



MOTORS and MOTORING



FORESIGHT OF THE MOTORIST WILL "FORESTALL THE STALL"

Attend to Details Before Starting Out Is Advice of Fred C. Russell. Units Usually Overlooked.

BY FRED C. RUSSELL.

It isn't a very pleasant sensation to be stalled on the road under any circumstances, but it's a thousand times more aggravating to discover after you have been towed home that there really wasn't any excuse for your predicament. If you had just attended to this or that before you left the garage you would not have been obliged to break your engagement and suffer the humiliation of being "towed" and of being charged a neat sum for the work.

Again we might say that it is one thing to know that something ought to be done by way of forestalling trouble and quite another thing to know what ought to be done. The most inexperienced motorist has learned something through experience, that he can't get very far on a day's run without fuel for his engine, water to cool the power plant and air to inflate the tires. Some are even provident enough to keep the battery filled at all times with distilled water, so that the fan belt is tight and to be sure that the oil indicator is registering correctly.

Many other drivers go deeper into the subject than this, but even those who are careful to see that every little thing is well greased and sufficiently tight are often inadvertently negligent of the very things which, when not attended to, result in just the sort of breakdown which every driver wants to avoid.

Cites Units Overlooked.

Here are a few of them:

A large percentage of breakdowns are the result of trouble somewhere in the ignition system, and this trouble, nine times out of ten, is simply caused by a broken wire which has served its term of faithfulness. This is particularly true of the ignition wires, which, due to excessive heat from the engine and vibration, tend to deteriorate and thus cause "missing."

When two cylinders of a four or six type of engine cease firing the driver is pretty certain to have a difficult time trying to proceed with his trip. Because he is obliged to go into second on every grade his engine will soon overheat and cause other consequent troubles. But there is no reason to be caught with broken or bared wires, because it is very easy to tell beforehand when they are due for replacement.

A crack in the rubber insulation of an ignition wire is sometimes as bad as an actual break in the wire or a faulty connection either with the distributor head or the respective spark plug. As soon as an ignition wire is exposed somewhere along its length the high voltage current which

STEEL IN AUTO TIRES.

Cotton and Rubber Not Only Materials in Vast Manufacture.

It is estimated that 41,250,000 pounds of fine steel will be used in the manufacture of the 33,000,000 automobile tires to be produced in the United States this year.

This will be a surprising bit of information to that great part of the motoring public which thinks of auto tires only in terms of cotton and rubber. Steel is used chiefly in the manufacture of beads.

Interfere with the regular functioning of the rotor and will eventually work down into the compartment containing the breaker points, where it will breed the sort of thing that calls for a repair shop.

Loose Connections a Worry.

Serious trouble often originates from loose connections at the relay, or cut-out, as it is generally called. This is the electrical device which prevents the battery's current from flowing back into the generator when that unit is not charging a voltage equal to or greater than that indicated by the battery.

Another cause of trouble in the wiring system is the result of allowing the battery posts to accumulate corrosive substances. These enter into the metal and eventually eat off the end of one or both of the feed wires. When this happens a car immediately sings what seems to be its swan song. If you know where to look for the trouble and how to remedy it you will simply clean off the posts as best you can and re-attach the broken wires—provided there is enough left of the posts to attach anything to.

But all of this should never be necessary if the driver would smear vaseline over the posts when the battery is new. This prevents the accumulation of corrosive substances—and is simply one of the ways of taking trouble by the forelock.

The distributor is another part of the electrical system which is always looking for an opportunity to give trouble. The head of this unit is easily removed, but because it is the sort of unit which doesn't seem to require daily pampering, is just as easily neglected. The first thing to do when inspecting the distributor is to find out—from the instruction book—what type of unit is used on your car. In some distributors the rotor touches the contact points; in the newer type the rotor does not actually touch, the spark jumping a slight gap to each contact point.

If the distributor is the former type, naturally the contact points must be kept as clean as any other electrical contacts in the system. Fine emery paper or a fine file should be used for this cleaning; and the tip of the rotor should also be brightened. The rotor track should be crossed with a little vaseline applied with a clean cloth.

The second type of distributor does not require this attention, because the contact points will not become oxidized under ordinary circumstances. But a periodic inspection and cleaning of the inside of the distributor will be found good insurance against later trouble. Any oil or dirt which is allowed to accumulate under the head is bound to

Motor News and Views

Bits of This and That Gathered Here and There.

BY WILLIAM ULLMAN.

How much do you really know about your car, its upkeep, operation, driving, etc? How well versed are you in the rules of the road and the law of the land governing automobiles? For driving purposes, how are your eyes, your ears, your brain, your nerves, and your sense of courtesy and justice toward other users of the motor highway?

