

A DAY OUT

New-comer to the Trojan Family Shows what 10 h.p., Properly Used, Can Do in Conditions Entirely Out of the Ordinary.

By H. S. LINFIELD.

VERY many car owners seem half afraid to forsake the broad, hard highroads in favour of the far more attractive by-ways. If, as apparently is the case, some people regard the narrow, twisting lanes as "dangerous" territory, then how much more exciting are the contortions of a vehicle which not only looks upon rough, rutted tracks with justifiable scorn, but on demand will tackle a cross-country scramble with the greatest confidence?

A few days ago a band of enthusiasts, accompanied by a little knot of even greater enthusiasts and optimists connected with the vehicle in question, took their way into Sussex to view the "coming-out" of the new Trojan six-wheeler. This healthy youngster, rumoured and talked of vaguely for some time past, had at last completed a long series of strenuous tests and was ready to undergo public inspection.

Where is the connection, you ask, between a six-wheeler and the orthodox car world? To start with, this particular machine is propelled by a 10 h.p. two-stroke engine identical with that used in the well-known touring types of Trojan cars. Then, the engine details, the lighting, steering and front axle correspond with the components fitted to the firm's ordinary cars.

Finally, the vehicle must not be visualised as an enormous machine eligible at first sight for the ranks of the heavies. Its wheelbase is only 8ft. 6in., and its length

13ft. 1in., so that in overall dimensions it is smaller than many cars, though it has a minimum ground clearance of thirteen inches. From the car man's point of view, and thinking in terms of interest rather than in those of practical value, the remarkable point of the whole thing lies in what can be done with ten horse-power, given suitable means of fully utilising that power.

Having experi-



enced the comfort of the modern motor coach for an hour or so, the gathering I have already mentioned found itself at the foot of those Downs which help to make Sussex what it is. Up a greasy, rutted lane, for which more normal cars make evident their distaste, a whole fleet of ordinary Trojans, stuffed full of people, clambered slowly but indeed surely in the now famous manner.

Perhaps half a mile and then a general halt. A first glimpse of the machine which is the hero of the occasion: not a wildly unconventional vehicle outwardly. In fact, a good deal smaller than some of us anticipated. From somewhere in the neighbourhood of its tummy came the familiar and entirely distinctive purr of this particular type of two-stroke engine.

Not a few people, particularly those overseas, may be interested in one or two mechanical points. An epicyclic three-speed gear box, in conjunction with an auxiliary sliding type two-speed box, provides six forward speeds in all, of which the highest and lowest are 4.9 and 4.8 to 1 respectively, and three reverses. For road work the normal load is 12 cwt., for cross-country use 9 cwt. The price is £390.

Previous tests have shown that the vehicle is able to maintain a good average speed, with low fuel consumption, in ordinary conditions. Water up to eighteen inches deep, and seventy feet wide at that, has been

negotiated without difficulty. Other tests have included bog and soft sand, stretches of which have failed to stop the machine.

It was standing on a sunken track, facing a high bank which proved slightly easier than 1 in 2. Without fuss or bother it made for the bank, reared itself into the air, and proceeded to climb. Soon its front wheels were in space, but there was no faltering. In due



The Trojan six-wheeler takes to the rough with a load aboard.

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course the front wheels reached firm ground again, steering was regained, the back wheels humped themselves over the crest, and the extraordinary vehicle was up.

Then with equal sureness it put itself at a similarly violent descent, ran down on to the rough lane and up a corresponding gradient at the other side. All without hesitation, and in matter-of-fact fashion. An ordinary touring Trojan tried also to climb the bank with a rush, and nearly succeeded.

Yet this was as nothing compared with the next evolution. Imagine a section of the Downs—a summit rising to five or six hundred feet. To climb at all comfortably to the top on foot will take perhaps fifteen minutes and involve efforts which will probably "wind" the average man. For in places the gradient is as bad as 1 in 2½.

A Narrow Squeak!

From the bottom to the top, with a load on board, the amazing machine conveyed itself. Over grass wet with recent rain; all without anything to help the six ordinary-looking pneumatic tyres.

