

AUTOMOBILE SECTION

AUTO INDUSTRY GOVERNS TRADE

Figures Show Influence in Business

"Cars Enhance—World Advance," was the slogan printed on the delegate emblems at the first World Motor Congress held in Detroit two weeks ago. A great deal of economic fact is in that slogan. The economic behavior of the country during the past five years can be seen from the number of cars used. The labor involved, the demand for iron, the demand for steel, and the many other necessary elements for automobiles are becoming a more deciding factor in the business cycle of the present generation than any other two or three ventures of newly considered enterprises.

From the first thought of economic theory agriculture has always been considered the subjecting and determining factor of business conditions. Then there were the theories that a business cycle occurred every 8 years because one of the planets of the universe blocks the sunshine coming to the earth. This planet, Venus, is just in a straight line with the earth and sun, between the two, every 8 years.

In more recent times, labor and capital have been considered paramount factors in the ups and downs of the business world. With regard to these the thoughts presented had, for the most part, to do with clothing workers, the miners and the bankers.

At the present time, there is an outstanding source of information for the economic student in the automobile world, not merely in the industry itself but in the use and influence on business in general. It is rather interesting to note that business conditions in America are showing an upward movement. We find conditions in the automobile industry starting to slow up just a little because the early spring orders are being filled and a little slump in orders takes place. At the same time there is a report that automobiles of the medium priced class and some of the others are raising their prices. The excuse used for the change in price is that there is a lower output schedule.

The lower output schedules must be planned for the future. For the demand for new cars is gaining every year. Twenty years ago an auto was as scarce as a battleship on Lake Michigan, but now there are some 15 million motor vehicles. Nearly ten million of them are passenger automobiles. Yet there is a reasonable demand for new automobiles.

In Illinois alone there was a gain of about 92 per cent in the sales of new automobiles during April over March. The Ford leads the list with a 114 per cent gain while the higher priced cars exceeded their March sales by 39 per cent, according to the sales registration statistics. In accordance with the present reports of the various economic service institutions who report an upward movement in the business conditions, the automobile sales anticipate a greater volume of business.

When people are spending money for new cars, whether they are cheaper cars or higher grade, there is a tendency to increase the volume of business. This not only helps to brighten the industries which are largely influenced by the automobile trade but other industries as well. According to the department of commerce report on automobile production during the month of April, there were 337,037 new automobiles produced. That is some 7,000 autos less than were produced in April of 1923, but over 144,000 autos more than in April, 1922.

The average market is becoming larger every year. This may seem strange with about 10 million passenger automobiles in use at the present time. It appears as though the automobile industry has reached its maximum. Instead, there are new developments in the automobile market. The overseas market of American made cars is becoming larger. Exports of this year to date are 30 per cent higher than for the same period of last year.

All these facts merely give an idea of the large number of workers necessary to produce the large number of cars. In addition there are the thousands of oil station workers, the garage men, the auto mechanics, and hundreds of other workers connected with the automobile industry. These are merely the direct or immediate workers. Then there are the other industries which thrive on the automobile industry because of the production of the raw materials necessary for automobiles.

The influence of the automobile industry is greater than has been credited to it. It is alive to the business conditions of the nation. It is a builder of business and at the same time an indicator of conditions. By itself it is not the only industry that causes business prosperity or depression, but in connection with agriculture, labor and capital it is of vital importance, although it has been somewhat neglected.

MOTORISTS PLEDGED AGAINST VANDALISM

Contemplating a great increase in touring this year the Chicago Motor club has issued a bulletin urging motorists to preserve the countryside. This bulletin urges motorists to refrain from picking wild flowers, to be careful not to pollute streams, to clean up when breaking camp, and to use the utmost caution to prevent forest fires.

The touring bureau of the Chicago Motor club has a number of pledge cards on hand addressed to the Motorists' League for Countryside Preservation. Motorists are urged to come in and sign these cards, which read:

"I, as a member of the Motorists' League for Countryside Preservation, pledge myself to do what I can for the preservation of the countryside, so that all may share in the enjoyment of it. To this end I will leave a resting place or campsite clean; free from papers or litter of any sort. I will be

careful in making camps and fires. I will leave the roadside in such a condition that the pleasure to be derived from it by others is not lessened by any careless action of mine."

ELIMINATION OF GRADE CROSSING IS PROBLEM

"Abolish the grade crossings!" cries the man in the street, reading of "another family wiped out." But the thing is easier said than done.

On class 1 railroads alone, there are in the United States 256,362 grade crossings. The net increase in 1922 was 3,855. To eliminate these would cost on an average \$75,000 each, or a total of some nineteen billions, a sum on which the annual interest charges would be almost a billion dollars.

It is obvious that this is prohibitive. We haven't the money to spend in such quantity. In cold calculations, the lives lost in grade-crossing accidents are not, economically, worth the amount of money required to eliminate all grade crossings. But when the national government undertakes to build and maintain national highways, doubtless it will set an example for all states to follow in eliminating grade crossings from all its mileage.

"Bugs" Baer Pens Hard Road Sense for Speed Artists

"Bugs" Baer, a well known newspaper humorist, has written and published a series of "road signs," probably merely intended to entertain. But many of them might be erected with benefit to the safety of traffic.

