

Hitting on All Twelve

by C.E.T. Scharps

A MISTAKEN idea appears to have got about that Robbins B. Stoeckel, Commissioner of Motor Vehicles for the State of Connecticut, is recommending the termination of the automobile reciprocity agreement between that state and New York, on the ground that the laxity of New York's laws permits reckless and intoxicated drivers to use the Connecticut roads, without any proper check being exercised over these drivers by the authorities of their own state.

An article he was supposed to have written in which a suggestion to this end was made appeared in a magazine recently. Apparently he didn't write it. A letter giving the sense of the article was sent by the editor of the magazine to the Commissioner, previous to publication, and our understanding is that Commissioner Stoeckel, in replying, particularly disavowed the reciprocity threat.

It seems that the attitude of the Motor Vehicle Department of Connecticut has not been clearly stated in this and similar articles appearing from time to time. There is no feeling of hostility toward New York or other states, and no attempts are being made to enforce any of the wishes of Connecticut by drastic measures. The idea of the Nutmeg State department is to operate as a constructive force for the good of users of the highways.

An official of the Connecticut department covers the policy in this language:

What we are really interested in is a uniform law which would compel New York operators to take out licenses and an examination of them as to their qualifications. Under the present existing laws of New York and Connecticut it is entirely possible for a New York car owner who is not a driver at all and who has never had any previous experience whatever in driving cars to get a New York registration and come into Connecticut under the reciprocity privilege to operate for thirty days.

Of course, this, as you will readily perceive, makes our law requiring examinations and requiring the operator's license more or less ineffective so that our interest in the uniformity of law between the states is to patch up and work out a system of handling this matter.

Incidentally, the Connecticut law is so phrased that the question of reciprocity is absolutely disposed of and the Commissioner has no authority over it beyond a regulative one. The Connecticut law permits the use by non-residents of a car on the state roads for a period of thirty days, not necessarily consecutive, within the license year. Thereafter the motorist becomes a resident, for the purposes of the motor vehicle laws.

Stop Giving Advice

MOST pertinent in relation to a suggestion by William Guggenheim, of the American Defence Society, that "pleasure" automobiles be stopped from running on Sundays for a period of three weeks is the comment of Elmer Thompson, secretary of the Automobile Club of America. Mr. Thompson says, in his usual clear-sighted way, "We are getting altogether too much advice from enthusiasts not always qualified to speak. It appears that much of this is addressed to car owners. Extravagance and waste can never be defended, but an automobile cannot be defined as a pleasure vehicle. It is a time saver, a business necessity. An enormous army of well-paid men is employed in its manufacture, maintenance and care."

And very apt also in connection with this is a statement from Alfred Reeves, general manager of the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce: "In view of statements from Mr. A. C. Bedford, chairman of the Petroleum War Service Committee, and others, that there is ample gasoline for all needs, it is desirable to operate motor cars for useful purposes as much as possible instead of railroads. . . . How much better off we are than Europe, where the use of motors is limited largely by the supply of gasoline that can be imported. There are only 290,000 motor vehicles in Great Britain, whereas there were more than 5,000,000 registered in this country the first of January. The Bureau of Mines reports our gasoline production at 6,849,000 gallons a day, while our war needs are only 959,000 gallons, and shipments of that amount are limited somewhat by the available tonnage."

There is no fuel shortage in the sense that laying up cars is going to help the least little bit. Gasoline is so plentiful, Mr. Reeves states, that officials at Washington have recommended its free use so that there may be no difficulty about the government obtaining its fuel oil supply, which comes only after the gasoline is taken from the crude.

So let us have no more of that sort of ill-informed advice.

De-Chinifying the United States

IT WAS our privilege in connection with a visit to the Boston Automobile Show last week to listen to E. Le Roy Pelletier deliver a talk on "Are Your Economics on Straight?" in which he disposed of some of the theories that have been doing damage to the motor car business. Mr. Pelletier has been making this talk before organizations of motor car men, boards of commerce, etc., in a number of cities, ever since the automobile show at Milwaukee in the middle of January.

In connection with that show he wrote a series of ten one-page advertisements published on behalf of the exhibitors putting things straight with regard to the merits of the "Save, save, save" campaign. They covered the field so well that dealers everywhere wanted to hear him talk. At Boston, for instance, he spoke at five meetings, and has return dates scheduled in a half dozen other cities where he spoke before.

