GERMANY LEADS IN AIR, SAYS U. S. 'ACE'

Rickenbacker Testifies to House Committee.

RESULTS HERE CRITICISED

Most of Fliers Have Quit Because Government Isn't Encouraging Aviation, Is Declaration.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17.—"Germany leads the world in aerial navigation today," declared Captain Eddie Rickenbacker of Columbus, in his testimony before the house committee on accounts, which is investigating expenditures in the war department.

"We have spent a billion dollars on aviation and what have we to show for it?" he continued. "Our organization of 18,000 men is gone, and we have only a few obsolete planes left. Unless the government encourages aviation we will be outdistanced by all first-class powers.

"We ought to have the world buying airplanes at our backdoor now, instead of having to go to Europe to buy the latest type planes at Europe's backdoor. During the war we never took a step in advance in airplane construction that was not forced on us."

Rickenbacker, as America's ace of aces in the war with Germany, told the committee of some of his combats, which gave him an official record of 26 German planes shot down.

Rickenbacker said that he and most of the other American aces developed in the war have left flying and gone into other pursuits because the government is not encouraging aviation.

Future Wars in Air.

"What are your ideas with reference to the desirability of establishing a new governmental department, dealing exclusively with aviation?" asked Representative James A. Frear of Wisconsin, chairman of the committee.

"I think it is absolutely essential to the maintenance and development of the air service, and future wars are going to be won or lost in the air," said Rickenbacker.

"There must be a man at the head of aviation who is in sympathy with its development, who is willing to test out new ideas, and who will encourage American genius along that line.

"Americans have been inventing new devices for airplanes for years without encouragement at home. They have taken their ideas abroad, sold them there and during this war we have brought back these same ideas at great cost to the United States.

"Now the navy is subordinating aviation to the fleet; the army is subordinating aviation to the infantry and artillery; and the postoffice department and forest service are utilizing it but little.

"One department should handle aviation for all governmental activities, and there should be an alert man put at the head of that department. During times of peace flying should be developed, principally through the postal and forest services."

Fire Fighting From the Air.

"Pilots developed in civilian flying will be 70 per cent efficient as military flyers in time of war. The forests of the United States can not only be better patrolled by aviators than by rangers on horseback, but the fires can actually be fought more successfully from the air. Mail carrying by airplane should be greatly expanded."

Rickenbacker told the committee "there never was a time in the war that the Germans were not ahead of the allies in aviation."

"I believe in giving the devil his dues," he said.

"We are prone to believe we are the best in everything. We should be broadminded enough to admit mistakes when we make them."

When asked by the committee to point out some of the things American aviators lacked, which the Germans had, Rickenbacker declared that parachutes would have saved the lives of some of America's best-known aviators, including Major Raoul Lufberry and Captain Coolidge.

"I have seen German pilots and observers step overboard in an unconcerned way after their planes have been disabled in the air and go sailing off in their little parachutes," said Rickenbacker. "It was an unwritten law of the skies, at least so far as the Americans were concerned, that a man should not be shot down after he had left his plane that way.

War Department Blamed.

"The Germans usually landed in their territory because we carried the fighting to their territory, but some of them fell inside our lines."

"Why were not the Americans provided with parachutes?" Rickenbacker was asked.

"I do not know."

"Parachutes have been in use for years," was suggested.

"Yes, the first balloon ascension I ever saw at a county fair ended with the balloonist coming to the ground safely in a parachute."

Rickenbacker said he made two trips to Paris in an effort to get parachutes furnished, but didn't succeed.

He told the senate committee that in his judgment the war department had made a grave mistake in not encouraging professional automobile drivers to go into flying. He said when he tried to get into the air service in this country he was told that professionals would pay too much attention to the motor and not enough to flying.

"I got 120 hours of flying out of my motor, where the average was nine hours," he said. "I could save my motor. A motorist can tell by the pulse of a motor whether it is in proper working order, just as a doctor by feeling a man's pulse can tell whether he is in good condition.

"I would not go into combat unless my motor was working properly and I think that is one reason I am here today. Of course I realize that there was a lot of good luck in it."

SOFT TIRES PICK UP NAILS

The Moral Obviously Is to Keep the Tire Inflation Up.

