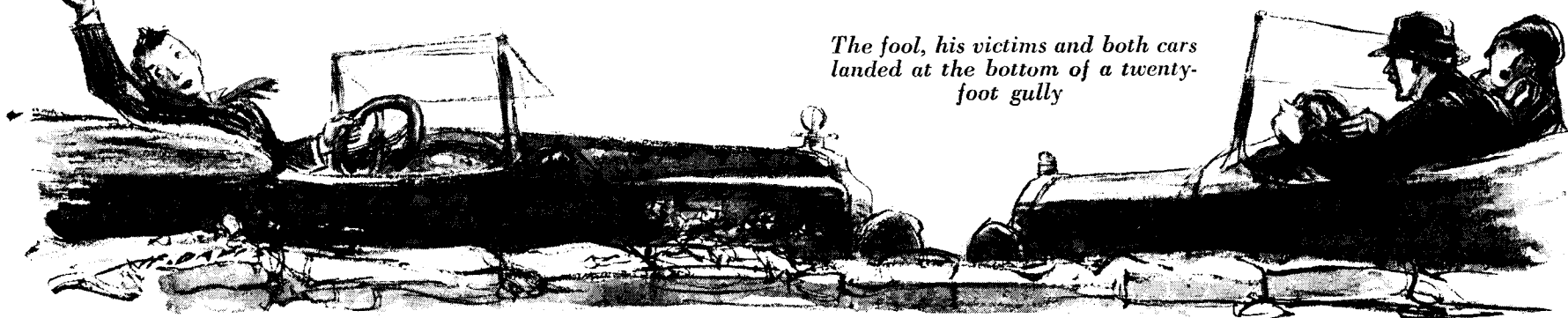


The Head behind the Wheel



The fool, his victims and both cars landed at the bottom of a twenty-foot gully

A MAN drove into the garage this morning in a heavy sedan. His wife and three children were with him, and the running boards were weighted with luggage.

"I get a bad squeak when I get up around forty-five or fifty," he said. "Can you eliminate it right away?"

One of the mechanics was put on the job. As he was backing the car around to put it on the elevator, it slid up against the wall, although he had depressed the foot-brake pedal as far as it would go.

"You haven't any brakes on your car," he called across the floor to the owner.

"I know it," replied the man irritably, "but I haven't time for that now. Take that squeak out; that's all I ordered."

Ray, the mechanic, has no patience with careless drivers.

"What do you do when you want to stop her?" he called as he rolled the car on to the lift. "Drag your feet on the ground?"

Needless to say, the brakes had been adjusted before the car was brought back downstairs. It only took a few minutes longer.

Now, here was a man, evidently in a great hurry, for he had been driving 45 to 50 miles an hour, and he begrudged the time necessary to fix his brakes. The squeak annoyed him, and so he didn't mind waiting while it was eliminated. But he was willing to risk his life roaring over the highways with his wife and children in a car the brakes of which were useless. It's such carelessness, such criminal negligence, as this that is responsible for the great number of serious accidents, of fatal accidents, on the highways.

Although running a garage tends to make one a bit pessimistic as to the number of loose-wits at the wheels of motor vehicles, I believe that most drivers are careful or try to be. The great trouble is that too many motorists think their responsibility ends if they signal stops and turns and use some sense as to speed and steering. They do not realize the importance of perfect brakes nor the need of tracing every strange noise to its source and making repairs if needed. Unhappily, too, good drivers and cars in splendid condition are often endangered by less careful pilots and broken-down cars on the highway.

Here is an instance of the importance of "queer" noises. When I cite such cases I don't want to seem to stress the carelessness of all drivers so much as to show by examples the necessity for checking up now and then.

The other day a small sedan with four young women in it rolled in. The driver jumped out.

"We've got a flat tire," she said. "We've driven more than ten miles on it, and I know it's ruined. Will you

Most automobile wrecks could be avoided if the drivers used their heads, says this garage man, who has untangled scores of them

By W. F. CURRINGTON

please put on a new one right away?"

I looked at the tires. They were all fully inflated.

"That's mighty funny," said the driver. "We've all been hearing a noise right along that sounded just like a flat."

a very unusual noise in the machine and without making any effort whatever to ascertain its cause, she certainly exhibited gross carelessness.

Often we get a hearty laugh out of the stupidity of some drivers, when accidents have been avoided not through



FROM years of observing careless drivers and the results of their stupidity the author of this article offers these suggestions for safe driving:

Never drive unless your brakes are working perfectly. When you need them you **NEED** them.

A little unidentified noise may foreshadow disaster. Stop and ascertain its cause.