Mr. Pelletier asserts that only the most luxury-loving people on earth, and the most extravagant, could ever have the money to finance the world's greatest war. He points to China as an example of a country of the greatest frugality, where styles of dress have not changed in centuries and where food is of the most limited range. He objects to the Chinifying of this country. Although the theory that extravagance is the soundest economic policy appears radical at first, Mr. Pelletier certainly proves his case. His facile mind disposes easily of the stock arguments advanced by those who have singled out the motor car industry as a ready and fit subject of attack.

Smaller Output Means Higher Prices Sure

IT COMES, after all, as no great surprise that the motor car manufacturers have decided to reduce production by 30 per cent in passenger cars. Actually this means that about half the cars planned for 1918 will be produced, because, starting from last April, when the state of war with Germany was declared, schedules were cut and production materially checked. A falling off in public demand at that time was the compelling cause. There are less selfish reasons for the recent reduction. One is that the motor trade may go as far as the government requires in making war goods. Another is not to interfere with the absorption of materials needed in war fields.

Immediate increases, and big ones, in the prices of cars may be expected. It stands to reason that when "overhead" is distributed over 70 per cent of production, instead of 100 per cent, the cost of each car is greater. Then, too, in order to permit dealers to live from the smaller number of cars they must get, it is imperative that the margin of profit on each car sold be made greater. Higher prices for new cars and a lessened production mean in turn better prices for used cars.

The whole situation is bound to keep on the road everything in the way of an automobile that can still run.

Trapping the "In Transit" Cars

A SHIPMENT of sixty Oldsmobiles, coming over the road from Lansing, Mich., to Charles H. Larson, the New York distributor, got as far as York, Penn., without interference. There the Sheriff ordered the arrest of the convoy, because no license tags were displayed thereon. The only signs on the cars, except for that of the leader, were cardboard reading "Oldsmobiles in Transit." The whole fleet was held up until additional sets of license plates were obtained from the Secretary of State of New York. What with the fines and the charges for the plates, it cost Larson \$720 to free his cars from the toils in York.

Other motor car dealers are finding like trouble in Pennsylvania. Of course, as driveways are bound to be about the only method of getting cars down here this spring and summer, the extra plates will come in handy. But Michigan and Ohio permit cars with "in transit" tags to go unscathed, so why shouldn't Pennsylvania?

Did It Ever Happen to You?



Uneven Brakes Do Great Damage to Tires

When you bring your automobile to a sharp halt before the upraised hand of the policeman at the street intersection have you noticed at times how the rear wheels of the automobile ahead of you act? Have you noticed one buzz round while the other locks?

That peculiarity is the penalty of faulty brake adjustment. The locked tire is called upon to resist the pressure of automobile and pavement alone, the consequence very often being a badly gouged tread.

Before a man sets out in his automobile he should give a thought to his brakes. He should see that both brakes grasp with equal effectiveness and that the brake linings are clean and dry.

If one brake is looser than the other, not taking hold simultaneously, not only is the locked tire damaged, a great piece gouged out of the tread, but the safety of the motorist himself is jeopardized. Properly adjusted brakes give him perfect control over his motor and respond to his touch.

I have seen tires with a section the size of a man's hand gouged out of the tread when uneven brake tension caused one wheel to lock and slide while the other rolled. Let the wheels keep turning, but under the slacking pressure of the brake, and your car will be brought to a standstill more quickly, with greater safety and without detriment to tires. —B. F. Goodrich Company.

Springy Weather Helps Motor Car Selling

"The springlike weather of the last week has given added stimulus to the sales of motor cars, and if the demand for machines continues dealers hereabouts can look forward to big business this spring," says James J. Hunt, vice-president and general manager of the Reo Motor Car Company, of New York.

"The public realizes the importance of the motor car as a vehicle of utility more to-day than ever before. Not only for its help in relieving congested traffic conditions and in distributing food, but in the actual aid which motor trucks and cars give in producing it, by increasing efficiency of the owner, be he a business man, farmer or professional man, does the motor vehicle show its true value to the

2-Engine Fires Irregularly

The diagram that follows is the second of a series designed to be of value to automobilists, to assist them in diagnosing and curing various troubles. The series is issued by the Cadillac Motor Car Company, of Detroit, in a leaflet called "The Cadillac Service Man." Although the suggestions are designed to relate to Cadillac cars only, the charts, in the main, apply to all types of cars. The plan is to publish a chart weekly until the whole field is covered.