Did you ever ask yourself these questions? Did you ever take inventory of your motor car assets other than the merely material ones?

Most of us live at such a high rate of speed in these motoring days that we rush on from one thing to another without ever stopping to find out whether we are well or ill equipped for it, deciding this point after we have already succeeded or failed.

Possibly you know more of one phase of motoring than is good for you, and less of another that could be of much real use. This is not suggesting deep study, nor matriculation at automobile academy, nor even advising a course in a correspondence school. It is only a hint that it might be well for you and me, and the other fellow, too, to classify our motor knowledge, both practical and theoretical, in their proper pigeonholes, thus finding out just where we stand motoristically, as it were.

Considered in principle, 60 cents per horsepower is heavy tribute to the state of Maryland for the privilege of motoring over her roads, but the tax could be easily forgotten in the joy of riding over the Washington-Baltimore boulevard, or in rolling jollily and dutifully over the broad, smooth highway that leads to Fredericktown and on over the hills and mountains to the country beyond Cumberland.

In this connection, it is good policy to learn as much as possible about reading the ammeter, so that the intricate workings of the electrical system can be carefully watched. An ammeter that registers "discharge" when none of the switches are on is a fairly sure indication that the contact points of the cut-out are stuck together and that the battery is discharging in the generator.

A broken contact or a short circuit in the electrical system invariably asserts itself suddenly and without warning. If none of the fuses are blown some wire is either disconnected or broken. The suddenness of electrical trouble differentiates it from all other car ills. If you have not given proper attention to the "switches" of the car you can, at least, forestall a repair bill by the humility of being towed by looking to the wiring of the engine the moment the motor stops suddenly. But the simpler plan—that one that forestalls the stall itself—is to look to the wiring before you take to the road.

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An Omaha automobile dealer is offering a free license plate with each car to attract buyers.

While the roads to Rock Point, Chapel Point and other places in that general direction are bumperless, the way to Benedict, Leonardtown and Point Lookout produces a most irritating shaking and has caused many parties to turn back before fairly started.

So far as dust is concerned, the same censure applies to the route to Annapolis via Marlboro. While a lack of rain in southern Maryland has aggravated conditions, none of the various trips would be recommended for strictly touring purposes. Of course, for the party that uses an open, leather-upholstered car, dons old cloths and leaves early in the morning for a few days' fishing, crabbing and bathing, the various points offer the finest sort of ob- jective, for the fish bite freely, and the food is good.

While on the subject of motoring through southern Maryland, or in any section contiguous to or of the District of Columbia, for that matter, it is worthy of mention in passing that today most of the roads from here to there are now pretty well signposted by the gasoline and oil companies.

Even at the risk of giving away some advertising, it must be said that the Standard Oil Company is foremost in making it possible for motorists to know whether they are on the right road and the distance from town to town. Along with these outstanding guide posts are some worn and weather-beaten state signs, which a few years ago replaced the early efforts of a tire company to give information to the tourist.

Seldom, if ever, does one see the much-vaunted direction sign of motor clubs, yet providing these should be one of the prime functions of such organizations. Furthermore, such signs are more necessary on the beaten trail than on, for it is when the tourist is lost on a deserted road, with neither house nor fellow motorist in sight, that he would gladly give up the price of annual membership to know just where "he's at."

There are many auto clubs in the country that specialize in this service—as well as all other services which motorists require—notably, the Los Angeles club. Through the work of this organization many a tourist has been saved from the desert, directed to water, food and lodgings and put on the right track to civilization.

All of which probably explains why the Los Angeles club has nearly 25,000 members, while the combined membership of the Washington and Baltimore clubs hardly reaches 10,000.

New York motorists are, in part, up in arms against recently enacted state legislation requiring all car operators

MANY VIOLATE LAW REQUIRING SURRENDER OF DEAD AUTO TAGS

Sellers and Buyers of Second-Hand Cars Haled Before Traffic Court—Fines Are Imposed.

Because the District law requires that all second-hand cars sold should bear a new license number and that the original tags shall be turned in, many violators of this regulation—some willful and some innocent—are being haled before the traffic court and forced to pay fines.

According to Assistant Corporation Counsel T. Gillispie Walsh, in charge of cases coming before the traffic court, many of these defendants are not guilty of any intentional infraction of the law, but have proceeded on misinformation given them intentionally or otherwise by the seller of the car.

Since the law requires that when a car is sold as "second hand" the tags be taken off and turned in to the traffic office, so they may be listed as "dead numbers," both the seller and buyer are violating the law if use of the original tag is continued after the car has changed hands.

Fines Are Imposed.

