

EUROPE ESTABLISHES AUTO EXPORT MART

Automobile Growing in Service for Economic Development of Countries

Improvements in methods of manufacture, development of models suitable for foreign markets, protection tariffs and "buy at home" propaganda are some of the competitive forces helping European manufacturers to establish themselves in foreign and domestic markets, says George E. Eddings of the National Bank of Commerce in New York writing in the February issue of Commerce Monthly. "The automobile is of growing service in the economic development of every country. This fact, coupled with rapid expansion of output in Europe and in America, is giving an increasing importance to the export market. Particularly as the American industry has become more highly developed it has given more and more thought to the development of the foreign field.

"At the same time European manufacturers, lacking broad domestic markets to absorb their output, are also looking to foreign markets as an outlet. Their home markets are protected by high tariffs and in some instances exports to colonial possessions are favored by preferential tariffs. Some of the foreign manufacturers through introduction of large-scale production methods for making cheaper cars have pared production costs so that the automobile in Europe as in the United States relatively is one of the lowest priced commodities.

"European automobile manufacturers have established a firm foothold in their own domestic markets. More recently they have strengthened their position in foreign markets by catering more particularly to the requirements of the export trade.

"Automobile manufacturing industries in Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy are small but growing. Although the aggregate annual output in these countries is little more than 12 per cent of production in the United States, exports are approximately 40 per cent of the exports from the United States and constitute a measurable proportion of the automobiles entering international markets. European automobile manufacturers depend to a far greater extent on exports as an outlet for production than does the industry in the United States. Italy exports nearly three-fourths of its annual output, France over one-third and Great Britain 10 to 15 per cent.

"The British motor industry has now reached a most important stage in its development. Production cost has been cut to the bone and considerable progress made in engineering development. The achievements of the British automobile industry in production, although on a much smaller scale than in America, have been nevertheless striking. Production is nearly seven times the prewar output and registrations have increased nearly 600 per cent.

"Exports in 1925 were over 29,000 units and on the basis of eleven months shipment exports in 1926 were well over 30,000 units. In 1922 British manufacturers supplied only half of the cars operated in the British market, now three-fourths are manufactured at home. That progress is being made by British manufacturers in export markets is evidenced by the recent orders booked at the close of 1926 by two large British firms to supply \$4,500,000 worth of cars and trucks for the Australian market. More than half the business represented by these orders went to the United States, last year. Considering the sizes of the automobile manufacturing industries in Great Britain and in the United States the former country now has relatively a much larger share of the Australian trade.

"Financially the British motor industry has been brought up in a hard school. In 1921 twenty-seven important companies lost 11 per cent of their capital. The identical twenty-seven companies in 1925 made a profit of approximately 10 per cent of the investment. The average price of the British selling unit has declined from \$26 in 1922 to \$330, as estimated in 1926.

"Great progress has been made by the French automobile industry in the past five years. Output in 1925 was estimated to be 177,000 units and production in 1926 was expected to equal that of the previous year. This represents an increase of over 100,000 cars over the number produced in 1922. Early 35 per cent of the 1925 production was exported. Toward the close of 1926 French production slumped sharply, partly because of seasonal causes but more largely because of fluctuation of the franc which put down buying demand.

"Italy exports a higher percentage of its production than any other country. Over 75 per cent of its output in 1925 was exported. Italian exports go largely to other European countries, but they have been making headway in the South American and other distant markets. Three Italian concerns have recently joined forces to promote automobile sales in British India.

promote home industries in preference to using imported goods is somewhat in evidence in Italy as in Great Britain and other countries.

"The German automobile industry has made rapid progress in the past two years. In 1911 the output was 16,939 units. By 1922 production had recovered somewhat from wartime disorganization and amounted to about 46,000 units. In 1925 output increased to 70,000 units, which constituted probably a new high record. The output has been estimated by some to be as high as 90,000. Mass production records were introduced to a certain extent, but it was evident by the close of 1925 that the German market could not absorb as many cars as it was expected to take. Manufacturers had miscalculated the ability of Germany to duplicate in a smaller way the large scale consumption of cars in the United States, an outgrowth of unprecedented prosperity, mass production, lower automobile prices and deferred payment sales.