- a. Spark plugs... Dirty spark plug cores. Broken spark plug cores. Points not set correct distance apart. If engine misses on open throttle the points are too far apart. If engine misses on closed throttle the points are too close.
- b. Distributor and timer... Dirty contact points. Improperly adjusted contact points. Low spot on timer cam. Dirty track in distributor.
- c. Battery nearly or completely discharged (if missing is at very low speeds).
- d. Imperfect ignition coil.
- e. Imperfect ignition condenser.
- f. Leaky or cracked insulation on high tension wiring.
- g. Loose connections or open circuit at ignition switch or circuit breaker.
- h. Imperfect fuel mixture... Carburetor not adjusted properly. Water in gasoline supply. Insufficient flow of gasoline to carburetor. Imperfect gasket between manifold and cylinder block. Air leaks into intake passage. Worn valve stems or valve stem guides.
- i. Imperfect valve action... Valves not seating properly as a result of incorrect setting. Valves or cam slides sticking in guides. Weak or broken valve springs.

Country Responds to Motor Truck Reaction

"It is certainly most gratifying to see how wonderfully the business people of this country have responded to the President's appeal for cooperation in every line of industry for relieving the terrible freight congestions which now exist," said Harry J. De Bear, manager of the local Maxwell branch.

"Every business man to-day appreciates that the motor truck is a factor of considerable importance in a great many different ways in this war. It has made possible, as a means of conveyance, things that a few years ago would have seemed almost ridiculous to even think of. The past winter, which has been the severest we have experienced in years, has really done more to prove to the world at large the practicality and indispensability of the motor truck for hauling and delivery purposes, and to prove that in these days, in conducting an up-to-date enterprise, it is practically an utter impossibility to accomplish the desired results with any other than motor driven vehicles."

"I certainly think that one of the chief factors in winning the war for us is going to be the continued improvement of general commercial conditions throughout the country, and there is nothing that has ever been given to the business man as a betterment for general conditions more helpful than the faithful motor truck."

"From what I have gleaned from some of the truck representatives along Automobile Row, the hearty response of the New York merchants has been one far beyond expectations, and at the present time in order to prove the issue of the motor truck being the Good Samaritan as the logical factor in adjusting freight conditions, practically every motor car representative in the country has begun to bring cars from their birthplace to their selling place by driving them over the road, and it has surely become a common sight to see cars, after caravan of motor trucks driving over the roads, East, West, North and South, through all kinds of weather, under all conditions, over all kinds of roads, and always arriving at their destinations ready to be turned over to the waiting buyers."

Peace Declared Between New York and New Jersey

By arrangement between the motor vehicle departments of the states of New York and New Jersey the extension of reciprocity to commercial trucks in exactly the same way it now applies to passenger cars has been accomplished. A New York owner is entitled to send his truck into the State of New Jersey for a period of fifteen days, or fifteen trips in one year, without being required to take out a New Jersey license. New York owners need have no fear of sending their trucks into New Jersey.

Significant Sayings

In the severest service throughout the country, hauling loads from cities to towns, and from farms to markets, motor trucks have established themselves as necessities. And it is certain now motor truck service has come to stay. —C. W. Nash.

The Whumhammer says "auto game" and "pleasure cars"; don't be a Whumhammer. —B. G. Koether.

Who will buy the 1918 output of automobiles? The same people who have always bought them and always will buy them—those who need them. —Jno. D. Mansfield.

—But Woman's Work Is Never Done



Above—Showing women at work in a plant of the United States Tire Company. Below—Young women of a theatrical company assemble a Maxwell truck. (They really do it, too.)

May Your Car Be Held to Force Payment of Old Repair Bill?

Lien Law Is Interpreted in Opposed Ways by Two Legal Authorities

Whether or not an automobile dealer has the right to hold for payment of a previous service bill a car which is brought into his station on any subsequent occasion is a question brought to the attention of this department recently. A motorist who owed a bill for work done on several occasions in the seven or eight months preceding took his car into the service station again for adjustments made.

There had been some dispute over the items of the pending bill or bills and no settlement had been reached. When the motorist sent his chauffeur to get the car, having provided him with the money to pay for the work just ordered, the dealer refused to release the automobile. He said he would not until the standing bill was paid.