Then some real excitement. The driver, a phlegmatic and necessarily nerveless being, turned round and proceeded downwards. Perhaps he started a little fast; at all events to obtain steering way he had to let the machine gather speed for some yards. Subsequent braking caused it to broadside. The whole thing was heading for a chalk pit. Did the driver realise the full danger? Could he right the broadsiding? Within feet it seemed—more probably within five or six yards—of the awful drop the machine came under control again, and all was well. But, judging by what the helpless spectators were feeling and saying, that driver must have had a bad time. A stout effort!

Next, a track was fitted to both pairs of back wheels and the upward performance repeated with six or seven daring folk on board. It rained pretty violently while they were in process of being suspended in mid-air, as it were, at an angle commonly known as acute, moving slowly, but without doubt towards the far from inviting June sky.

Those who reached in this fashion the very excellent picnic lunch laid invitingly at the top of the hill deserved their meal. Those canneries who elected to

walk to the summit deserved it even more. But the star turn was that of a well-known pressman who tried to emulate the six-wheeler with a motor cycle.

He stopped, he fell, he faced in the wrong direction. He tried again; he stopped, he swore, he dropped his machine. But would he give up? Hours later, or so it seemed, after anxious friends, with expenditure of immense effort, had descended the hill in search of him, and when nearly all the vast quantities of food had vanished, there appeared a large, cheery yet intensely annoyed man, very thirsty, but minus the motor cycle!

The descent, by a less spectacular route, was in itself amusing. Real summer rain came down in sheets just as lunch was finished. A rush for the fleet of Trojans. Into them bundled an incredible number of people armed with the seat cushions, rugs and coats which had been commandeered for use at lunch.

By fully fifty per cent. was the load of every car exceeded. The rain did its worst. But down the deeply rutted track, which was the alternative to the direct "over-the-top" method, no cars could have felt safer or have been more free from skidding.

Brutality on the Beach.

Not yet content with what had been done, the brutal organisers began to show us what would happen on the seashore at Newhaven. Loose, deep shingle, lifted here and there by the waves into drifts, worried the six-wheeler, with tracks on its four hind wheels, not a scrap.

Now, the other day, at one of those charming little coast villages where one can get by car close to the sea, I had occasion to turn round just at the point where the road ended in a pebbly foreshore. In the manoeuvre, as my driving wheels came on to the loose stones, I knew all about wheelspin. I was well qualified, therefore, to appreciate the merit of the Trojan's performance, literally running over a beach as the vehicle was.

Someone suggested that proceedings would not be complete until the six-wheeler had climbed the almost vertical chalk cliffs rising from the beach, but he wasn't regarded too seriously, and tea was the next important item. Then comfortably back to town, so bringing an instructive, amusing, and delightfully arranged day out to a very pleasant end.

THE CAR AND CROSS-COUNTRY TRAMPING

ONE of the many ways of utilising one's car to advantage during a fine week-end is to drive it to a selected point and then to leave it in favour of a real cross-country ramble, but this needs planning beforehand. If that part of the outing devoted to the tramp is left entirely to chance it will often be found to be something of a failure; it may be found difficult to leave the roads, and footpaths, and the choicest woodlands, meadows, and pleasant streams may be missed as a result of one's sheer ignorance of their existence.

The best means of finding a walk suited to the time at one's disposal and to the, shall we say, "horse power" available, is to select one of those described in the many little books specially devoted to the subject. Among these are the "Walker Miles" series, which give in full detail the most delightful rambles in such delight-

ful and comparatively accessible districts as the Surrey Hills, the Chilterns, and so forth.

On a recent fine Sunday a party of "tramps" drove out to the charming little town of Amersham, in the Chilterns. They parked their cars and embarked on Walk No. 1 in the Ramblers' Guide, involving a round trip of precisely ten-miles in length. This took the party, almost entirely by way of footpaths, to the upland hamlet of Coleshill, to Penn Street surrounded by beechwoods, through Shardloe, the ancestral home of the Drake family, and so back to Amersham. And after the members of the party had had tea, and thoroughly enjoyed it, they got in their cars and drove home again.

I would repeat that this is an entirely pleasurable way of making the use of the car more interesting and health-giving.

V. T. B.