

In The Automobile World

THE EXTREME BEAUTY

SHOWS IN BODY BUILDING AND COMFORTABLE FITTINGS

Were Features at the Auto Shows Held so Far This Year—Tendency Towards High Speed Engines.

One of the features of the auto shows already held this year is the extreme beauty shown in body building and the utmost comfort found in fittings. Manufacturers have seemingly rested on their oars in their experiments regarding the best type of engine to use; the apostles of the twelve, the eights, the sixes and the fours are seemingly convinced that they have "the" car that the public requires so far as engine power is concerned, and they have concentrated all their skill and art on the chassis and building and fitting out of the body.

Investigation as to the number of cylinders best adapted for the automobile engine, shows that, as a rule, higher-priced new cars have adopted the multiple cylinders. There is no doubt that the champions of the fours and the sixes are not content to rest on any dogmatic assertions as to the good qualities of these respective types; they are striving for im-

provements that will give all the flexibility obtained by the multiple cylinders.

The tendency toward high speed engines continues. Cylinders of smaller diameter and longer stroke, for smaller, quicker explosions, and more rapid revolutions, increase in number. One authority estimates that 50 per cent. of automobile engines have a cylinder bore of less than three and a half inches.

Three-speed gear boxes have almost entirely displaced fours on account of the greater flexibility of the high-speed engine. Battery ignition the cars of 1915. The tendency is has shown 100 per cent. gain since bearing strongly toward construction of engines with removable cylinder heads. Overhead valves and the thermosiphon cooling system also grew in popularity last year. Seventy per cent. of the 1917 cars have vacuum fuel feed.

What are the tendencies in body design? For each one of the sixteen types of bodies lately defined by the American Society of Automobile Engineers there will probably always be a place of greater or minor importance, but at this time the main endeavor is concentrated on evolving the body that will best span the seasons. Much progress has been made toward the all-the-year-round car in the last two years. In fact in adapting to seasonal changes, in the ease and readiness with which the summer car can be converted into the winter car, it will be difficult to imagine how much more improvement could be made than that displayed in the 1917 models.

Open Sedan is Popular.

This does not mean that the aim of the designers is concentrated on one type of body, in fact there are several that admirably exemplify this adaptability to the different times of the year, but unquestionably the most prominent development of this kind among the 1917 models is the "open sedan," that is, the car so constructed that its glass sides may be lowered so as to leave the space entirely clear from the glass front to the back. Numerous automobile makers have come out this season for the first time with this style of body. Probably more manufacturers have added this type of car to their list than any other style.

Next to the open sedan the two or three-seated car with collapsible top, the convertible coupe, will in all likelihood be found to hold second place in the season's tendency in body styles. Third, the roadsters of clover-leaf and club style occupy a more prominent place at the show than ever before. The year's production of roadsters in comparison with the touring car is not known, but if it were it would undoubtedly show a strong relative gain. The compactness of the roadster with at the same time provision for roominess, has had a decided appeal, and the ingenuity of seats in the roadster has been one of the most interesting developments in recent body design.

Using Up All the Room.

The popularity of the roadster type has made itself felt in the makes of the highest-priced cars and one can see as high as one likes in selecting a car with seats for but two persons. In fact, lessened seating capacity,

ENORMOUS GROWTH OF AUTO INDUSTRY

The following figures, given by H. W. Baker, secretary of the New York State Automobile Association, indicate the enormous growth that has taken place in the automobile industry during the past ten years:

	1905	1906
Number of automobiles in United States.....	52,000	3,376,000
Number of tires required.....	360,000	12,000,000
Gallons of lubricating oil used.....	11,000,000	75,000,000
Gallons of gasoline consumed.....	30,000,000	1,800,000,000
Number of licensed trucks.....	235,000	318,000
Miles of paved road.....	8,000	52,000,000
Cost of construction.....	—	\$100,000,000
Total expenditure by end of year.....	—	\$100,000,000
Value of farm lands increased from 20 to 194 per cent.	—	—

that is, doing away with surplus room, seldom if ever used, is a noteworthy tendency in 1917 automobile design. This, too, irrespective of price. Some of the most costly town cars in new models seat but two or three persons.

Bodies are made smaller and the lines skilfully drawn so as to emphasize the chassis, a vital part of the car which a large body may try to ignore, but never successfully. There is a true relation between the chassis and the body, and designers are bringing this proportion more into effect.