There came to the writer recently an owner who stated that it was his misfortune to have more tire trouble per week than any six owners in his neighborhood, that if there were a tack or nail on the road one of his tires was sure to pick it up and puncture the tube, says a writer in Motor. This owner gave very little attention to his tires and tried to combat the nuisance by getting more tires, and those of better make.

The high-price ones seemed no better than the cheaper with respect to their puncturing proclivities. This owner's trouble, when investigated, proved to be caused by underinflation, by running the tires so soft that they easily "picked up" such objects as nails, tacks and small, sharp stones. After the subject of proper inflation was explained the jinx apparently disappeared.

During the warm weather watch the tire pressures, see that the tires are inflated to recommended pressures and get a tire caliper which measures the bulge of the side walls. If the car is heavily loaded on a long run the pressure might be slightly higher than usual—perhaps three pounds—the exact figure depending upon the added load. That is why it is so important to get not only the proper pressure but the proper wall shape with that pressure. It is possible to partly flatten a 4-inch tire with 80 pounds of air by overloading it sufficiently.

MOTORISTS VERY WASTEFUL

Waste in Tires Alone Estimated at $225,000,000 in Year.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17.—An automobile expert has figured out that over $225,000,000 will be wasted by motorists this year due to ignorance and negligence in the care and use of tires. The following hints on caring for tires are offered for the careful consideration of motorists:

"Slamming on the brakes is perhaps responsible for more tire trouble than anything else. The motorist should always apply his brakes gently, for everytime they are jammed on they lock the wheels and run up tire bills. Such a practice is useless, for it does not immediately halt the car; the momentum and weight often cause the rear wheels to slide along for a considerable distance and gouge off the tread rubber. However, if the damage has not been too great the owner may still save his tire by giving it early attention to protect the fabric from decay and moisture and to prevent dirt from working under the rubber.

GOOD LUBRICATION ADDS TRUCK LIFE

Overloading Is One Evil That Should Be Avoided.

STRAINS CUT SERVICE

Heavy Work Should Be Provided For by Purchase of Truck That Is Big Enough, Says Expert.

During the prevailing cold weather truck drivers will obtain a considerably higher efficiency from their motors if they will drain the crank case frequently, and, using about two quarts of kerosene for a bath, turn the motor over a few time, then drain out the kerosene and refill with new oil.

The reason for this, as explained by W. J. McCallum, manager of the Northwest Auto company, distributors of Bethlehem trucks, is that perfect carburetion is impossible until the motor warms up, resulting in considerable gasoline finding its way into the oil reservoir, which gradually thins the oil until it ceases to be a perfect lubricant.

Loading Can Save Truck.

There are many other ways, too, by which greater efficiency and longer life can be obtained from a truck if the driver will give it the care it should have. Loading and unloading can be handled in such a way as to exert the minimum strain on the chassis. Eighty to 90 per cent of the load should be carried on the rear axle at all times. If the load consists of some bulky, light commodity and something heavy, the light goods should be placed forward on the body and the heavy material as far back as possible. If the whole load is heavy, as soon as a portion is removed from the rear, that from the front should be moved back if it has to be carried further before being unloaded.

Overloading is another abuse that should be avoided except in emergencies. All trucks, while given a rated capacity, are so constructed as to provide for this being exceeded at times but it is by no means intended that because a 3½-ton truck can carry a load of 4½ tons it should be persistently loaded to that capacity. The safest and surest way is to estimate carefully beforehand the average weight of the loads to be hauled and select a truck with a greater carrying capacity. That is, if the average load to be hauled is estimated at three tons, it will prove the better investment, in the long run, to buy a 3½-ton truck.

Probably the greatest errors are committed in building dump bodies on trucks. It is the practice generally to put a three-yard body on a 3½-ton truck. For this very reason trucks used on road-building work cost more to maintain and depreciate faster than in any other line of work. No more than 2½ yards of gravel, sand or crushed rock should be hauled on a 3½-ton truck. A five-ton truck with a three-yard body will prove by far the cheapest in the long run. It will cost less to maintain, will stay on the job more consistently and will last about twice as long.