"Don't run up your mileage with skids," contains a lot of real caution in tabloid form. "Don't do your thinking with your brakes," will strike a responsive chord in every man who has had near-nervous prostration at the sight of the reckless driver stopping in a hurry. "There are three grades of eggs, but only one grade of crossing and that's dangerous," ought to be pasted in the hat of all those who try to "beat the train" across its right of way.

"The glass in your windshield is the same stuff they put in hospital windows. Which will you look through?" is a very pertinent query, and "Fifteen miles an hour may be a chill but fifty is fever," is not too medical to be understood.

To towns troubled with too much

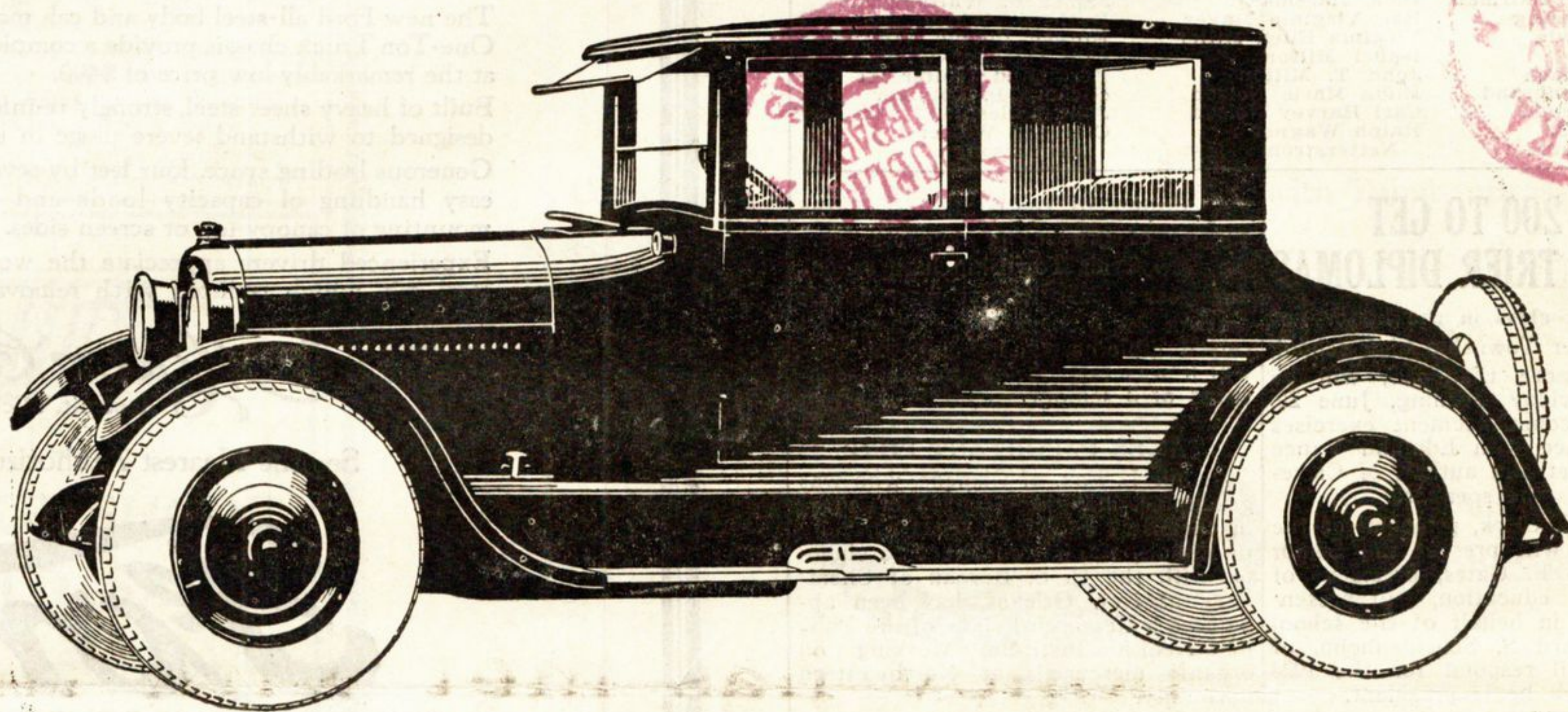
speeding by tourists, Mr. Baer suggests "Speed limit in this town fifteen miles an hour. One day for every mile over that!" or "We have seven hotels and one jail, take your pick!"

"Don't try to scare locomotives with your horn." "The minute you save may be your last one." "You wouldn't travel on a freight train, so don't try to travel under one," are all good to remember.

Mr. Baer intended to be funny, and succeeded; he may not have intended to be serious, but many can take his cleverness seriously with benefit to themselves and the general public.

In other words (Mr. Baer once more), "Accident insurance is a good thing to have without the accident."

The vibration of a car causes all nuts to work loose. At least once a month tighten all rim lugs, but before doing so put a little cup grease on the bolt which will eliminate wheel squeaks. Your body fenders and running board bolts require tightening at least every 2,000 miles. Keeping them tight will eliminate squeaks and rattles. Spring clips should be tightened every 1,000 miles to prevent breaking and shifting of springs. The springs should be oiled every 500 miles to keep out rust and squeaks.



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