"Despite these difficulties the German industry is developing an organization to meet world competition. Efforts are being made toward standardization and "rationalization,"—that is, the writing down of unprofitable capital investment and elimination of uneconomic equipment.

"In 1923, 77 manufacturers exhibited 118 models. By the middle of 1926 the number of plants was reported to be about 30, with only 43 various types of automobiles on exhibition. Even with that great reduction, the number of models is still large for economical production. Through elimination and consolidation, by the end of another year it is expected that the number of producers will be reduced to about twenty. One-third of the capacity is now attributed to one producer.

"For quite a while before the war Germany was well established in the automobile export field. Exports of cars and trucks in 1913 were valued at \$4,000,000 marks, which was six times the value of imports. The situation is now almost reversed. In 1925 imports were valued at \$5,000,000 marks and exports at \$3,000,000 marks. At some time in the far-distant future activity in foreign markets will be forced on the German manufacturers.

"The European automobile industry has been handicapped for several years by narrow and war impoverished markets, which have denied it the advantage of mass production. But the adversities of the industry have proved to be a stepping stone and the disadvantages are now in some small measure being overcome. Uneconomic products are being rapidly eliminated, consolidation and co-ordination of forces have reduced costs, modern equipment has been installed and mass-production methods have been adopted in several plants, and financial rehabilitation has reached the state where the industry has attracted the attention of American as well as European investors.

"Manufacturers in Europe are already producing more cars than they can sell in their home markets. Since conditions in many parts of Europe preclude rapid growth of domestic consumption it is apparent that the volume of exports will become more extensively the determining factor in the expansion of production schedules. The competitive power of European producers in the international market is clear in the case of such products as iron and steel, textiles, glass, cement and like, where the manufacturer has been able to combine the economies of low labor cost and large scale output. These commodities are sold in the important markets of the world in competition with the American products, and on occasions when flow over tariff barriers into our own domestic markets. With due recognition of the dominant position of the American industry in the export field, the outlook is for greater competition in international automotive markets."

Sticky Valves Cured by Few Drops of Gasoline

The exhaust valve stems are extremely likely to stick because of the formation of a gummy deposit that comes in this part. Gasoline or kerosene is the only thing that will help much in these circumstances.

By inserting a bit of copper tubing in at the next spark plug hole a little gasoline may be squirted on to the valve stem. The gasoline runs down the stem and quickly loosens the gum, so that the valve stem is free to move again.

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NEW FEATURES ON WILLYS-KNIGHT 70

High Achievements Claimed for Latest Model of Famous Motor Line

That the "70" Willys-Knight will continue to hold its leadership in power accomplishments in its price field in 1927, as it did in the past year, is the claim of Willys-Overland officials.

Company officials cite the performance and sales records of the "70" Willys-Knight as compared with other sixes in its price class as an indication of its general acceptance by the motor car buyers as being a leader in its field. It is claimed that in the past year the "70" has undergone rigid tests for power, speed, durability and economy of operation and in each instance, responded with a remarkable performance, establishing a nationwide reputation for unusual dependability.

The fact that no major changes were made in the 1927 "70" Willys-Knight sleeve-valve motor is declared by Willys-Overland engineers as an illustration of the engine's superiority, declaring this fact as a tribute to its efficiency.

The "70" power plant has a bore of 2 15/16 inches and a stroke of 4 1/4 inches, with a piston displacement of 177.9 cubic inches. The power develops 52.5 horsepower.

Belted spring shackles, which aid in the "70" performance are standard equipment. The shackles provide a spring flexibility, absorb road shocks, give better riding qualities and reduce to a minimum the wear and tear on all parts of the car.

Officials of the company declare that the reputation established by the "70" line in 1926 for all around performance is one of the chief reasons for the increased interest now being shown in this group of Knight powered cars.