If your hat blows off—don't grab for it. Pull up slowly and run back after it. Don't drive while you're sleepy or nervous. Think of the other fellow too. Slow down for highway intersections.

Don't make repairs or tire changes at the side of a much-traveled highway. Turn down a quiet side road or into a farmer's driveway.

Don't travel overfast on roads with which you are not familiar—especially at night. Be sure you're right before you go ahead.

Examination showed that the front universal joint of their car was ready to fall to pieces.

It was lucky for those girls that it still held; had it ripped apart while they were traveling 35 or 40 miles an hour the front end of the propeller shaft would have started whipping around wildly. Had the free end crashed through the floor board, the two girls in the front seat would certainly have been badly injured. But more likely it would have dropped to the ground, stubbing the front of the car and probably overturning it. And hundreds of motorists have been killed when their cars overturned.

"It Didn't Work" (Fortunately)

OF COURSE you could not have blamed the driver of this car if the universal joint, without warning, had broken and dropped to the road with resultant injuries and damage to the car. But in driving ten miles with

any fault of theirs but because chance examination in the shop revealed conditions which might have caused disasters. A fellow came in recently on the end of a rope. He had one of those rickety sedans which junk dealers eye longingly. Another motorist had picked him up some twenty miles out from town and towed him in.

Before the lad with the sedan gave us any instructions he finished an argument with the Samaritan. He objected to the "exorbitant" charge of \$5 for the towing, arguing that inasmuch as his fellow motorist was coming into town anyway he shouldn't charge him anything. Having finally paid up, however, he told us that his motor had stalled and that he had exhausted his stock of mechanical knowledge without being able to start it.

Luggage was crammed into every available inch of running boards. The

man's wife, baby and three other children, of whom the oldest was about six, were wedged in among more baggage in the tonneau.

Johnny, one of the floor men, was put on the job. Upon opening the hood he found that the carburetor was all smoked up. A thick coating of soot clung to it and extended up the intake manifold, while in the pan underneath was a small pile of ashes. The mechanic pointed to this and looked inquiringly at the driver.

"Oh, that," he said. "Well, you see, someone told me once that if you heated the carburetor it would make the car easier to start, and so I took a greasy rag and a match and tried to warm it up—but it didn't work."

Can you imagine what would have happened if it had "worked"? The wife and children were almost buried in the car under a pile of blankets, dishes, cooking utensils and what not. In the blaze that, by all the laws of common sense, should have resulted from this stupid tinkering, they couldn't have jumped from the car. Rather than spend a dollar or two for mechanical aid, the husband and father had taken the awful chance of burning them alive.

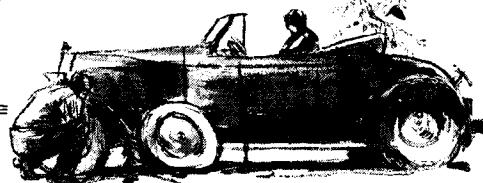
Incidentally, Johnny found a bare spot on a wire, which had short-circuited the ignition current through the motor block. He pulled the wire away, taped it and the motor started.

Another piece of foolishness: a fellow was driving along at a pretty good clip

here last Sunday when his hat flew off. Of course he grabbed for it. It sailed away, but he didn't stop grabbing until he found himself and the people with whom he collided lying at the bottom of a twenty-foot gully. Fortunately the descent was sloping, and both machines rolled over without serious injury to their occupants. Miracle! Of course the cars were badly smashed.

When your hat flies off while you're driving, ignore it until you can bring your car to a stop and then go back and recover it. That's what this driver should have done. Instead he risked his own life and that of others for a five- or six-dollar chapeau.

