

# VANITY FAIR

1920

## *Your Car and You*

By VANITY FAIR'S OBSERVER

**T**HIS is the most active part of the year in the motor world, both for manufacturers and for those who are interested in automobiles from a buying or scientific standpoint. Great thought and great publicity are given to the new styles in body designs and in the new features introduced into the chassis construction. But very few people, even in the industry itself, realize the really important part the automobile has taken in the daily life of our country and its people.

The village smithy is no more. In the place of that interesting relic of a bygone day, there stands a substantial concrete building marked "Garage". This garage may not be all that we desire in the way of efficiency, honesty, courtesy or personnel, but the thing that it represents has become the most omnipresent and revolutionizing factor in our existence in the short space of twenty-five years. Indeed, the motor car has become so commonplace that we regard it rather in the light of a piece of household equipment, scolding about its shortcomings and seldom, if ever, giving thought to the fact that here, in exchange for a comparatively few dollars, we have come into possession of the most perfect saver of time, money, energy and ennui ever produced by the mind of man.

A congressional investigator has stated that in this country we waste \$500,000,000 a year in the inefficient transportation of food and that of every dollar expended for food 66c are expended in its distribution. It is in relieving this situation that the automobile, as typified by the truck, is going to be the greatest element in reducing the present excessive high cost of living.

One-third of the passenger automobiles in this country, or approximately 2,300,000, are owned by farmers. Seventy-eight per cent of their mileage is for business and a recent canvass of farm owners showed that they had increased their productivity sixty-eight per cent through the use of the automobile. It will take but little time for this condition to assert itself in the lowering scale of living costs. On account of the relief given to the more or less inefficiently handled railroads by motor transportation and the opening up of new territory which has no rail communication the motor car has become pre-eminent in the building up of the country.