The automobile was of the opinion that the dealer had no right to do this any more than any other person could seize upon property he happened to find to settle any outstanding account, unless the creditor had first asked and obtained judgment against the debtor. The question was referred to this department and an effort made to determine the law. The results of the inquiry are not exact, as one authority brought into the question submitted contends that the dealer, under the particular circumstances, is justified in holding the car. Another authority holds the reverse.

Charles Terry, an attorney, who for years has been an authority on legal matters connected with the automobile, offers the opinion that the dealer in this case has the law on his side. Mr. Terry is counsel for the Automobile Dealers' Association and for other important motor trade and sport organizations. His opinion is for a variety of reasons to be listened to with attention and respect. He quotes Section 184 of the lien law of the State of New York, as follows:

"The Lien Law. A person keeping a garage or a place for the storage, maintenance, keeping or repair of motor vehicles, as defined by Article 11 of the highway law and who in connection therewith stores, maintains, keeps or repairs any motor vehicle or furnishes gasoline or other supplies therefor at the request or with the consent of the owner, whether such owner be a conditional vendee or a mortgagor remaining in possession or otherwise, has a lien upon such motor vehicle for the sum due for such storing, maintaining, keeping or repairing of such motor vehicle or for furnishing gasoline or other supplies therefor and may retain possession of such vehicle until such sum is paid."

"This statute means," says Mr. Terry, "that if the keeper of a garage or service station repairs an automobile at the request or with the consent of its owner, he can refuse to surrender the car at any future time after the owner again puts the machine into his possession."

"It must contain a brief description of the property against which the lien is claimed, its estimated value and the amount of the lien at the date of the notice."

"You must also request the owner to pay the amount of the lien on a date not less than ten days from the date of the notice, and state when and where the sale is to be held if the amount is not so paid."

"You are entitled to charge for storage between the time that the notice is given and the property is sold, if you make a demand for that amount in your notice."

"Notice of sale must be published once a week for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper published in the town or city where the sale is to be held, and the sale must be held not less than fifteen days from the first publication."

"If there is no newspaper published in such town, notice must be posted at least ten days before the sale and is not less than six conspicuous places therein."

Roads From Albany to Buffalo Are in Impassable Condition

The driving of passenger cars and trucks to New York from factories in the Middle West by way of the Buffalo-Albany route is to-day not a practicable proposition, according to R. H. Johnston, New York manager of the White company, and Charles A. Stewart, manager of the Automobile Dealers' Association, who have just been exploring a part of this route. The conditions observed on this exploring trip were described yesterday by Mr. Johnston as follows:

"Mr. Stewart and myself left New York Saturday in my sixteen-valve White touring car, with the intention of finding out if the road conditions were sufficiently favorable for us to begin driving cars and trucks over the road from our factory at Cleveland."

"We found the roads entirely open and in good condition all the way to Albany, as is evidenced by the fact that we ate our breakfast in New York and arrived in Albany at eight o'clock. The state roads between here and Albany are, generally speaking, in better condition than the pavements in New York City. There were two or three places where there were stretches of water on the road to the depth of eight or twenty inches, but these meant nothing more than that cars and passengers received a good splashing."

"The boulevard at Schenectady was in fair condition. It was covered with several inches of snow, in which were deep ruts. We wanted to choose which set of ruts we were to take, but the switching facilities from rut to rut were very limited. Beyond Schenectady conditions immediately changed for the worse. Leaving that city, we started to cross the toll bridge to Scotia, when the tollkeeper warned us that this route was closed and we would have to take a detour. We took the tollkeeper that we needed despatch information, and proceeded despite his warning. We passed through Scotia without any trouble, but on leaving that town we found the roads completely blocked by deep snow drifts. Accordingly, we turned back to follow the detour which had been recommended to us. This detour carried us past the General Electric works, and finally on to the towpath of the Erie Canal. There is no objection to travelling on the towpath provided it is made a 'one-way' street. The towpath is just wide enough for two vehicles to pass, but if one driver veers by a few inches, or if his vehicle makes the slightest side slip, there would be one less chauffeur for Secretary Hugo to register next year."

"The towpath part of the route is only about seven-tenths of a mile, and beyond that we followed the road through Rotterdam and then crossed on an iron bridge over the Mohawk River, then coming back onto the main road on the north bank of the river. This detour from the turn at Schenectady is about eight miles long. The regular road between the two points is just wide enough for two vehicles to pass, but if one driver veers by a few inches, or if his vehicle makes the slightest side slip, there would be one less chauffeur for Secretary Hugo to register next year."

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