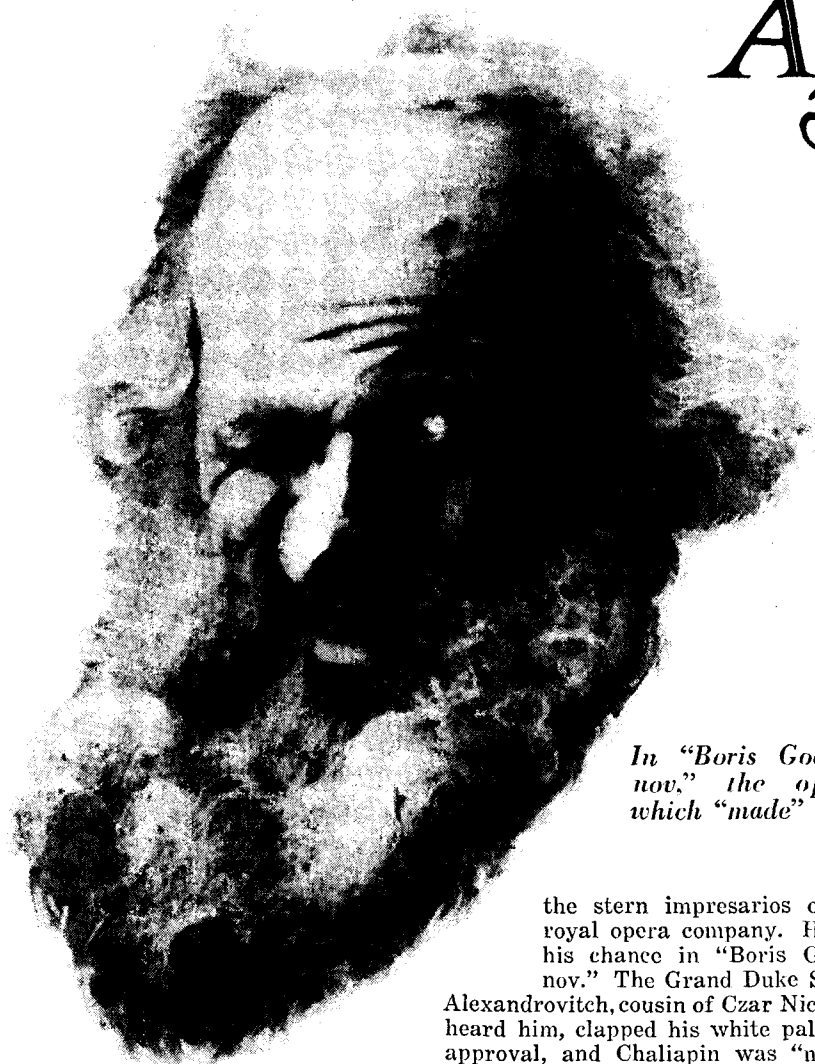
One look at the shop any Monday morning sets a fellow to wondering whether most motorists set out for Sunday driving with no higher ambition than to swell the business of local junkmen. Our stock of wrecked cars every Monday runs from three to eight. We had four this morning. The first one brought in was a heavy coupé. There was no doubt that the driver had been sober, but he (Continued on page



Illustrated
by HENRY
DAVIS

Against the Wind

With a vagabond troupe in Russia Feodor Chaliapin sang in the open, often pitting his great voice against the gales—and all his life he has battled against the winds of fortune



In "Boris Godounov," the opera which "made" him

An Interview with

FEODOR CHALIAPIN

By JOHN B. KENNEDY

ON THE frozen steppes that bound the ancient Tatar capital of Kazan in East Russia, the elder son of a peasant family pursued the traditional program of a first-born muzhik. Before reaching his teens he followed the plow behind oxen, preparing the fields his family did not own and could never own, to raise grain for the black bread on which the hordes of the Little Father's subjects were fed.

He sang in the choir of the yellow-domed Orthodox church with its spiked cross. He slaved as a porter with a fervent memory for missed meals, joined a vagabond troupe and within five years St. Petersburg thrilled to the wonder of a native prodigy, the most celebrated of modern basses.

Our Curiosity is Overwhelming

FEODOR CHALIAPIN (it's pronounced Shal-ya'-pin) made himself. Hunger, not the mere overnight missing of meals, but continuous need of food, shelter and clothing, marked his apprenticeship to the company of strolling players that traveled the Ural plains, its sole equipment a battered harmonium tied to a donkey's back. Without schooling, without formal vocal training, he labored up to a hearing before

the stern impresarios of the royal opera company. He got his chance in "Boris Godounov." The Grand Duke Serge Alexandrovitch, cousin of Czar Nicholas, heard him, clapped his white palms in approval, and Chaliapin was "made."

That was more than thirty years ago. Today there is no mark of early struggles in his keen, fresh face. A tall, powerfully built man, erect as a rod, with a blond head like a well-kempt lion, a flat, youthful underchin and the flexible mouth and wide nostrils of the born singer, he has worn well through both adversity and prosperity. He speaks fluently French, Italian and German besides his native Russian, and his vest-pocket vocabulary of English is discriminatingly used.

As he talks there is no hint of the compelling robustness of his singing. His laugh is the only clue to vocal richness.

"The American people," he told me, "are generous in their recognition and overwhelming in their curiosity. They want to know the why and wherefore of every name that becomes a part of their lives, in art, science, politics and industry. Europeans care little for the record of a man's early career. If he succeeds, he is accepted as a fixture; if he fails, nobody knows how and nobody cares to know why."