Proper lubrication is another important feature affecting the efficiency of a truck. Sixty per cent of the maintenance labor on a locomotive goes for cleaning and inspecting. The average locomotive is thoroughly cleaned and inspected at the end of about every 150 miles. It is rarely an engineer is seen standing beside his engine without an oil can in his hand. The best of workmanship and highest grade materials may be put into a truck, yet it will fail to give its owner the service he has a right to expect from it if the lubrication is neglected. The best of materials will not lubricate a bearing and the finest workmanship will not keep a truck out of the scrap heap if wearing surfaces are not lubricated regularly.

The slightest neglect, while not restroying the truck immediately, will have damaging effect, and will cause not only increased depreciation but lost time, increased maintenance and operating cost and a performance not at all in keeping with that which the truck is designed and built to give.

BOXERS SELL REPUBLIC TIRES

Johnny Kilkane and Willie Ritchie in the Tire Business.

A few years ago a successful boxer usually spent his winnings in carousing and when he finally took the count was ready for a benefit and then the bread line. About the only line of business he ever entered was running a saloon or possibly a poolroom. But the young men who now fight their way to the top are much more cleanly in their manner of living and when their ring careers are over and frequently even before defeat compels retirement, they have wisely invested their earnings.

Two recent cases are those of Johnny Kilbane, world's featherweight champion, and Willie Ritchie, former lightweight champion. Both have entered the tire business and both have selected the same tire to sell—Republic tires, made by the Republic Rubber corporation of Youngstown, O.

Johnny Kilbane is now head of the Johnny Kilbane Tire company of Cleveland and Willie Ritchie is senior partner of Ritchie & Costello of San Francisco. Both are working personally in the business, although Kilbane takes a layoff long enough to paddle around the country, slap a few ambitious boys for a few rounds and collect some more "jack" to add to his already neat fortune. Ritchie has not engaged in ring work for some time and is devoting all his time to the tire business.

The New York postoffice department reported in 1900 a saving of 15 minutes per trip as a result of its tests with motor vehicles for the collection of mail in the downtown districts.

M'CRAKEN COMPANY GETS PREMIER CAR

Territory Comprises Oregon and Western Idaho.

LATEST MODEL IS CLASSY

Many Improvements in 1920 Edition of Car Famous for Having the Magnetic Gear Shift.

An announcement of much interest to the motoring public last week was that the Premier six has been taken for this territory by the McCracken Motor company. This firm also handles the American car and the Moreland and Commerce trucks.

The Premier car is very well known here as the car with the magnetic gear shift. It has been represented in this territory for several years, and is very popular in Portland and vicinity, as is testified by the large number of Premier owners. It is a car of the higher price class.

The McCracken Motor company has been made distributor for the Premier for all of Oregon and the western part of Idaho. This includes the Idaho territory, of which Boise is the center. The Boise district probably will be handled through a sub-dealer in Boise. Major W. H. Warrens, who for some years was manager here for the B. & O & T. company and who served in the war, will be in charge of Premier sales for the McCracken company.

New Model Very Classy.

The Premier is just out with a new model, which includes many refinements and major improvements. It seems to be furnished with about all the conveniences any owner could want, from double spotlights to a windshield cleaner, all as part of standard equipment. It comes with all-aluminum Fleetwood body, by the same manufacturer who makes Locomobile and Pierce-Arrow bodies. This is a custom-made body and a very handsome one.

Some of the particular features of this body which contribute to the comfort of passengers are ventilator valves in the front compartment, roof ventilators in closed cars, special electric lights, carrying compartments for tools in the front door, electric cigar lighters in both front and rear compartments, and in the closed cars a vanity case for the lady and a smoking set for the man, arm rests, pillows and hassocks trimmed to match the interior.

Plenty of Lights Here.

Electrical equipment is exceptionally complete with double electric headlights, both the small lower lights and the large upper one having non-glaring lenses. On the cowl are two special two-candle power lamps for use when standing at the curb.

The instrument board lamp can be removed and is provided with 15 feet of cord wound on a spring reel for use as an inspection lamp. Tonneau lamps illuminate both running boards and the rear door thresholds, while other lamps are placed on the top bow so that one can read if so disposed. On either side of the windshield special searchlights are mounted. The closed cars have stop lamps that are automatically switched on when the doors are opened.

