Northern Members Should Unite to Aid Radio Owners

An editorial article in The Rouyn-Noranda Press last week is well worth thoughtful reading. One suggestion made in that editorial is particularly worth consideration—that the members for the North should unite forces at Ottawa to see that the North is given something like a square deal in radio. The Rouyn-Noranda Press says:—

"The Rouyn-Noranda Press for a number of weeks past has been watching with sympathetic interest the campaign being waged by the newspapers of Northern Ontario for the establishment by the Canadian Radio Commission of a powerful relay station which would give to this vast Ontario and Quebec territory some chance of enjoying the broadcasts from the Commission's Canadian stations.

"Here in Rouyn and Noranda we have as much or more to complain about than have the residents of the Northern Ontario towns. It is true we are not afflicted with miniature stations such as those located in Kirkland Lake and Timmins and probably fortunately we are outside the range of what The Porcupine Advance terms their "piffling" programmes but we are on the other hand forced to be content with American radio broadcasts and only on rare occasions are we able to enjoy anything originating in Canada. Even the news broadcasts are usually drowned out by the powerful American stations and if the fee paid by people of this district for the privilege of owning a radio is supposed to include any benefits from Canadian Commission broadcasts then such fee is clearly being collected under false pretences.

"When it is considered that up here we embrace in what is known as the north a territory larger than all Southern Ontario and Quebec, and that the older sections of the province are favoured with numerous stations while we, notwithstanding promises made long ago, are still without even one, it must be clear that the North is receiving scant consideration at the hands of the commission and that the complaints being aired by the newspapers for the past month or more are fully justified.

"The question of where such a relay station would be located is of little concern. North Bay, Sudbury, Kirkland Lake, Rouyn-Noranda, Timmins—any place that competent officials might decide as offering prospects of the best results—would, we feel sure, be satisfactory. Perhaps if our northern representatives at Ottawa, Hon. W. A. Gordon, J. A. Bradette and Chas. Belec, joined forces and presented the situation squarely to the commission some action might follow. The people of the North pay their share of the cost of maintaining the commission, and their share also of the cost of the commission programmes. The South is surfeited with Canadian radio and the North is starved. It's not a fair deal. We again insist that something should be done to give adequate Canadian radio service to the North."

Blairmore Enterprise: Bellevue Lady: "Aye! Hoo can a man mak' ends meet noo-a-days wi' proveesions at five dollars a bottle?"

Auto Industry Proves Nothing New Under Sun

There was an Auto in 1862 and it was an "Austin." Ford's First Car had Engine at Rear. Ghosts of the Cars of Long Ago Walk Again.

In 1926 a letter writer in The Advance signed himself "Thirty Years a Motorist," and there were many protests to the effect that there was no motoring in 1896. The Advance on several occasions pointed out that the letter writer was fully justified in the use of the name chosen, that as a matter of fact, it was known for a fact that the gentleman in question had handled motor cars for over thirty years. The following article in addition to its other interest still further supports the idea of "Thirty Years a Motorist" before 1926:—

(By William S. Dutton)

That most modern of institutions, the automobile industry, seems to have set out to demonstrate anew that there is nothing new under the sun. Ghosts of the past are stalking in the laboratories of the industry's most ultra modern designers.

One feature of the big show presented by Henry Ford at the Chicago World's Fair was a motor car body so radically different from the conventional that before it some millions of visitors stood in wonder of what a boldly progressive industry would do next.

The shell was offered by a manufacturer of motor car bodies as its "suggestion for the motor car of the future." Daringly streamlined, the familiar hood in front merely furnished a compartment into which to strech the legs and store baggage. Space for the engine was provided in the back of the unique body directly over the rear axle.

Rear engine cars have been the dream of automotive engineers for the last several years, but to date, no manufacturer has had the nerve to risk placing a model on the market. Such a wide departure from the established practice of putting the engine in front has been held to be too long a step forward for a habit-bound public to countenance so that even now it is doubtful whether the "car of the future" will make its debut in dealers' sales rooms for two or three years more, if then. The public must be "educated up" to it, feel the automobile manufacturers.

A 25-Year-Old Blunder

"Educated back" to it would be a more accurate description. The facts are that in the rear-engine car the engineers and designers are merely dreaming of the day when they can correct a 25-year-old blunder, which some day perhaps may be rated in transportation history as one of the automobile industry's most serious mistakes.

In another part of Mr. Ford's big white building at Chicago was presented a spectacular display of vehicular history from the chariot of ancient Egypt to the newest type motor car on the highways. Sixty-seven vehicles were in the display, the pick of a vast permanent collection of vehicles at Dearborn, Michigan, which numbers 220 automobiles of all types and makes and 560 horse-drawn carts, wagons, and carriages. Each vehicle presented at Chicago was significant of a step in transportation progress or change.

