen to regulate the traffic. Do away with the tram lines and substitute motor 'buses and the congestion will be abolished, the motor 'buses will pull up at the kerb, passengers will not be compelled to dodge into the middle of the road to board the tramcar, and all other traffic will be free to pass along without accommodating anyone. Moreover, the abolition of the horsed omnibus will do away with the vicious practice of such vehicles pursuing their course along the

Do You Want a Motor Car ?

READERS of PROGRESS who are in the market to buy motor cars find the expert advice given by this journal invaluable.

Any reader who wishes information and advice can obtain it from us by writing his questions and enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope. He will receive a reply by post.

The proprietors of PROGRESS have no financial interest in the sale of cars. In several cases where readers have bought cars upon our advice, the manufacturers have offered to us the usual trade commission, which, of course, was refused.

A Surfeit of Cups and Trophies.

The Continent suffered last season from a surfeit of automobile competitions on land, on sea and in the air. Motorists are becoming tired of competing for twenty to fifty-guinea cups, which to win outright is almost an impossibility. The rules specify that the holder must win twice in succession or three times in all. To do this a competitor is obliged to enter for interminable competitions and at the end of much hard work he may have the good luck to become possessed of the trophy. Many of the cups are put up merely to satisfy the vanity of the giver, or to advertise his particular merchandise.

Owners of light American runabouts, with leather-faced fly-wheel clutches, should be careful not to let the car stand out in the rain with the clutch out, as it will get wet and the leather become hard, a fierce clutch will then be the result.