UNIFORM VEHICLE LAWS NEEDED BADLY

Estimate Death Toll for 1926 Will Reach 23,000; Some Reports Made

By S. J. Williams, Director National Safety Council

Automobile fatalities in the U. S. in the year 1925 totaled 21,627 according to a recent announcement of the Census Bureau. This represented an increase of at least 9% over the preceding year. Ten years ago the total was less than 8,000. 20 years ago it was less than 600. In those 20 years the automobile has been developed—but at what a price in human life!

In 1926 the automobile death toll was about 23,000, judging from advance reports which the National Safety Council has secured from 28 states and 100 cities. This estimate represents an increase of 5% over the preceding year, as contrasted with the previous increase of over 9%. This indicates that at last we are beginning to make some impression on this great problem. If we are, it is because many of the larger cities and several of the more thickly populated states have been making desperate efforts to cope with the situation and many of these showed an actual decrease in automobile fatalities in 1926, including the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Ohio, Kentucky and a few others, and the cities of Boston, St. Louis, Kansas City, Louisville, Minneapolis, Jersey City, Columbus, Erie, Hartford, Paterson, Providence, St. Paul, Toledo, Worcester, Youngstown, Salt Lake City and some smaller places.

I have heard many bitter arguments regarding the causes of and the remedies for automobile accidents, but I have never heard any one dissent from the proposition that we need good laws and we need uniform laws. The difficulty has been in agreeing on what constitutes a good law. Various organizations have produced model vehicle laws in the past, but none of them represented a general agreement until Secretary Hoover called together the National Conference on Street and Highway Safety. This conference did other things, but its greatest accomplishment, I believe, was in securing agreement of over 1000 delegates, representing practically every state in the Union and every conceivable business or other interest, on the Uniform Vehicle Code. This code represented more than a year of hard work on the part of a committee of 37 mem-

bers, public officials, judges, engineers, lawyers, automobile men, railway men, representatives of women's clubs and of labor organizations. These various members and the great organizations and constituencies which they represented, contributed every available scrap of information and experience bearing on the subject. On the legal side, this committee cooperated with, and the code was later submitted to, the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws which officially represents every state in the Union and which is also a section of the American Bar Association.

What is the substance of the code thus produced? I shall pass over the first two parts, dealing respectively with the registration of the vehicle—the ordinary license tag—and with the certificate of title for prevention of theft.

The third part of the law deals with the licensing of drivers—both professional chauffeurs and private operators. This is vitally important. Official figures show beyond question that the eastern states, which have had drivers' license laws for several years have, in general, a very much better record than have the other states. A drivers' license law, honestly and energetically administered, will accomplish two things. It will require new drivers to learn how to handle a car, and to learn something about the motor vehicle laws and rules of the road, before starting to drive on the public highway unattended. And secondly, by providing for revocation of the licenses of those convicted of serious or repeated violations of law, it will remove from the highway the irresponsible and chronically reckless driver. A drivers' license law will not at once stop all accidents; it will not stop any unless it is properly administered; in any case it will not touch materially that class of accidents caused by momentary thoughtlessness or chance taking on the part of a normally good driver. But, judging from the experience of other states, this law may be expected, with proper enforcement, to cut down accident rates by 25%.

The fourth part of the uniform code deals with rules of the road and other regulations governing the operation and equipment of the motor vehicle. It is on this subject that uniformity among the different states is so obviously desirable. I need not expatiate on the manifold troubles of the motorist going from state to state or even from city to city and trying to accommodate himself, like a chameleon, to the ever-changing regulations. I shall not attempt at this time to go into the specific provisions of this law, on such controversial subjects as speed, except by saying that every one of these provisions was discussed by the hour in our committee meetings and I believe that the present provisions of the code represent the very best standard that can be generally agreed upon throughout this country. I believe that every public official, and every private citizen—for each one of us considers himself a traffic expert—should take the attitude that was expressed by the Motor Vehicle Registrar of Pennsylvania in a recent conference which I attended, when he said, "I don't

MOTOR SUSPENSION EXCLUDES VIBRATION

Advent of High Powered Cars Makes This Problem Much Greater

Methods for eliminating vibration in motor cars present one of the big questions that confront automotive engineers at all times. With the advent of high powered cars this important problem of the automobile owner has been met in various ways through different chassis designs as well as through new motor suspension.

