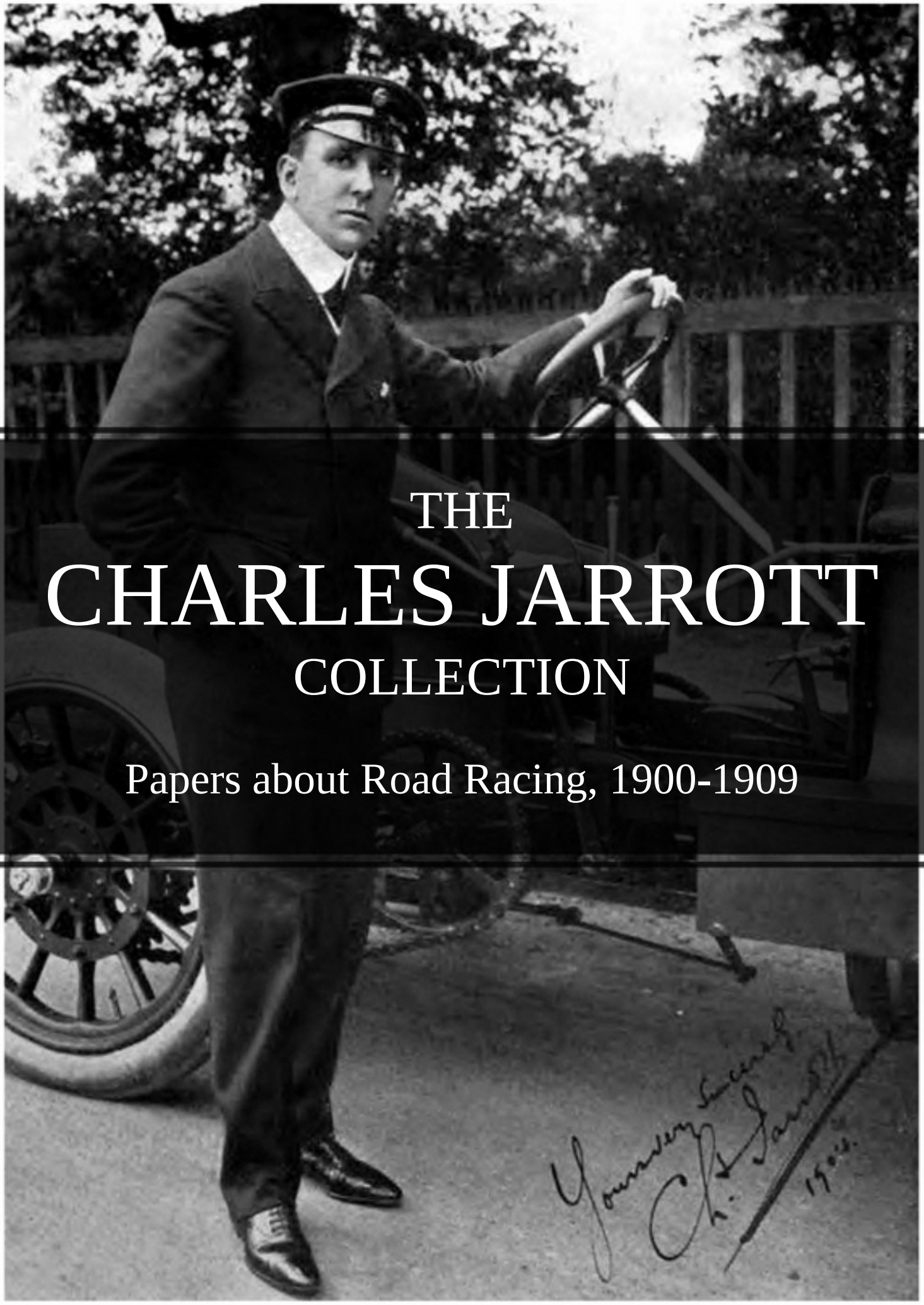

THE CHARLES JARROTT COLLECTION

Papers about Road Racing, 1900-1909

Edited by Davide Grappolo

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AUTOMOBILE RACING

"The Wheel and Cycling Trade Review" (July 19, 1900)

As an Englishman interested in the automobile sport and industry from its inception and commencement in England, having also had the opportunity to watch its growth on the European continent, the marvel to me on this my first visit to America was that the American nation has not, with its usual foresight and perception, appreciated ere this what vast opportunities this coming craze has, both from a sporting and from an industrial point of view. The average American road may have more to do with it than is at first apparent, but still to follow the lead of Europe on matters pertaining to mechanical traction is surely not American. That the movement is making rapid strides here is apparent, but the general mass of the people have not yet been enthused in the same manner as on the continent — and in a somewhat lesser degree in England — and this brings me to the subject matter of this article: Automobile racing, and its importance in relation to the new industry.

In 1895 the automobile industry in France was just emerging from that stage when the necessary fundamental experimental work in connection with the proper construction and working of a motor had been completed. A few of the leading manufacturers having turned out carriages of a fairly satisfactory character, a great automobile race was arranged from Versailles to Bordeaux, back to Versailles, and on to Paris, the distance covered being about 730 miles. This was a very severe test, but the whole scheme met with general approval and the race was carried out.

