

# PROGRESS

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## Progress The Scientific New Zealander.

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT.

### Roads and Motorists.

In our motor section to-day we draw attention especially to the new departure in England whereby the motor interest itself has undertaken to put its house in order. Eminently British is this. Your Briton does not wait for the police or for the Legislature to hurry up. He just "stops the racket" if he thinks it wrong. Now there is no doubt that the racket in this case is wrong, for some motorists, bitten with the mania which is the curse equally of the motorist world and the other world, rush about the country, regardless of all laws human and divine. The Briton has discovered that there is no need to run to the law to ask for further protection. The decent motorist understands that the fault lies with the inconsiderate motorist, who has hitherto successfully defied the law. So long as there was a doubt about the justice of the law—as for example when the law wanted impossible conditions like walking ahead with a flag—motorists considered it good sport to circumvent the guardians of the law. But when the principle of circumvention was applied for the purpose of killing people carelessly and getting off scot free with a ribald tongue in a brazen cheek, then the decent motorist arose in his might, and, shaking the law by the hand, proceeded to make it hot for all offenders against decency, truth and considerate gentlemanly behaviour. Recognising that the public has

as much right as they have to the use of the roads, they have taken measures to control the guilty through the medium of the innocent, who know the game quite as well as the guilty, and may be expected to play it properly. We may take it for granted that the worst evils of motoring in Britain are now numbered.

### A Plea for the New Zealand Inventor.

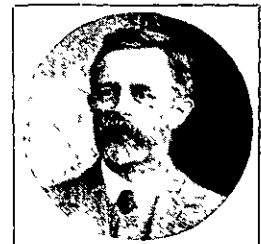
By PETER ELLIS.

That the people of New Zealand are very inventive is shown by the records of the patent office. But can it be said that there is a correspondingly zealous spirit of enterprise among our moneyed men and speculators, who may do much to foster promising inventions, and so reap indirect, if not direct, advantage therefrom? The prosperity of a nation is largely due to inventors, and our Government may do worse than allocate some of their handsome surplus funds every year (when there is a surplus) to inventors who really make *bona fide* attempts, and sensible and practical efforts to improve existing appliances. Look at America from the inventor's point of view; the spirit of enterprise and push is so keen there in reference to inventions that every promising idea is readily snapped up and made the most of (if promising and practical) in the highest degree. Granted that 99 out of every 100 inventions prove useless, nevertheless it is worth while putting the 99 to the test in order to produce the successful one. Calculate the total number of patents applied for, and compare the cost with the value of successful ones, and it may easily be seen how well it pays a nation to offer every inducement for *bona fide* inventors to exercise their powers. Yet alas! I believe many valuable ideas perish on the threshold of nativity for lack of nourishment. Ninety-nine failures to secure one success is good speculation, compared with some fashionable ventures, to wit, games of chance, and the like, without one ray of promise, save mere "Devil's Luck," in which so much useful capital is sunk, but from which the industrial community reaps little indeed. The pity is that the spirit of perseverance in utilitarian industrial enterprise does not dominate our speculators as it does our inventors, for often long before a likely patent can reach fruition the speculator backing it tires and shifts his interest to another plane, only to find wise men step in where timid souls are

scared, and reap the benefit at the critical stage. Mark the progress of the successful speculator, and you will generally find him "hanging on" when others slack their hold, allowing, of course, that 'ere he ventured on his project the chances of success were promising. Mark, too, the progress of the successful inventor; here, again, dogged perseverance crowns his aim "mid struggles fierce with friend and foe." No better illustration may perhaps be found than Edison's great fight whereby he lit his lamps. Impossibility, a very Goliath of Gath, has often to give way before a persevering shepherd boy with a puny sling and stone of his own invention. This giant says "You can't"; the persevering genius says "We will, we'll travel fast, we'll drive, we'll fly, we'll conquer earth and air"; 'tis done, and marvels yet to come the world must see. Now, if God's Own Country, Maoriland, must hold her own with other favoured lands, the purse strings must be loosed toward that end. Not in the football field, though eminent its place, nor racing track, good as it may be, nor in the daily dance of sensuousness, is found a nation's wealth. "The man behind the gun" is he who makes what is not yet, but still must be, as fate demands. Though failure after failure strew the way, we must go on, and win, and conquer. 'Tis evolution's way; the eternal grind of elements, gives birth to being.

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The Hon. R. A. Loughnan, who has been in charge of the editorial department of PROGRESS since December, 1906, continues to occupy the editorial chair.