So, too, the convertible idea has affected the highest-priced cars, showing how full of life this idea is; in some of the custom-made bodies of the season, in which the cost was but a secondary consideration, the space between the chauffeur and the owner is no longer sharply divided. The glass window behind the driver's seat is made so that it may be lowered, and in one type the whole car may be thrown into one compartment. This elasticity is at the owner's behest; if he desires to drive he may do so without submitting to the isolation of the typical chauffeur seat.

All Have Graceful Lines.

The demand of the public for streamline bodies and unbroken surfaces is evidenced by a glance down the length of the long show room which has 45,500 square feet of space. The stocky car that was all angles has passed from view and its place is taken by graceful lines that give one the impression of looking at a thoroughbred horse—which is perhaps Nature's most beautiful creation. Wire wheels seem to indicate a reversal to the old type of car, and they give an impression of lightness and speed which makes a strong appeal to many people.

Many cars have, of course, a self-starting device—although some of them still retain the starting handle as part of the equipment—for even the modern electric self-starter is not infallible under all circumstances, especially in the hands of some people. Electric lighting systems and devices for preventing that glare which is the bane of the motorist's existence when doing any night driving are also to the fore—in fact, in the accessories department of the show there are literally hundreds of things which seem to be essential to the proper driving of a car, no matter of what make.

With the growth of winter motoring the demand for the closed model set all manufacturers on the war-path, and what with long-lift up

holstery, heaters for the interior of the car, and other devices, the modern motorist can be just as comfortable skimming over the frozen roads as he used to be in the summer time. And it is not only the wealthy magnate with his big bank roll who can afford these things—the salaried man or the small business man can now purchase a car which gives him the same degree of service.

Machines More Costly.

The increases that have been made in the prices of the more widely known models of pleasure cars will not have much effect on the sales. The past two years has seen an enormous increase in the cost of steel, aluminum, etc. And the manufacturers had to reduce the quality of the materials put into the cars or else increase the price. They adopted the latter plan, and the public may rest assured that while they may have to pay a little more for their cars than in pre-war times, yet they are securing the best possible value and that the workmanship put into the cars on exhibition is that of the highest standard.

FADS AND FANCIES FOR MOTORISTS

Early spring days will find the man who drives his own touring car wearing the latest model in leather coats. The coat has a Shetland wool lining that snaps in place and may be removed if too warm. Buttoning from the right side way over to the left with one button, the coat is secured at the waist line with a belt fastened to the coat, except for a space in front where it may be tightened or loosened. A convertible collar can be regulated to suit the conditions of the weather. The coat is loose enough to admit of perfect freedom in driving. The smartest touch to this outfit is an aviator model cap worn with the coat. The cap comes in three models—the curtained hood, the fur-lined hood and the leather-lined skull cap with ear protectors.

New cloth Alpine shaped hats in plain colors and in the black and white plaids are being selected for southern touring cars. These hats go well with the new rainproof dust coats. Pekin-vain, they are called. The coats are of gabardine with plaids linings, cut in full top coat model. Hanshee cashmere shawl robes are

excellent for early spring use, and they come in fascinating colors, the reverse side being a pale shade of the darkest color. For instance, a purple robe has a lilac reverse, a brown a tan reverse, a navy a pale blue, and so on. The fringe at the ends is three inches long.

Tufted leather pillows are newer than the plain ones, but are not comfortable. Velvet pillows trimmed with worsted flowers are novel and are in the boister shape, gathered and finished at the ends with tassels. Still newer are the pillows made of pongee or Indian silk, stenciled. These are done in bold floral designs on natural tan. They clean perfectly and it is said will wash if great care is taken. They are made slip fashion to button in place.

Among extra wraps the Lanvin cape is perhaps the newest. The cape is three-quarters length, in navy blue serge, oddly draped, with a

high, loosely-buttoned collar of tan burella cloth. The lining is of tan crepe de Chine. Along the back of the collar is a strip of silver embroidery and the buttons are done to match.

Sport coats are a veritable color riot this season, and they are made in many new models and materials. One in loopy, a loosely woven cloth, is in a green, yellow and white plaid. The coat is unlined and is a sort of modified raglan. An orange wool jersey cloth is in a smock model, which is very becoming to the slender figure. Tricotine is a woven silk material, and in an old rose belted model is most attractive. Two-tone satin coats are new and the lighter side forms the lining black with the white reverse being very smart.

With the chinz coverings there is a tendency to use the painted mullin embroidered silkline or the stencil-ed linen curtains in the machine.

