

## How Old London Moves About

ONE of the editors of the *Farmer's Advocate*, who has been for years a prominent member of the Epworth League has been spending a few weeks in the old land, and has written, for his paper, the following interesting sketch of London streets. We are indebted to the courtesy of the *Advocate* for the use of the cuts.

Think of all the people of Canada—some 5,000,000—packed into an area of fifteen miles across, and you have Old London, a jungle of humanity, an epitome of the world, past and present!

In August of this year, nearly 1,000,000 people left London for holidays—that is, more than the population of six or seven of the biggest cities in Canada combined—and yet the stranger in the great heart of the Empire would never have missed them, there seemed so many millions left. A London paper reports 1,200 trains leaving the Liverpool street-railway station (one of five or six large stations) in a single day of 24 hours! London is an intensely busy place. No wonder Napoleon called England "a nation of shopkeepers." London looks like it. But whether on business, pleasure or mischief bent, how do these millions get about every day? English folk have the reputation of being great walkers, but, looking at them in London, I imagine they are getting over this wholesome habit. And, for millions of toilers in this human hive to walk is impossible, and so they pour in and out of the city in steam cars, mostly underground; here and there in the outskirts a few two-horse trams (street cars) "linger superfluous on the stage," but they are being superseded by electric trams—beautiful modern cars, moving swiftly on roadbeds that put Canadian street-car tracks to shame, for they are solid as the granite hills of old Scotland. Then, there are the cobweb-like ramifications of the Metropolitan and other underground electric railways, most modern of which is "The Tuppenny Tube," a decidedly American innovation, but really the cleanest, brightest, best-ventilated, speediest and most comfortable of all the subterranean highways of London. In places it is as much as 50 feet below the surface of the ground. You are taken down by an electric "lift," first depositing your little pasteboard ticket with the man at the slot, landing in an electric lighted station, "far from the maddening crowd" of the street above, and then into the electric-lighted train of half a dozen cars or more. Guards (there are no conductors) open the doors at every station, and you are "lifted" up to the street again. Before you reach the surface the train is half a mile or more away on its circuitous journey through the white-tiled tunnel. London is literally honey-combed with these subterranean passageways. Passing along a quiet street or court, you suddenly hear an earthquake rumble below, but it is no seismic disturbance to shake down the palace or the tenement—it is only the underground train.

Practically, there are no surface cars in London; the rapid, long distance riding is all done below. But there is just as great a world of traffic on the streets above in two-horse busses, perhaps the most novel feature that first impresses

the stranger. Over 3,500 of these traverse the leading streets of the city in all directions. They carry about 25 persons each, and in fine weather the top is the favorite seat for the sightseer. There is no brighter panorama than the ever-moving lines of busses, crowded with jolly, chattering people, on Piccadilly, the Strand, Trafalgar Square, Oxford Circus or London Bridge, on a sunny, summer day.

It is "Keep to the left" in London, and the thronged busses, on which the fare ranges from a penny to two pence, move with remarkable rapidity. The bus driver is a marvel. In two weeks' observation I did not see a collision or a mishap. He guides his big vehicle as by instinct. "Bus, horses, driver, are all one. He does not wait for somebody else to move, and never backs up. He reasons that everybody else will move, and they do. Everything proceeds on the "keep-going" theory. He calculates to the nicety of a hair's breadth that the vehicle ahead will move on out of his way, and it does. And the man behind also drives on the same theory. It is really wonderful. The horses are blocky, and well cared for. At intervals along the streets men are stationed to give them frequent drinks of oatmeal and water on hot days. The bus drivers are quick-witted jokers, with a retort for everybody.

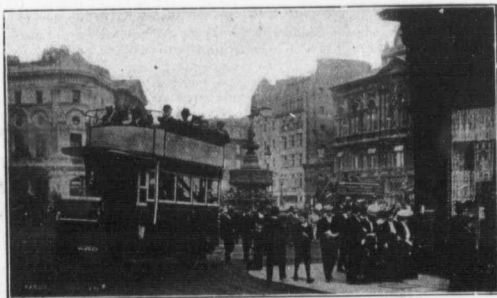
"Why don't you go to church?" queried the ever-present American girl Sunday morning of the driver.

"How can I on 20 bob a week and driving you people about?"

Besides the horse busses, there are over 350 motor busses. New ones are being added as fast as they can be built. They are popular, being speedier than the horse busses. The traffic of busses, cabs, trade vehicles, carriages, etc., on some streets is simply marvellous, particularly at points where several streets intersect. Average returns, taken officially on different days, show that the heaviest traffic of the day, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., was 22,481 vehicles passing the Mansion House, that passing the Marble Arch, at the entrance to Hyde Park, being almost as great. Of ten different points counted, the smallest number reported, passing in the twelve hours was 12,319. In a single hour, as many as 344 omnibusses pass the Mansion House one way. Omnibusses alone bring nearly 20,000 persons into the central area of London between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning. One stream of vehicles passes on the left, and the other to the right in the other direction. Here and there are wider areas on the streets, called "safteties," which make it easier for the people crossing. The authorities are very severe upon bus or motor drivers who get on the wrong side, trying to steal a march on



THE HORSE BUS



THE OLD LONDON MOTOR BUS

a rival. While I was there two of them were fined £10 and costs each for just such offences.

But who regulates this appalling rush of traffic and unravels the tangles when any occur, as they must at the intersecting points where streams converge? The most wonderful being of the city—the London policeman. Without either