To provide a smooth riding quality at all speeds Willys-Overland engineers have adopted a new motor suspension equipment for the Whippet cars which goes a step further along this line than do the methods employed in any other car in the four cylinder field.

The first step to provide a new suspension for the Whippet motor which would assure elimination of vibration and as a consequence result in ideal comfort in traveling, was the adoption of two angular support members at the rear of the engine. Through this method of engineering the necessity for bolting that section of the motor direct to the frame is eliminated, the engine escaping the natural jolt on the frame.

But the engineers went further in their plans to provide a suspension for the motor which would prove flexible enough to put an end to vibration at almost any driving range. This has been accomplished, designers say, through the use of a spring mounting at the front section of the motor. This spring mounting provides two

agree with everything in the Hoover Code, but I am willing to accept it without changing a word, because, if we sincerely believe in uniformity, I don't see how we can ever get uniformity unless we accept this uniform code."

The National Safety Council is a great believer in education as the cure for accidents of all sorts. Our 65 local councils, as well as the National body itself, are engaged chiefly in educational work. But education must have a solid foundation. We must impress on the growing child, and the adult motorist and pedestrian, the overwhelming importance of personal carefulness in the use of the streets, but we cannot stop with simply saying: "Be careful!"—we must tell the child and the adult what he must do and what he must expect that others will do; that is, we must have laws governing the use of the highway. I believe also in the tremendous importance of adequate law enforcement. I agree with the man who says "What we need is not more laws, but better enforcement of laws"—but I respectfully point out to him that one big reason for unenforced laws is unenforceable laws. Give your police, your sheriff, your judges, a reasonable, practicable, up to date law—then get behind them and insist on enforcement of it.

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General Electric Enters Field of Refrigeration

CLEVELAND, O.—(Special.)—The recently organized Electric Refrigeration Department of the General Electric company has established general headquarters in Cleveland, where it was announced today that a million dollars would be expended this year in advertising the new product throughout the United States.

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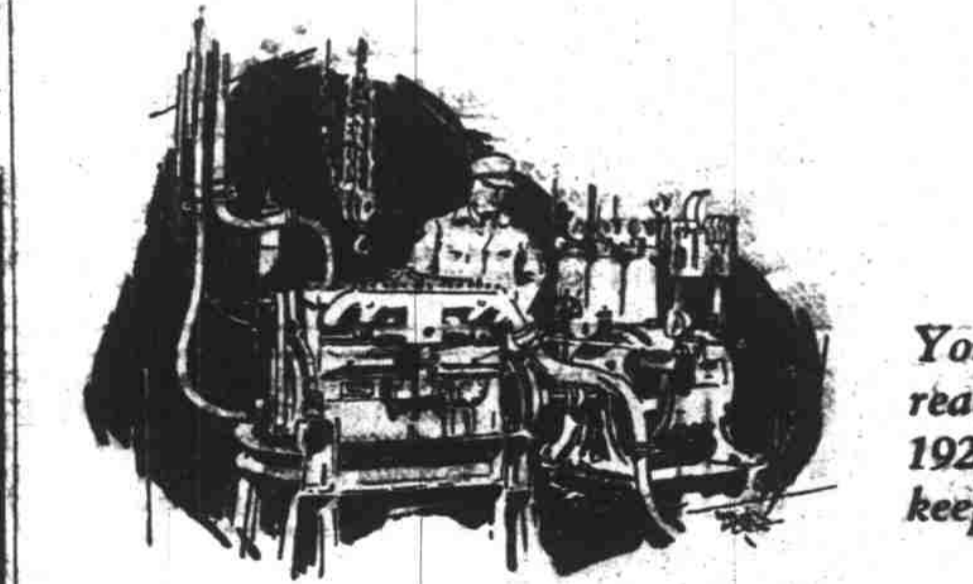
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