

THE AUTO-HATER GIVES HIS OPINION--AND ACTS

THERE goes another of the infernal things!" snarled the man waiting for a car as he stamped his heels against the curb.

"Notice that!" he growled, addressing nobody in particular. "See how those fenders are put on an automobile? They're on an angle, so that all the mud they throw will just reach the sidewalk. Somebody's figured it all out, so that a fender is on just the right angle to get as much mud as possible on a man's trouser legs when he's waiting on the curb for a car. When people used to drive buggies and carriages they didn't have the fenders on at an angle. It wouldn't have done much good anyhow, because people didn't drive horses more than fifteen or twenty miles an hour through town, and the drivers couldn't succeed in splashing much mud on people. ;

"Wonder who was the first man to think of automobiles," went on the man, talking now to the sad eyed little chap at his left. "Whoever it was I hope when they sort out the sheep and goats, that they get him in the right place, and that somebody runs over him with a million horse power drab automobile about forty times every afternoon. I sure do. Why, honestly, friend—of course I wouldn't want to see anybody get hurt or anything—but if I ever see one of these gasoline wagons blow up into a million and one pieces some day, same as a toy balloon, then I'll just about laugh myself to death that's all. Whenever there's an auto accident—wheel smashed, or even a busted tire, I just hang around and keep askin' the proprietor of the outfit, 'whatsmatter,' and fairly revel in his troubles. That's the way I stand on automobiles. Funny, too, about these fellows that have 'em. Decent sort of chaps lots of 'em, if you meet 'em on the street car, or anywhere else, but the minute they get in one of those diabolically conceived machines, they lose all sense of respect for other people's rights.

"Why, I know a fellow—"

The man with the brown mustache was interrupted by somebody calling his name. It was a friend of his in an automobile.

"Want to ride out?" asked the automobious friend; "I go within a block of your house, I guess."

The man with the brown mustache dashed out like a dog taking after a butcher wagon and demonstrated the geometrical propositions about the shortest distance between two points. He pounced into the front seat where he could watch out and keep tab on things along their right way. "Don't care if I do," he assented. "Been waiting for a car there for about forty minutes it seems to me. Car service sure is something approximating the limit."

The auto was under full statutory limited speed again.

"Look at that fellow dodge," laughed the man with the brown mustache. "Wanted the whole crossing to himself, didn't he? That's right, toot the horn and see 'em jump out of a seven years' growth. Does beat all what a lot of lunk-heads there are walking about town. They'll stop right in the middle of the crossing and look at you like a castor oil bottle. Don't know enough to go straight ahead and let you steer around 'em. Of course a fellow doesn't like to see anybody get a broken leg or anything, but honestly it would serve some of 'em right if they did get hit by a good big, husky auto. Then they'd know how to act next time.

"Say, this thing certainly does move along in great shape. Just like sliding along on a big ribbon.

"Well, well, here we are pretty nearly home already. Better'n street cars, isn't it? If there's anything I hate it's to sit in a street car with a lot of silly looking old women glarin' at me and whispering mean things about me among themselves, because I don't give up my seat, or pickin' flaws in my necktie. 'Tisn't often though that I get a seat. Cars are always crowded like a Sunday dollar excursion train. Oh, but there's some sense to this kind of traveling! you betchuh! Ah, here we are. I must say I'm sorry it wasn't a longer ride. Well, mebby in another year I'll have the price of one of these carts myself. S'long and much obliged to you!"