NEW INVENTIONS
MECHANICS
HOME WORKSHOP
MONEY MAKING IDEAS
350 PICTURES
By MARTIN BUNN

over forty-five around here you get a ticket.

"Remember that old open touring car you had back in 1920?" asked Gus with a smile.

"A FINE car!" returned Walton proudly. "Had all the speed I wanted. It went forty-five on the straight stretches.

"Sure, and everyone in the car was getting their teeth and planning which door they'd jump through if the old can left the road. I know, I had one," chuckled Gus. "And that's the answer to your question about speed. The cars of today are made to do seventy and eighty so they'll be able to travel forty-five safely without jarring your fillings loose. There's some difference between forty-five today and forty-five ten years ago.

"And another thing," added Gus. "Remember how you had to coax those old cars up to speed. Why, jumping from ten up to thirty miles an hour is nothing today. And as far as economy goes, I bet you'll spend less on this car than you did on the old one.

"Maybe," agreed Walton. "But I'm going to do something about that gas mileage, too. When she gets broken in, I think I'll let you check up on that carburetor.

"That'll help," nodded Gus. "And there are lots other things you can do to save money.

"What?" inquired Walton, interested.

"Well, in the first place, you want to give these tires of yours a little thought," Gus advised. "If you go easy on the speed and easier on your brakes, you can just about double the life of your shoes. They'll be good for all of 20,000 if you're careful, but they won't last 10,000 if you ride them hard. Even figuring on a cheap set of tires, that means about twenty-five or thirty dollars.

"It may sound silly, but engineers claim that even the roads you use have a lot to do with the cost of running your car. They've figured that if you can use concrete instead of macadam, you can save as much as two cents a mile on gas, oil, and wear.

"And while we're on the subject, oil's another thing that can put a crimp in your gas mileage. If it's thicker than it should be, it adds just that much more to the work the motor has to do.

"Oh, I suppose those things mean something," agreed Walton. "But the real costs are gas, oil, and repairs.

"And you can cut down on the repairs too, if you're careful," answered Gus. "Wait a minute and I'll show you what I mean."

With that Gus disappeared through the door to the garage office. When he reappeared he was carrying a small rectangular box. "This is my file of customers and repairs," he explained as he approached Walton. "It's an illustrated story in itself."

As he spoke, he began fingerling the grease-smudged cards. (Continued on page 115)

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SAVING DOLLARS WHILE DRIVING YOUR CAR
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"We won't bother about names—just figures," he suggested as he lifted out one of the cards. "For instance, here's a six-cylinder car, a 1930 model. During '31, the only repair was a carburetor job. In '32, the brakes were adjusted, the clutch repaired, new exhaust valves installed, and a whole new set of spark plugs was put in. In '33, the car had a rejob, new rings, new connecting rod bearings, and a new set of tires. So far this year, the car has been in here only once, and that was for a front brake. As a result, the car has cost over two hundred and twenty-four dollars for repairs in four years."


Without answering, Gus fingered through the cards again and selected another.

"NOW, here's the same make car, same model, but owned by another man. The mileage is just about the same on both. In 1931, he had a general check-up of the ignition system, carburetor, valves, and brakes in May and again in October, radiator flushed in July, and the tires switched to different wheels in December. During '32, chassis inspection two general check-ups in the spring and fall, valves and reservoirs adjusted, both front tires replaced, and breaker points adjusted. Under '33, the usual two check-ups in spring and fall, two new tires, and new brake linings. So far in '34, the car hasn't been in."

"Gosh," broke in Walston when Gus had finished, "that second car was in here more than the first one."

"Right, but it didn't cost as much in the long run," said Gus. "All together, the threeyear record for the car totaled only ninety-three dollars, including the tires. That owner believes in paying for prevention instead of cure. A check-up twice a year doesn't cost much and it keeps the general condition of the car up to par. It's cheaper to adjust bearings than to replace them."

"I've never looked at it that way," Walston admitted. "A repair shop to me has always been something to keep away from unless it was necessary."

"It isn't necessary," Gus assured him. "If you're really interested, you can check the savings account balances of car owners. It's been arrived at that car owners waste billions of dollars a year by dealing with gyp garages. That's why it pays to locate some honest garage and give it all your work. You wouldn't trust your life to a quack doctor, why place your car's health in the hands of some crooked mechanic?"

"ISN'T there some way a untrained person can tell if a garage is overcharging him?" inquired Walston.

"It would be pretty hard to make any fast rule on general work," Gus advised. "But with repairs, where parts have to be replaced, it's safe to figure you get a dollar's worth of labor for every sixty cent's worth of parts."

"Well, in about four months I'll bring this car in here and let you go over it," said Walston as he climbed into the driver's seat. "Maybe there is something to this business of an ounce of prevention being worth a pound of cure."

"Weren't you just wasting your breath telling that fellow how to take care of his car?" Joe Clark remarked as Walston drove off. "He never wants to spend any money unless he absolutely has to."

"It may help some," Gus said, and then added, "By the way, the Model Garage would have a tough time making ends meet if every customer on our list treated his car the way he should."

-- Margaret Halsey

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