

perience, to write or speak, and as letters of inquiry began to pour into our Chicago offices, we established records for editorial side-stepping that entitled us to championship rating.

Among these letters was one from Detroit, written on a coarse, blue-lined sheet of nickle tablet paper such as that on which the school boy laboriously scrawls and figures, and asking that I call upon the writer the next time I visited the Michigan metropolis. It was signed, "H. Ford, Engineer, Detroit Electric Company."

The name meant nothing to me, but I visited the author of that missive as the mechanical brains of the concern that built the Detroit Electric—the fellow whose duty it was to design and supervise the manufacture of the battery-driven carriage that then provided transportation for so many wealthy Americans. Naturally, I pictured him as a prospective advertiser for *Cycle Age*.

I made it a point one afternoon about ten days later to grant the request, but when I inquired for this H. Ford at the offices of the Detroit Electric, none there ever had heard of the man. As I was about to leave, however, the girl at the information had an inspiration.

"Say, perhaps he's the engineer—you know, the fireman—of the building," she suggested. "You might go around to the basement door at the rear of the plant and ask, anyway."

I played her hunch.

Reaching the foot of the stairs, I found myself in a small dark chamber, in the opposite wall of which was a steel door. I tried the handle, but it was locked.

Next, I pounded on it with my fist, and when that brought no response, I lifted a foot and began kicking at the heavy portal. I knew there was someone inside,

for I could hear a shovel scraping coal off the concrete floor.

But I had to lose the heel off my shoe before I succeeded in attracting attention.

When the door eventually opened, I was confronted by a tall, gaunt fellow, his face covered with the grease and grime of the boiler room. He was just finishing banking his fires for the night.

"Are you H. Ford?" I asked.

"Why yes!" he said, his tone tinged with surprise, for I don't suppose he was in the habit of receiving visitors at his place of employment.

"My name is Wagner," I told him. "I'm with *Cycle Age*."

"Well," he declared, grinning and extending a blackened hand, but before I permitted him to say anything more, I gave him a piece of my mind.

"Hell of a way to welcome callers," I told him. "I've just kicked the heel off my shoe trying to get in here!"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Wagner," he answered, "but if you'll be seated in that chair over there, I'll fix it for you in a jiffy."

Hobbling over to the designated seat, I made myself comfortable while H. Ford bent down on one knee and removed the shoe.

"Just a minute now," he added, as he walked over to a bench, where with hammer and nails he repaired the damage.

"As good as new," he informed me, laughingly, as he replaced the oxford on my foot.

"I have a letter from you, in which you asked me to call," I explained.

"Yes, Mr. Wagner," he replied.

Then he straightened his sparse frame, and plunged