

The Race for Progress.

In face of the vast improvements in speed, reliability, etc., of autocars, it seems ungracious for people to complain. Yet they do. For example, here is a complaint voiced in a journal of the trade:—"No one seems to care to standardise a car, and, as soon as you have bought one, it is practically out of date. Increase of h.p., weight, size, upkeep, and gearing, are the present manias of manufacturers, and soon the poor men of small means will have to return to their cobs and groom-gardeners." Upkeep and initial expenses of the higher power (from 5 to 8) he says have knocked him out, and he is an enthusiastic motorist, if chained to the inexpensive side. The Editor conduced thus:—

We think our correspondent overlooks the fact that the increase in power which he laments is usually due to pressure from users of a car. They have, say, an 8-10 h.p., and like it. They beg the maker to make it more powerful, or more roomy, but no slower, and, if enough of them beg, he does as they desire.

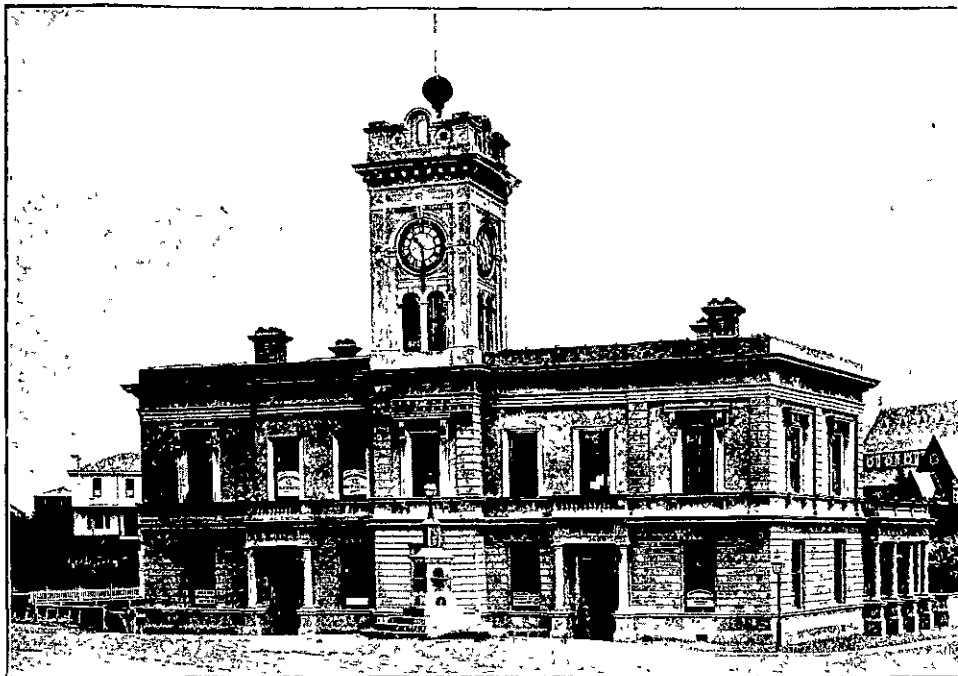
Neat and not without reason doubtless, still there is something in the complaint. In the old sarcastic ballad we read that "Moderate men looked big, Sir." Nevertheless there is reason why the moderate man should be catered for. The pence of the poor have built big churches: in like manner the small cheques of the moderate men may build up a big share of the business of motor factories.

Birmingham.

Before the Norman Conquest Birmingham was already a market town; indeed, some affirm, a centre for hardware. This early date for the origin of the towns' great manufacture is, however, not authentic. The first reliable reference seems to be in Leland's "Itinerary," published in the reign of Henry VIII. This writer observes "The beauty of Birmingham, a good market town in the extreme parts of Warwickshire, is one street going up along almost from the left side of the brooke, up a meane hill by the length of a quarter of a mile. I saw but one Paroch Church in the towne. There be many smiths in the towne, that use to make knives, and all manner of cutting tooles, and many lorimers that make bittes, and a great part of the towne is maintained by—smithes, whoe have their iron and sea-cole out of Staffordshire."

Telluride.

The successful treatment of gold and silver ores of a refractory nature, such as telluride, arsenical, and pyritical ores is of great interest to the mining industry in general, and the Mount Zeehan mine is to be worked by the above process. Mr. A. T. Firth, mining and metallurgical engineer, who lately visited Wellington in connection with this company, recently received the following wire from the secretary (Mr. A. E. Bucher), Auckland:—"Pond's assay, new



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reefs average £20 1s. 9d. per ton." This refers to three new reefs discovered just prior to the date Mr. Firth left Auckland. Owing to the successful treatment of refractory ores by the above process, Mr. Firth states that over 100 square miles, containing millions of tons of refractory ore in the Waiomo district, to the north of the Thames goldfields can now be successfully treated.—(N. Z. Times)

Late files of Canadian papers give details of a remarkable "ash-burning secret," discovered by an Altoona cobbler. This is how heat is said to be obtained from ashes—Moisten with either salt water or salt water in which oxalic acid has been dissolved a mixture containing one part coal and three parts ashes, and a better fuel than pure coal is obtained. The ashes of anthracite coal burn as readily as those of bituminous coal. This mixture will, upon being placed upon a

burning fire fuse into a coke like mass and deposit but little residue. The salt water may be obtained by the dissolution of common salt in water. The chemical action of this compound is thus explained:—When an aqueous solution of an alkaline salt, such as common salt is mixed with coal ash the result is that a mild lye is formed, which, when mixed with any combustible material such as coal, and upon the application of heat, gives off oxygen gas, thus promoting rapid combustion. The addition of oxalic acid causes a chemical change of greater value than the first, for the reason that second chemical breakdown results in the formation of a carbide, which in turn gives off acetylene gas, thus adding to the intensity of the heat and facilitating complete combustion. Many large industrial places in Altoona are said to be profiting by this invention.



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