Auto of 1862 Shown

The earliest automobile in this most instructive "Drama of Transportation," since returned to Dearborn, is a steam driven car built in 1862 or 1863 by one William Austin, of Lowell, Massachusettts. While resembling outwardly a horse-drawn carriage of its day, this 72-year-old equipage is, from the engineering standpoint, further removed from the influence of the horse than is the present-day motor car in all its glistening grace and speed. Austin placed his engine, clumsy as it was, at the rear centre of his power-propelled buggy. The carriage had a wheel base of 54½ inches and a tread of 55½ inches. The wheels were 45 and 46 inches in diameter, front and rear respectively. The fuel was charcoal, chip-wood, or scrap coal. The two cylinder engine, held in place by a frame, had piston valves. The drive was direct to the rear axle, the latter acting as a crankshaft. The water tank was located at the rear of the carriage.

Rear Engine Common Then

Later the Benz Company of Mannheim, Germany, founded by Carl Benz, famous in automobile annals, struck even further away from the influences of the horse and its traditional place in front the cart. A Benz car built in 1891, and another of 1892, are in the collection and each has its engine located uncompromisingly in the rear.

Ford's own first successful car, built in 1893, and still in good running order, was a rear engine type. Likewise was the Daimler of 1894.

Looking back over these ghosts of progress as they have been arrayed side by side, even the lay visitor cannot help but be impressed by the pioneers' vision of what a motor car should be. Among a total of 37 significant models introduced prior to 1910 and exhibited at Chicago, 14 were of the rear engine type, six had their engines in the rear centre, seven in centre, and only ten in front. That is to say, front-engine models were in the minority by the overwhelming odds of 27 to 10.

Of course it must be granted that the early builders were probably influenced more by expediency than vision. Power transmitted directly to the rear axle was the simplest and most economical form of construction. The fact remains, nevertheless, that it is still the simplest and most economical way to build a car, and the most sensible way. Engine heat, engine noise, and engine odours, are removed to the place where least objectionable and noticeable when the power plant is in the rear of the car. There is more leg room in front, and lack of leg room was long an indictment against the earlier models with the power plant in front.

Tradition Forced Sacrifice

Tradition and habit, the ever present human reluctance to break loose from established forms, was the main reason for the front-engine automobile. The horse always pulled its load, and so the automobile makers finally contrived a way to get their power-plant where the horse would otherwise have been, though they continued to transmit the propelling force to the rear. And thus the new vehicle became a hybrid sort of thing, which presented the appearance of being pulled and yet actually was pushed from behind. It was neither fish nor fowl.

Just how many years of progress were sacrificed by the automobile to the tradition of the horse, or, to state it in another way, how much further advanced would be the automotive design to-day if the pioneers had been guided by logic instead of deference to an age-old custom, is a nice question over which future historians may well speculate. It has taken us a quarter of a century to reach the point where a handful of advanced thinkers in automotive design are ready to admit cautiously that the car builders in the '90's were right when they placed their power plants behind.

Indeed a study of the motorized section of the Drama of Transportation is likely to lead one to wonder if there is anything fundamentally new or envisioned in the automotive industry of to-day, of which the old-timers did not think. Lack of proper tools and materials, especially of metal alloys, made many of their ideas impractical at the time but none the less they had the ideas and in their experiments forecast the trend of future development with uncanny accuracy.

Self Starter (?) in 1896

The self starter is popularly supposed to be of fairly recent origin and one of the most important of latter-day improvements to the motor car, yet it appeared on a Winton car in 1896. Standardization of parts, also thought of as a modern idea, was introduced by Ransom E. Olds, the designer and builder of the Oldsmobile, on an olds car in 1900 This car, known as a curved dash runabout, weighed only 800 pounds and was built in one style, with one paint finish, and each and every part was made to a standard. The car averaged 25 miles to a gallon of gasoline and combined the principles both of air and water cooling.

Three wheel cars have recently been the subject of experiment, though not by any of the larger manufacturers and the idea has been considered novel enough to interest motion picture audiences via the news reels. A car of the tricycle type was built by Anderson L. Riker in 1896.

Air Cooling in 1904

Air cooling and opposed cylinders are thought of to-day as innovations of the aviation industry, but as many of the early engines were air cooled as water cooled. Such cars as the Holsman of 1904, the Stevens Duryea of 1904, and the Kilbinger of 1907, employed both air cooling and opposed cylinders in their motors. A Knoxmobile of 1902 introduced an advanced principle of air cooling. Steel spines were inserted in the cylinder walls, screwed into place and grooved throughout their length. There were from 1,500 to 2,000 spines three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter and two inches long.

Even independent wheel suspension, popularly known as "knee action," and widely exploited as a radical improvement of the past year or two, is really a ghost of motordom's past. A car known as the Eisenach, built at Eisenach, Germany, in 1898 or 1899, incorporated a simple form of knee action in its front-end suspension.

Progress of any kind is dependent on the past and its accomplishments, and Mr. Ford's huge collection of ancient and modern vehicles at Dearborn shows this unmistakably. Inventors don't draw new creations out of the air, like magicians, but working at the right time with the right tools, they assemble the findings of countless experimenters who have gone before and who, in their time, probably worked at the wrong time and with deficient tools and materials.