Believing that every buyer and seller of cars in the District ought

to know this important regulation, Judge McMahon, who conducts the traffic court, has been assessing fines in all of these cases.

According to Mr. Walsh, dealers in second-hand cars are telling buyers that the license tag is included in the sale and purchase of the car and that it may be used freely. Many defendants have stated that the seller intimated that another tag would never be necessary. Some testified they were told they could take the car with the license tag on it and go out upon the streets and run it without even an operator's permit until they felt qualified to take an examination for a permit.

Association to Co-Operate.

When the alleged delinquency of the second-hand dealers was brought to the attention of President C. H. Warrington of the Washington Automotive Trade Association, he stated that his organization would welcome an opportunity to co-operate with the District authorities to break up such practice, although the dealers charged with giving the misinformation are not members of the trade organization.

Writing to The Star, a prominent Washington medical man suggests some interesting subjects for treatment in these columns. He says, in part:

"Three things have been on my mind for some time which may appeal to you as worthy of a drive."

First, in connection with safety for all—especially for those who may be hurt or killed, as well as the automobilist who has to stand the trial and expense—it would be feasible to have policemen, firemen and, possibly, letter carriers, i. e., all public officers, who are on the streets a great deal, stop and caution children and, possibly, pedestrians, who are constantly exposing themselves to danger by hanging on machines, throwing or holding sticks for cars to run over, walking out from between parked cars where they can see an approaching car, nor can the driver see them. These things are well known and of daily occurrence, but I do not know of one case where the offender has been cautioned by an officer.

"(2) Racing ambulances through the streets. Ask any hospital head nurse many they have saved or relieved by such haste, and if it is always necessary.

"(3) An anti-noise crusade. Noisy cars of ancient vintage, intolerable trucks and motor cycles with muffler cut-out. All these are bad enough in the daytime, but much worse at night and in the early evening. Stopping these practices I am sure would remove some of the criticism now heaped upon automobiles."

Over the door of an enticing looking roadside inn between Boston and Cape Cod which angles for automobile trade is a sign, which reads:

You who have toured and stopped overnight or longer at such places can do your own commenting on this, and fill out a day.

The annual motor truck mileage of the United States is 7,130,000,000, and 1,420,000 tons of freight is transported annually over highways by the vehicles.

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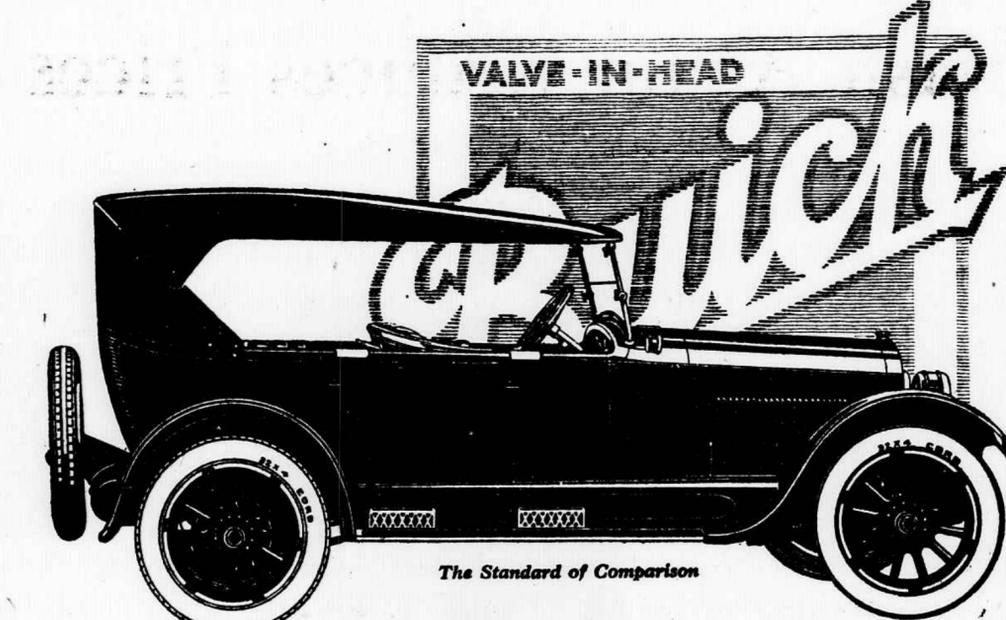
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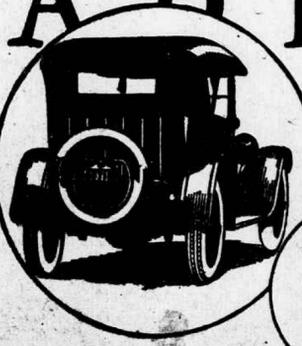
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