



THE CAMP FIRE

The car is a valuable aid to the sportsman, enabling him to reach regions with ease that would otherwise be beyond his scope.

By Revell Reynolds

# THE KING'S HIGHWAY

A CAUSERIE ON MOTORING MATTERS

By SANCHO

WHAT does it cost to run a car? I figured out to write some informative paragraphs this month on this topic, but strangely enough reliable information is not easy to secure. The matter occupies the minds of people who don't own cars but are thinking of buying them, but, alas, those who do own them always seem most delightfully vague about their expenditure, and one gathers that they rather prefer not to tot up the figures. One motorist of my acquaintance who has run a 24-horsepower American car for about two years, in the course of conversation, informed me the other day that he did some 5000 miles a year and his running expenses totalled only about a pound a week. This did not include insurance, garage, or depreciation. Another owner of an exactly similar car, which has not yet been on the road a year declared the figure too low, and gave it as his opinion that the total cost, including insurance and garage, but not depreciation, should work out at £100 per annum, for average family use.

AN owner of a 12 h.p. English light car, which has now been on the road some years, tells me that his experience, taking one year with another, is that his expenditure, including five shillings a week for garaging, and allowing for comprehensive insurance, averages about 30s. a week. His annual mileage, he says, is round about 4000, and he has spent a

fair amount on renewals and pays for most of his minor repairs, not having the time to do them himself. On the other side of the picture, we have the recent announcement that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's biscuit-making baronet friend thought it necessary to give him £30,000 to enable him to run a car worthy of his position! Still, the fact remains that it can be done on less.

AFTER all, unless the financial shoe is a very tight fit, it is not so much a question of what a car costs as of what it is worth as a key to unlock the great world of outdoors, and a magic carpet to transport one from the city to the pleasant countryside, or *vice versa*. This is a sum not easily to be set down in figures, but most car owners will tell you that it

means a lot more to them than what the car costs to run. In America they have got things to such a pass now that the number of cars is equal to the number of people in receipt of incomes of 1500 dollars a year, equal roughly to £300 in our money. How many motor-cars there are on the road in New Zealand is a matter of guesswork, but the generally accepted figure is that there are round about 50,000. This is rather more than the total number of income tax payers in the Dominion, but although income tax begins at £300 a year, it does not sweep a universal drag net, as only a small number of the farmers have to pay it, and in the motor tax discussions we have had statements to the effect that it is the farmers who own most of the cars—perhaps the fact that they don't have to pay income tax enables them to do so! Anyway, while we cannot make a statistical comparison of our car ownership with America's, the fact remains that it is remarkably high considering that whereas they pay pence per gallon for motor fuel, we pay shillings here.

THE annual meeting of the Automobile Union this year has been notable for the new working arrangement effected between the North and South Island Unions, a quarterly conference between the two bodies having been agreed upon.

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