Hand-buffed leather, with long, straight piping and Marshall springs, are regular equipment. The instrument board is made of solid walnut and is finished in ebony. All the metal parts, such as handles and fittings, are of solid nickel alloy and cannot rust or tarnish. Two extra ribbed-tread cord tires are mounted astern. Other features of standard equipment are Perfection heater in open as well as closed cars, Pyrene fire extinguisher, Gabriel snubbers, Kellogg tire pump, Waltham eight-day time piece, Boyce motometer and windshield cleaner.

Magnetic Shift Improved.

The Premier magnetic gear shift has been greatly improved in the new model. It is no longer necessary to press a series of buttons for the different gears. A gear-selecting finger lever on the steering wheel quadrant supersedes the push-button control of the magnetic shift formerly mounted just below the wheel.

The engine has been considerably improved, the aluminum feature being retained, but improvement in cylinder construction developing more power continuously than its predecessor. Bock roller bearings, Berg & Beck clutch, Delco starter and other standard units are used.

The new model is a very handsome car. A peculiar curved form to the upper lines of the bodies, referred to as a "Grecian line" and covered by Premier patents, gives unusually distinctive appearance. The Alemite lubricating system is used.

LET THE WINDS BLOW, THE RAINS DESCEND AND COLD FOGS SETTLE OVER THE LAND—THE OWNER OF AN ESSEX SEDAN SHOULD WORRY.

MANY HANDSOME CARS HAVE APPEARED OF LATE, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO GO QUITE A WAYS TO BEAT THIS ESSEX SEDAN FOR STYLE.

C. L. Boss of the C. L. Boss Automobile company, Essex distributor here, who's standing beside the new sedan, is delighted with this latest edition of the Essex and well he may be, for the factory can't make them fast enough to supply the demand in this territory. One of recent purchasers of this model is F. W. Leadbetter. This enclosed Essex has all the pep of open models and the added advantage of being comfortable in all weathers. Inside the car is Tom Langhorne, Essex salesman.

HERE'S HAULING RECORD

BIG MACK TRUCK KEPT RIGHT ON TRAVELING.

Also Illustration of What Truck Owner Can Do Who Hustles for Return Cargoes.

What is believed to be a new record in motor truck efficiency, considering distance traveled, time taken and size of load, according to information received by F. C. Atwell of the International-Mack company, was recently made by Lee B. Hawkins of Moneta, Cal., who operates a fleet of eight Mack trucks.

A seed firm near Los Angeles wanted to ship 15 tons of seed in a particular rush to Calexico, 225 miles away. No freight car was available, so they asked Hawkins if he could make the delivery in two days. He took the consignment, and with two of his Macks, one carrying ten tons and the other five, started for the town of Calexico next morning. At night a stop was made and the trip resumed at dawn. Calexico was reached 30 hours after the start.

Arrangements were then made to receive a return load of nearly 15 tons of dried milk at El Centro, 10 miles from Calexico. This was delivered at San Diego, 100 miles. There 15 tons of fish were loaded on and delivered in Los Angeles, 130 miles more.

Reaching home at Moneta at midnight, one of the trucks hooked onto a trailer and the truck and trailer delivered 17½ tons of tomatoes by next morning to a cannery 25 miles away. At a town near by 7½ tons of well casing were taken on and delivered that night at Elsinore, 100 miles away over the mountains.

Compare this performance with what would have been done by railroad transportation. No more remarkable example of motor truck efficiency could be asked. There have been many instances of unusual performances of trucks that have been staged as stunts by dealers or manufacturers, but this is a case where the owner capitalized on the proved utility of his trucks. It shows what any other owner can do if he solicits return loads in a persistent manner.

ONE CHAIN BAD FOR THE CAR

And Failing to Put on Other One Is Lazy Practice at Best.

You often see cars ambling along the wet pavements on a rainy day with a tire chain on only one of the rear wheels. While it is true that by insuring good traction for one of the rear wheels the chances a that the car will be able to move over even the slipperiest places, still it is a bad practice to use but one chain because you are thereby imposing too great a strain on the differential. By working it overtime in this fashion undue wear is the result, and no doubt many noisy axles come from just such thoughtless stunts as this. By using but one chain you gain nothing except the few minutes extra time it would take to put on the other chain. A word to the wise is sufficient.

Stale Gasoline.

After it has stood for several days, even in a tight tank, gasoline will become dead and slow to ignite. This is partly due to evaporation and partly to chemical changes that take place.