A Cycle of Change

Even as late as 1893, the mechanical facilities available were so meagre that they would have been utterly inadequate to build a modern automobile. Prior to that date no sort of a successful car was possible, regardless of how complete and inspired the conception of the man who tried to build it. Too many needed things were then lacking.

First, the horse led designers gradually to work their power plants forward, though they had to overcome engineering difficulties in order to do so. Then along came aviation and we began to learn something of a new science, streamlining. Its discoveries quickly showed a glaring fault in the modern automobile; with its bulky engine and radiator in front, it butted its way through the air instead of slipping easily through it. Streamlining suggested a rear-end power-plant, if a perfect job of streamlining was to be done.

So our newest transportation industry, aviation, is exerting its influence upon motordom to free it from the last vestige of influence held over it by transportation's oldest industry. And the ghosts of the '90's walk again.

Science Sizes up Arctic Sled Dogs

By "Shakes"

At a conservative estimate, there are 15,000 dogs in Canada's eastern Arctic Just how important these animals are in the development of the real North has been realized recently by the Ontario Research Foundation who, at the invitation of the Dominion Department of the Interior, sent a representative to study the diseases, biology and management of sled dogs as well as the suitability of the eastern Arctic for reindeer herding.

The research man found out some very interesting things about the dogs of the North. He discovered, for instance, that real Eskimo dogs are of a definite breed. They have not been crossed with other breeds common a little farther south and remain a pure type somewhat like the Samoyede and the Chow. These last mentioned breeds of dogs are usually considered to be Asiastic but that in itself is not surprising in view of the theory that the Eskimos came to North America from that eastern continent. Mere surmise would lead to the belief that the Eskimos brought their dogs with them.

Considering the question of dogs from a purely utilitarian standpoint, the Foundation man advises that the principal qualities to be looked for in any sled dog are size, pulling power and a good thick coat of hair. In this the opening for the head to pass through, eastern Arctic Eskimo dog, weighing from 75 to 100 pounds, is ideal. Western Arctic dogs, we learn, are not quite so good as those in the east; the reason —gold. When the white man carried his search for the precious metal into the western Arctic regions, he took with him sled dogs of many types. The result is a hopeless crossing of breeds that may take long ages to develop into a perfect Arctic animal.

The real Eskimo dog is a beautiful creature, intelligent and hard working. He lives outside all year round and his rations depend entirely on the amount of food available for man and beast. When proper meat is available, the Ontario Research Foundation finds that a 50-pound seal is sufficient for one feeding of a 15-dog team. "Perhaps this lack of attention," says the O.R.F. Bulletin, "has been to the advantage of the dog in the long run, because when man attempts to improve breeds of animals by selection and other methods he frequently spoils them, as breeders have done with several of our utility breeds."

But there is one need for research in the business of more efficient driving. Hitching of dogs varies in sections of Canada. The Eastern Arctic hitch is a fan shaped one in which long lines of rawhide fixed to the harness at one end and at the other to a ring placed some distance in front of the bow of the sled. The lead dog is often as far as 50 or 60 feet in front of the sled. The western Arctic hitch consists of driving the dogs in pair; the northern prairies, Northern Ontario and Labrador coast hitch is single file. Each has a definite advantage but what the Foundation would like to arrive at is a hitching method that would combine the qualities of all three. Here are some points to be considered: the single hitch places the lead dog far in advance and distributes the load unevenly on the animals although it has an advantage in that the dogs are pulling straight before the load in the most efficient manner. The western hitch distributes the load more equally among the dogs, but they cannot all be pulling at the same angle and hence waste effort.

The little experimentation, the Foundation believes, might solve the problem. In the meantime, eastern Arctic dogs will continue to pull their loads in an inefficient manner, as they have been doing for many centuries. When and if their work becomes easier, they will have modern science to thank.

Simple, easily adjusted harness is one of the fine features of Eskimo dog hitching. Let the O.R.F. describe it: "The Eskimo style of harness is undoubtedly different from that used in the wooded areas of the North. It is in the form of a sling made of raw seal hide or webbing. There is a triangular opening for the head to pass through, the apex being on the front of the chest where the straps cross over and pass between the front legs. It is suspended on the back and loins by cross-pieces. The main advantage in this type of harness is that it does not compress the blood vessels of the neck like an ill-fitting collar, nor does it squeeze the sides of the chest too much. It is thought that this style of harness should be tried in other parts of Canada."

Work Instead of Relief Called for by Earl Rowe

Rather than spend one dollar on direct relief, it would be better for Canada to obligate itself to two dollars additional indebtedness and provide employment and let men feel they had a responsible part in the march back to prosperity, declared W. Earl Rowe, M.P., Dufferin-Simcoe, addressing the Macdonald Club in Strathcona hotel at Hamilton last week. He advocated state-aided colonization, and said a housing scheme would do much to provide employment. Canada should take advantage of its natural resources. Gold sold from the mines of Ontario last year produced more revenue than did the agricultural products exported. There remained enough of the precious metal to pay off the national debt, he said.

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