

MOTOR-CAR OUTING.

Several Wellington gentlemen had a very successful motor-car trip to Palmerston North and back, on the 9th and 10th ulto. The party, numbering eleven, were carried by three cars under the guiding hands of Mr. A. de B. Brandon, who drove an Argyll, and Messrs. Meadows and Matthews, who each drove a Cadillac. The journey up on the Friday was particularly enjoyable, the weather being fine, though dull, and the roads were in good order. Those who had not previously crossed the Paekakariki hill were astonished and delighted at the magnificent panorama of sea and coast line which suddenly opens out on reaching the top. The many pieces of flat, straight road met with subsequently were bowled over at a good



AT PORIRUA.

rate of speed, with the exhilarating effect known only to the motorist—result, everyone arrived in high spirits. Though there was heavy downpour in Palmerston on Friday night the return journey on Saturday was commenced with a clearing sky, and every prospect of good weather. After leaving Palmerston the roads were quite dry, showing that the previous night's rain was not general. The weather continued fine until some miles past Otaki; indeed, at Levin the cars left in clouds of dust. Before reaching Paraparaumu very dirty weather was run into, and, thereafter, it became gradually worse. There were, of course, some of the mishaps inseparable from such a trip. The most serious was a bad puncture which befell one of Mr. Meadows's tyres when descending the Paekakariki hill on the return journey. It was pitch dark and raining heavily, and the damage was repaired under trying conditions. The cars, however, all arrived safely, and even the unpleasant termination of the trip was enjoyed as an "experience." Incidents of the trip are shown in our illustrations; that entitled "halt by the wayside" being a snapshot of some of the party gathered round a car whilst a small repair was being effected on the trip to Palmerston.

Early in 1905, a powerful motor steam fire engine of Messrs. Merryweather and Sons' "Fire King" pattern was supplied to the London Fire Brigade. This machine has done good service, and the London County Council has just placed an order for a second one with the same firm. Solid rubber tyres will be fitted, those on the rear wheels being of the twin pattern, to prevent side slip. Compared with motor engines of German and other foreign make this machine shows the decided superiority of British engineering skill. A German motor engine just put into service in a Continental city has a pumping capacity of 220 gallons per minute against the "Fire King's" 500 gallons, while its weight is about the same—just over four tons. The speed of the German engine is twelve miles and a-half per hour, against the English twenty to thirty miles, and, while the latter will carry two officers and six firemen, as well as 1000ft. of hose and all appliances for working, the German engine has to have a separate tender for the transport of the firemen and equipment. Other British towns which have recently ordered motor engines are Edinburgh, Glasgow, Cardiff, Aberdare, and Grimsby.

According to the Sydney "Bulletin" the latest development of the automobile is the "Turret Car", an armoured fighting machine carrying a field piece and capable of travelling 25 miles an hour. The gun is mounted on a revolving turret, and the drivers and crew are under cover of ½-inch pressed steel shields with curving edges. The machine has been submitted to very severe tests over ploughed fields and across broken country, on rough roads and grass land, and averaged a speed of 25 miles an hour. It

can take guns wherever horses can, and at three times the speed, and as long as fuel lasts, without growing tired as the animal does. It has all the advantages of the armoured tram without its fatal drawback, the limitation to rails that can be torn up. The car can go anywhere, and manoeuvre as desired, and it brings to land warfare all the excitement of sea fighting. Cavalry can only go till the horses are worn out; a force of fighting cars can raid indefinitely as long as fuel lasts. The men can sleep or at least rest, while rushing at 25 miles an hour to another spot to strike a fresh blow.

The Ford Car.

The general manager of the Ford Motor Company (Mr. Henry Ford) has been identified with gas-engine construction as pertaining to automobiles since 1892, when he built his first machine, which is still in active use and doing satisfactory work. Mr. Ford built the machine which held the world's championship for 25 miles, made on a circular track in 1901, and he will be remembered by most automobile sportsmen as the builder of the famous No. 999, which held the world's then speed record which was obtained in New York on July 25th, 1903, thus making the mile in 55 4-5th seconds on a circular track. Mr. Ford has never ceased in his endeavours to produce a perfect automobile. From time to time he has designed and built at least a dozen different machines, only to see fresh opportunities for improvement where most men would have rested on self-satisfied "oars." When the two-cylinder-opposed engine was put on the market wise men shook their heads at such an innovation in the prevailing type, but



HALT BY THE WAYSIDE.

it has proved a great step towards simplicity, flexibility and reliability. The Ford holds an established position in America for its compactness, safety and its low cost of maintenance. Mr. Ford claims to have proved that the multiplication of cylinders, when accompanied by simplicity of design, has not only increased the flexibility and power of

the car, but has reduced the motorist's troubles and increased his confidence in his ability to always "get there" on time. Among the Ford models for 1906 we may mention model "K" having a luxurious body for five passengers, weighing 2000 lbs., with 114-inch wheel base, six-cylinder vertical motor, 4½ inch bore by 4¼ inch stroke, 40-h.p. actual, improved planetary transmission, and possessing a speed of from 50 miles an hour down to four miles per hour on the high gear. We understand that a local Wellington company has secured the sole representation for New Zealand for the Ford Motor Company, and that they have already placed orders, and that large stocks of these and other models for 1906 make will shortly be landing in the colony.



12-H.P. SINGLE-CYLINDER CADILLAC : MESSRS. BEATTIE, WATSON, MCKNIGHT AND LANG, PALMERSTON NORTH.

Great Ports of the World.

The commerce of the great ports of the world is the subject of a very interesting report which has been issued by the Washington Bureau of Commercial Statistics.

Taking the aggregate of the imports and exports of the different ports, it is shown that the two most important ports are London first and Liverpool second, with New York a good third.

In the order of aggregate trade the various ports are as follows:—

London	..	£260,915,000
Liverpool	..	260,103,000
New York	..	221,396,000
Hamburg	..	196,303,000
Antwerp	..	197,223,000
Marseilles	..	86,311,000
Calcutta	..	58,881,000
Bombay	..	51,054,000
Singapore	..	42,794,000
Sydney	..	37,792,000
Shanghai	..	37,628,000
Alexandria	..	33,030,000
Melbourne	..	30,612,000
Montreal	..	29,680,000
Capetown	..	26,595,000



12-H.P. 2-CYLINDER FORD : MESSRS. RAYWARD ("PROGRESS"), FOURLONGE, TOOGOOD AND MCHENRY. [Hardie Shaw, Photo.]