



THE GLADIATOR, WHICH MADE THE RECORD TRIP TO NAPIER AND BACK

The Gladiator — Return Journey from Napier.

Readers will remember that a week or so ago Mr. James Wilkinson, the Company's representative, in company with Mr. Oswald Cleland and Messrs. Holmes and Allen succeeded in lowering the record for the trip from Napier to Wellington. This successful attempt was made as the result of the fast time Mr. Wilkinson made on the up journey, which was received in the Hawkes Bay motoring circles almost with incredulity. The time on that trip was 10 hours 20 mins. running time, and when the party declared that they felt confident that they could make the return trip very much faster they were challenged on all sides in Napier to do the journey within 11 hours and we know the result of the challenge.

Mr. Cleland was given a place on board the Gladiator Car for the return journey to act as official timekeeper.

Leaving Napier at 6.25 a.m. on a bright keen morning the 18.28 h.p. Gladiator Car, on which so much depended, began to show her good paces, and put mile after mile behind her in very fast time. By the time Hastings was reached, an average of close on 40 miles an hour had been maintained. Shortly after leaving Hastings the party had the ill fortune to miss the road, and coming round a corner found themselves in a cul-de-sac. There was nothing for it but to 'boutship and retrace their steps. By the time they struck the main road again they had added 15 miles on to the contract they had in hand. Nothing daunted, Mr. Wilkinson opened out again on the fine level roads there are about there. After leaving Waipukurau they started along the tortuous road to Masterton. On leaving Masterton a mishap occurred which nearly terminated the trip. A cart was drawn to one side to let the car pass, and for some inexplicable reason the driver started backing across the road just at the moment that the Gladiator was coming up. With a bare four feet of road free it seemed impossible that the car could get through. One thing only was possible and that was to keep the two front wheels on the formation at any cost. The car did it, and after a few crab like manoeuvres managed to climb back to

the road again. From Greytown to Featherston the road is intersected with water-races which had to be negotiated slowly, and no sooner is Featherston passed than the Rimutaka climb is ahead, and they did make good time over the hill—45 minutes from Featherston to Kaitoke. On leaving Kaitoke the Mungaroa had to be climbed and the Gladiator and Company had the ill-luck to meet a drover with a couple of hundred cattle. This meant pulling up for twenty minutes; but in spite of these delays Wellington was made well within the guaranteed time. Mr. Wilkinson and party have been the recipients of congratulations from all sides. Two hundred and fifty miles, with two mountain ranges, in nine hours, at nearly 28 miles per hour—a very fine performance.

With a little familiarity with the road Mr. Wilkinson is convinced he could easily cover the distance within the eight hours. This is truly a remarkable performance and one calculated to test a car in every way. The grades are steep, and there is every sort of obstacle to meet. The trip was made on the 18-28 h.p. Gladiator Car which had only just been freshly taken out of the case from France, and it is a striking testimony of the substantial nature and careful assembling of parts by the makers that a new car could

run this distance of 500 miles without shaking a single nut or bolt loose, or without the necessity of stopping the engine for a moment.

The Clement & Gladiator Cars are recognised at Home as being well in the forefront—as witness the following letter by Colonel W. J. Bosworth, who is chairman of the Automobile Association of Great Britain, (and he always invests in Clement Cars). He says: "I am often asked by my friends why, when requiring a car, I select the Clement, and my reply is as follows:—Because I drove a Clement car fifty thousand miles (a distance approximately equivalent to twice round the world) without the slightest mishap except a broken wheel, the consequence of severe impact with a spur-stone occasioned by a bad side-slip. The last time I sat in her she went as well as ever she did, and showed a clean pair of heels to a friend of mine who was driving a costly vehicle of very well known make and of considerably higher power; moreover, our relations terminated most satisfactorily, for I sold her exceedingly well. On the principle then that 'one thinks highly of the bridge that carried him over' I ordered another Clement." 50,000 miles is fairly convincing. Turning next to the technical side of these cars one description will suffice for both, as their construction is the same.

With the 18-28 horse power model the engine is of 4 cylinders, cast separately 95m. m. x 130 m.m. with two inspection plates to each water jacket—five bearings are employed to the crank shaft; which latter is the finest grade steel.

The ignition consists of high-tension magneto and synchronized trembler-coil as well.

The Carburetter is one of the most striking parts of the machine—for economy of fuel: the results of tests in this department in France have demonstrated that the Clement and Gladiator Cars cover 30 miles to the gallon of petrol.

For speed control there are 4 gear ratios forward and one reverse; so that any speed up to 50-55 miles an hour is easily obtained.

The Clutch is of the special design of this firm—and shows a novel departure from the standard article. It consists of laminations of discs which engage with one another in such a way as to absolutely prevent that horribly fierce engagement now so common.

While the whole finish of the car is luxurious in the extreme, the careful way in which the makers have assembled the whole—every nut and bolt easily got at if necessary—is most satisfactory.

The running of the engine is so even and vibrationless that one could balance a glass



TWO CARS—THE CLEMENT (LEFT) AND THE GLADIATOR (RIGHT).