The hardship of his early life was not without compensations. Singing in the open air against the winds that sweep undying across the vast plains of East Russia, Chaliapin developed a sturdiness of volume which the hot-house ateliers of the culturists could never have given him.

"No singer was anybody until he had sung at the Imperial Theatre in Moscow or St. Petersburg, and to obtain an audition the beginner had to have indomitable will and self-confidence if he went unaccompanied by the great or near-great."

"As a trouper I had mastered most of the barytone and basso rôles of famous operas, Russian, German, Italian and French. Lingual versatility is an essential equipment for the lowliest musical troupers in Russia, who, in the old days, traveled the land like gypsies, as they do even now, though motion pictures are beginning to penetrate the hinterland."

"The moment I emerged from the ruck

of beginners, life brightened," he said. "I learned to see and hear all things, but to say little and never, under any circumstances, to discuss politics, not even in my own household."

This caution bore fruit. He was even permitted by the Soviet commissars to retain direction of the Imperial Theatre in Moscow.

The Russians, who like their singers in large sizes (like their wrestlers), made Chaliapin the rage. It happens that physically he resembles the celebrated Georges Hackenschmidt in length, chest breadth and profile, plus an inch or more of forehead. They met in a gym.

"Come on the mat and play with me," Hackenschmidt said.

"If you'll go to the opera and sing for me," Chaliapin retorted.

"Rasputin was in power as a member of the Czar's household at about that time," he recalls. "He heard me sing and sent for me to see him at the Imperial Palace. I knew his vast influence with the Imperial family through the apparently almost miraculous cure he wrought on the Czar's son, Czarevitch Alexis. To ignore an invitation from the monk who dominated the Czarina

refused to come at Rasputin's call. I told him that royal recognition was prized by me only when it came from royalty.

"Then, as we walked about the grounds, he gave me a glance at his unhappy state of mind. He felt some grave danger impending, but even then did not realize that he was the tool of an oligarchy. I made bold then to tell the Czar what I thought: that he permitted the majesty of his office as head of a great empire to intimidate him; that he failed as a showman."

"He thanked me for this opinion, but shrugged his shoulders as we parted—a fatalistic gesture—and he said: 'To be a showman one should have something to say about the quality of the show. I have not!'

Tolstoy is Sentimental at Heart

"I'M confident that this walk with the Czar prevented Rasputin from attempting to punish me for declining to meet him. That man was a savage, one of the wierdest characters that ever lived in a country of dark heroes. Some day some Russian will make an opera about the startling romance of Rasputin's life. And I hope to sing the rôle."

Rachmaninoff, the famed pianist, and Chaliapin had forged to the front at about the same time. They were friends and comrades. Together they went one Easter morning at Tolstoy's invitation, which had more value than a royal command to the young and ambitious.

It was the Russian custom then, on Easter mornings, for acquaintances to greet one another with the salutation: "Christ is risen!" to which the response was made, "He is risen indeed."

Rachmaninoff and Chaliapin, aware of Tolstoy's cynical attitude toward all religion, debated whether or not they should greet him in the traditional way. Custom won the debate. They met the old count on his porch.

"Christ is risen!" Chaliapin declared.

Tolstoy paused, then turned and brooded over the gaunt, funereal city of Moscow. "I see no sign of Christ," he said.

Afterward he sat in his living-room while Rachmaninoff played and Chaliapin sang. They rendered various arias, and Chaliapin concluded with his unexcelled singing of the Volga boatman's song.

"You are young men and you will learn that there are more important matters in life than music."

"Thereupon," says Chaliapin, "we plunged into The Old Corporal's Song. As I finished the song I observed that Count Tolstoy rubbed furtive tears from his eyes. Someone else in that company saw them—his wife."

"Let it pass," she whispered to me. 'Tolstoy has a feeling heart, but a hard head. He pretends to despise sentiment, but he himself is sentimental!'

When Chaliapin came to America nearly twenty years ago there was nothing of the surliness he had sometimes met in Europe. (Continued on page 43)



Chaliapin in a domestic rôle with his daughter Marina

was to court destruction. To accept it was to identify oneself with him.

"I refused his invitation. Then, after a performance of Faust which the Czar attended, the Czar commanded me to appear at the Winter Palace. I sang for him and his court—Rasputin was not present."

"The Czar was a sad man, with a pale, melancholy countenance, at heart a very simple man bewildered by the perplexing drama of government life. He took me aside after dinner that day in the palace and asked me why I had