

SPECIAL BUILDING.

With pleasure motoring as such restricted to a minimum, some members might turn over in their minds the possibility of brewing themselves a 'Special' It is the club's aim to encourage such activity, and several of us would be only too pleased to give what practical help, we could to members sufficiently interested to try their hand. The great thing about these little cars, is that apart from the fun of building, they need cost little build, and little to run. With several events on the Club's calendar such as Autocross, Driving Tests Speed Trials etc. run on private property, they can be towed to meetings, so that running costs are limited to the small amount of fuel used at the venue.

Those of you who were impressed by Bertie Sayers Austin 7 special, will read in a later issue, how this car came to be built and how much such a car might cost to build. There are usually quite a few Austin 7 and Ford based specials on the market at very reasonable prices, for those who don't consider themselves capable of hatching one for themselves, but certainly half the fun is lost by not doing so. There are in addition, several quite inexpensive books giving the 'knowhow' to the inexperienced.

Meanwhile if any member is interested the Editor knows of a complete Austin 7 chassis, less engine, that could be acquired for a modest sum.

THE FIFTY BOB SPECIAL

It was intended that this issue of the magazine should contain an article by 'Bertie Sayers' describing his Austin 7 special, but since this is not forthcoming at the time of going to press, the Editor has perforce to fill the gap with a description of his Ford counterpart to be followed by a later article when the vehicle is finished - assuming it ever gets finished.

The acquisition of this phenomenal carriage happened this way. An old friend of mine is an inveterate collector of petrol motors, whilst his wife shows an equal

enthusiasm for 'horses' not under the bonnet but of the four legged variety. The result is they become intimately mixed (I'm referring to the petrol and hay motors) and the centre of the mixture in the yard was revealed as a heap that started life as a 1936 Ford 8 van. With sudden vision of a potent 'mud plugger' mind, said heap became my property for 50 bob delivered with the strict understanding that the body should not accompany the chassis. In point of fact the body was 'lost' somewhere between our respective residences and the chassis was duly decamped in my drive one Sunday afternoon. Without doubt it spoilt the look of the place but with the help of my two enthusiastic youngsters, we quickly reduced it to several smaller heaps, this making the 'desir.semi-det.res' even more untidy. My immediate intention was to render the chassis unrecognisable, and to persuade my wife that what she saw lying around was in effect an agricultural implement that would ease off the hard work in the garden. By always referring to it as a 'mud plugger' the kids and I still attempt to practise the deception, but I salve my conscience by remembering the thing did its bit for the garden, for by scraping off the evidence of its stable companions and spreading it on the garden, we enjoyed an excellent crop of early potatoes.

Closer inspection of all the bits and pieces revealed that everything that could wear, was worn more than somewhat but with a touching faith in the cheapness of Ford parts, I decided to proceed with the plot. I have since discovered that if one was to build such a car entirely from 'completely knocked down' bits, it would cost about £200. Bearing in mind that the successful mud-plugger must be light, have a fair share of weight on the back end and plenty of ground clearance I decided the easiest way to achieve this end was to bring the back axle nearer to the seats rather than to interfere with the position of the engine. To improve the behaviour of the front end, the axle beam was to be split, and the suspension controlled by a pair of telescopic dampers.

For the rest of the chassis, it was decided to renew parts where unavoidable and to improvise where possible to keep down the cost, and finish up with a sketchy body in the traditional 'pneumonia crate' fashion. Just how far I have got with this plan will need to be told in a later issue of the magazine. This will serve a dual purpose since the magazine lives a hand to mouth existence, and although -contd elsewhere