Using Superlatives. It is said that over-laudatory advertising of motor cars does no harm because people are accustomed to intensive selling methods and accept all claims with the proverbial grain of salt.

But when "wonderful" is said, it should at least mean adequate; a "beautiful" car should surely be "pleasing"; "economical" certainly ought to mean comparatively "inexpensive," and so on.

In this, which promises to be the greatest of all automobile years. There is a remarkable range of selection—a car to fit every pocket book and most of them good values. The real facts about them are nothing to be ashamed of—so why veneer the story?

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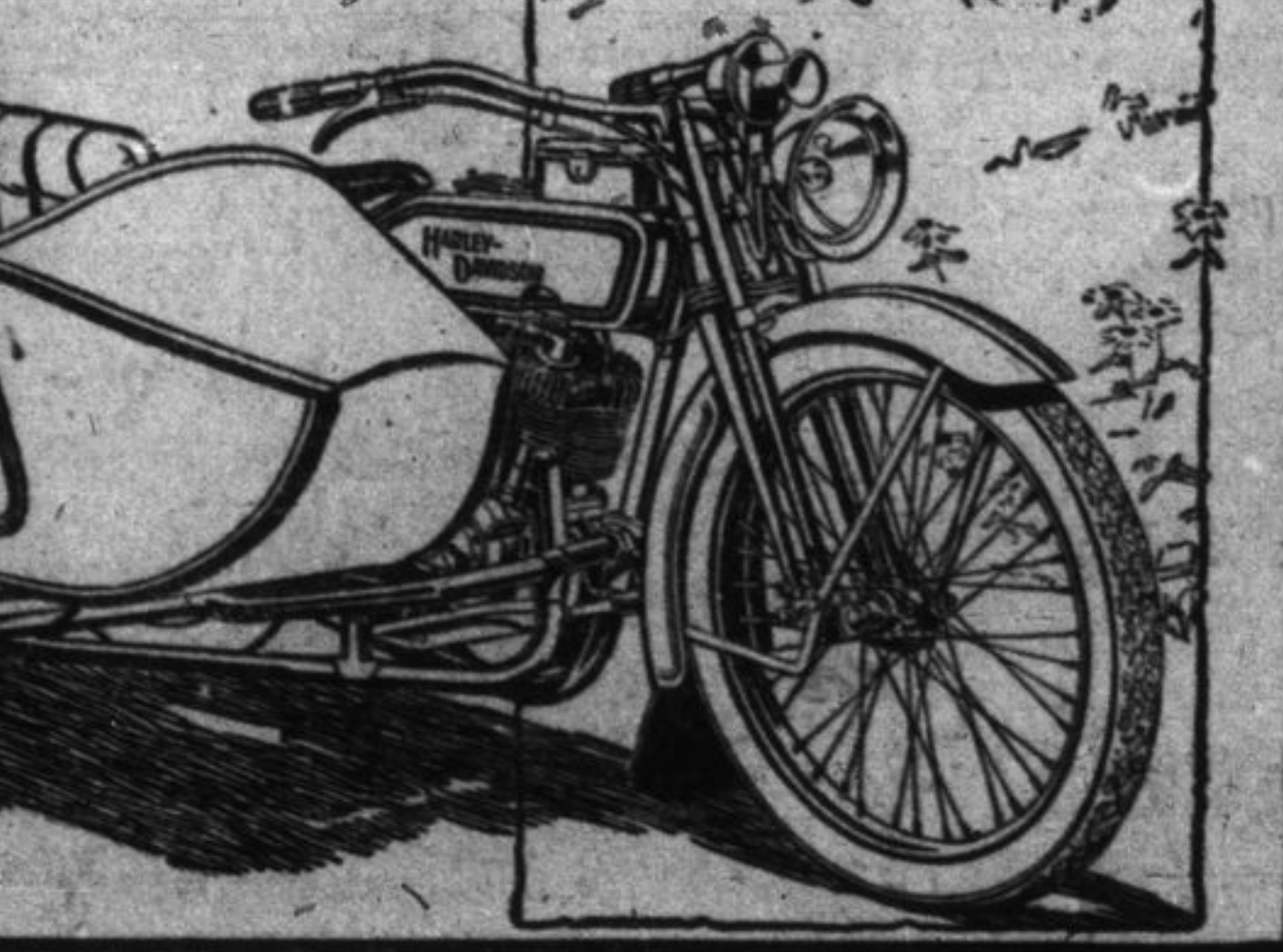
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