

THE AUTOMOBILE SECTION

Rent-a-Car Idea Follows Old Livery Stable Service Idea

Newest Form of Rental Becomes Popular Throughout the Country

In the many Rent-a-Car systems springing up all over the country, is found a revival of the livery stables of former days. The pendulum has swung back, and an old phase of transportation, motorized and modernized, is being brought to light. Although the companies already operating have had a large volume of business, due to the fact that they do not employ specialized cars, maintenance costs are exorbitant, profits barely cover expenses and failures in business are frequent. However, a certain portion of the public likes to serve itself when it can be done economically, as is attested by the popularity of self-serve restaurants and grocery stores. John Hertz, guiding genius of the Yellow Cab Manufacturing company, which specializes in building revenue producing vehicles, has announced a special car necessary to the success of a Drive-It-Yourself business.

It is over two years since Mr. Hertz first began his investigations of this new development of motor transportation. He maintains that a specially built car of attractive appearance and dependable qualities was necessary for the successful operation of Drive-It-Yourself service. That car, the Ambassador, Drive-Yourself five-passenger sedan, is now ready for sale.

But Mr. Hertz didn't stop there. He realized that the business needed a system of operation, and the Yellow Drive-It-Yourself System, in which the Yellow Cab company of Chicago, the operating company—not the Yellow Cab Manufacturing company, is financially interested, was formed in that city. Four different stations operating Drive-Yourself vehicles have been the testing ground for this new car, and its operation has proved to be economical and profit-building. During the month of August alone the net profit from this business was \$12,000.

The Yellow Cab Manufacturing company, through its various subsidiaries and branches is making a concentrated drive throughout the country for the development of this business. Soon every large city will have many Drive-It-Yourself companies operating on a large scale, with new, modernized, specially built automobiles and financially sound organizations behind them, it is said. Already operations are under way in Chicago and Louisville. Plans are prepared for every operator of Yellow Cab products to go into business, and the Ambassador Drive-Yourself, a specially built automobile that cannot be distinguished from privately owned machines, will be sold to every Drive-It-Yourself company in the United States as well.

To hire the car the public will pay but a small rate per mile. Traveling salesmen will use Drive-It-Yourself service to cover territory. Government officials will find it invaluable going from place to place on investigations. In the old days young folks did their courting in a hired rig. Now they have the entire resources of the Drive-It-Yourself companies at their command. There are hundreds of uses for this service. Women who like to drive a smoothly running automobile will avail themselves of the new system on their shopping tours; delivery boys, collectors, and public officials will use it; companies who have hesitated about putting into service cars of their own will hail it with satisfaction, it is claimed. Automobile repair stations will get more business now that the private owner can have a car to drive while his own machine is being over-hauled.

Drive-It-Yourself is a business that offers big opportunities with a minimum of responsibility and less effort than any other phase of the automobile business, Mr. Hertz says, now that the right car is available for the operation of such a business.

Tobacco in Cans Used as "Fill" on Highway

Down through the ages many odd substances have been used for the construction of highways. But it is unlikely that ever before in the long history of road building has a grade been constructed of pipe tobacco—and in cans at that.

But that is what is being used to form the grade for the important Lincoln Highway feeder along the Hackensack river connecting the transcontinental road with the Harrison Turnpike.

The 1,800,000 cans of tobacco which will go into the fill for the new highway were purchased with the contributions of patriotic citizens during the war for overseas troops. Stored in French warehouses at the close of the war, the tobacco was recently purchased by a New York firm and shipped to this country where Gov-

ernment custom inspectors condemned it as unfit to be sold. The condemned tobacco was valued at \$150,000 and additional expense for destroying it was in sight when permission was obtained to dump the cans in the Kearney meadows as part of the fill for the new highway.

Claims Good Roads Will Make for Better Schools

"In checking over the notes made by our road survey cars which cover every section of the country, we find that four-fifths of the little one-room school houses have no provision for heating or ventilation except old un-jacketed stoves and rickety windows," says Charles P. Root, manager of the touring bureau of the Chicago Motor club. "Most of these buildings are poorly lighted, and the seating facilities are also poor."

"The moral," points out Mr. Root, "is simply this: Build good roads and we shall be able to build larger and better schools, for with the existence of hard roads children can be transported by bus from 15 to 18 miles to a large consolidated school."

EXPECT CUT ON AUTO TAXATION

No Government Levy on Gasoline, Report

Congress will not impose a federal tax on gasoline. Not only is this practically assured but there will be a strong movement at the next session, and, if need be, in the following one, to have the excise taxes on automobiles reduced. This movement will be backed by the American Automobile Association and other strong influences.

But despite this, the tax load on the automobile steadily is growing more and more burdensome. Between them, the Federal and State governments are collecting annually almost a half billion dollars.

While there may be and probably will be further agitation for a Federal tax on gasoline, such tax cannot be put through chiefly because the states are more and more resorting to the gasoline tax. They are raising large sums of money by it and they object to the Federal government invading the same field.

Moreover, the automobile interests of the country and organizations concerned in the welfare of the owner of the auto vehicle are strongly opposed to a Federal auto fuel levy.

Efforts were made by the Treasury Department about two years ago to impose a general horsepower tax and a gasoline tax on all autos and to require Federal registration. This recommendation was made to the House Ways and Means Committee. But such a protest arose from the country against such a plan that it was blocked.

Under the Federal law there is a 3 per cent tax on trucks and a 5 per cent tax on other automobiles. Last year about \$150,000,000 was raised by this levy. Congress last session cut the tax on accessories, tires and parts from 5 per cent to 2½, a reduction of about \$20,000,000 a year, and exempted truck chassis selling for less than \$1,000. This means a reduction of \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000. In other words, there has been a reduction of between \$20,000,000 and \$25,000,000, in the Federal taxes on the automobile industry and purchasers of machines.

Because more states are applying the gasoline tax and in some cases raising the rate of the gasoline tax, the amount collected by the states is steadily climbing. This year the collections will be much larger than in 1923, when they totaled \$36,813,951. In the first six months of 1924 they totaled \$32,430,410.

This means that for the entire country the gasoline tax collections will exceed \$64,000,000. The states also in the first six months of 1924 collected about \$200,000,000 from registrations, licenses and permits. Probably 20 per cent more will be collected from this source before next January 1. The Federal taxes on the automobile industry this year, roughly, will amount to about \$130,000,000.

These figures do not take account of the fact that thirty-six states, also have personal property taxes against automobiles.

Taking all taxes into account, it will be seen the automobile in this country is bearing a tax of about \$500,000,000 annually and the tendency is constantly to increase it, due partly to increased production and partly to insistence of the politicians on using the automobile as a source for large revenues because it is convenient to do so and, thus far, easy to pass muster with the argument the automobile is more or less of a luxury in the hands of those who can afford it.

THREE-WHEEL AUTOMOBILE

The Germans have perfected a three-wheel motor car, and the advantages are said to be the reduction of cost due to saving of tires, easier steering and braking. Rigidity is given to the frame by diagonal cross members reaching a point in front.

Cadillac announces the first public showing of the new and distinctive Custom Built Cadillac-Fisher Bodies on the V-63 chassis.

You are cordially invited to attend this Salon between the hours of 9 a. m. and 9 p. m. at the Chicago Branch 23rd Street and Michigan Avenue.

October 4th to 11th

CADILLAC

Standard of the World

CADILLAC MOTOR CAR COMPANY
Chicago Branch