The road is a particularly hilly one, but M. Levassor succeeded in accomplishing the journey in a four horse-power gasoline carriage of his own construction in just over 48 hours. This first excellent test and the number of carriages successfully accomplishing it demonstrated to the French people the great possibilities in the new form of mechanically propelled road vehicles, and engineers and manufacturers went ahead as fast as possible to meet the great demand which immediately sprang up for motor carriages.

The following year another great race was organized from Paris to Marseilles and back, about 1,100 miles. The winner again was M. Levassor, with an eight horsepower gasoline carriage, which succeeded in accomplishing the journey in 67½ hours. This race was run in an appalling gale, and the drivers had to get down from their carriages and remove fallen trees from the road to enable them to proceed on their way. A regrettable accident happened to M. Levassor while driving his carriage in this race, as, in trying to avoid running over a dog, he swerved, upset the carriage, was thrown out and killed. I have been giving these events as they may prove interesting in showing what led up to the great enthusiasm now shown in France in connection with automobile racing.

The excitement engendered in connection with this last race knew no bounds. Other races were organized, and the new sport was "un fait accompli". To the manufacturers these races were invaluable, as they were enabled to test their carriages in a manner otherwise impossible, and weaknesses were discovered and remedied immediately in consequence. These races were and are countenanced by the authorities and everything is done to aid them, even to the extent of posting troops at various parts of the road to prevent accidents or obstructions to the competitors.

In England in 1896 the necessary act was passed by parliament to permit the running of automobiles on the road, which a previous law prohibited. The new act only allowed a speed to be

attained of 12 miles an hour, and as this law is still in force, road racing is an impossibility in England; and the only contents possible there have to be confined to the track.

The first automobile race in England took place in connection with the second annual run of the Motor Car Club to Sheen House, where there is a private cement track, and was won by myself.

Besides winning this race, I established a motorcycle record for one mile, doing the distance in 2 minutes and 8 seconds.

The second race took place in November, 1898, and in this I finished second to Mr. S. F. Edge, who had brought over a new French racing machine for the occasion.

In 1898 the great French race — Paris to Amsterdam and back — was won by M. Charron. Of course, a number of smaller races were run in various parts of France during the season with great success.

At the beginning of last year the Motor Car Club of England set itself to deal with the question of motor racing and promoted during the year a large number of races in London and various provincial towns of England with a marvelous amount of success. These races were practically confined to motor tricycles, and the sport was of sufficiently exciting a character to appeal to the public taste in a marked degree. Some most exciting races took place; for instance, one in the earlier part of the year, when Mr. C. G. Wridgway rode a match against Rigal of France at the Crystal Palace, London, and beat him. Another exciting race was between Mr. Wridgway and myself, when I defeated him in one of the most exciting races on record by a machine's length in five miles in the then-record time of 8 minutes and 22 seconds.

The race between Mr. S. F. Edge and myself for the championship was also of a very exciting character, and the enormous crowd of people present was worked up to a very high pitch of enthusiasm. This race I also won, but only with a few inches to spare, in the new record time of 8 minutes and 11 seconds. The races held at Liverpool, when Mr. S. F. Edge and myself went down to meet a team of French racing cracks and met with signal success, were also very exciting.

I am quite sure that the public in America will take very kindly to contests of this description, as they are very much more exciting than ordinary cycle racing, as a very much higher rate of speed is attained. The sight of four or five men traveling at 40 miles an hour around a very highly banked track provides as much excitement as the ordinary man requires.

So far as France is concerned, of course, the roads there lend themselves particularly to the purpose, and special racing machines are constructed to obtain the highest possible speed. It is interesting to note here what tremendous jumps have been made in this respect within the last two or three years. From four horsepower in 1895 the horsepower of the competing machines has increased to 20 horsepower in 1899, and in this year's races on the continent there were carriages fitted with 25 to 30 horsepower taking part; and when the word “finis” will be written I do not know. In some of the recent races an average speed of over 40 miles an hour has been maintained over a long distance, which means that certain portions of the journey a speed of nearer 50 miles an hour must have been accomplished to make up for the necessary loss of speed in hill climbing at other parts of the journey.

As a competitor myself on a motorcycle in the French road races I had a good opportunity of judging the amount of nerve, endurance and coolness required in these road races. Traveling at from 35 to 40 miles an hour, smothered with dust and tired beyond all endurance, passing or being passed by the highly powered racing carriages, with over 100 competitors taking part, it was brought home

to my mind that a 400-mile race was not child's play, and that the winner had something to be proud about.

And what a sight the start of a great French automobile race is! The competitors, arriving on the low built, powerful racing carriages, clad in leather for protection against the cold, goggles and masks for protection against the dust and possible rain, the roar of the motors, the excitement of the crowd, the daring and expert handling of their machines by the competitors on motorcycles endeavoring to get to their respective starting stations, the starting signal being given and the mad scramble to get to the front by a hundred keen competitors — all go to make up as exciting a scene as can possibly be imagined.

The drivers on the carriages have, as a rule, only a small seat for themselves, and the accompanying attendant has to lie down on the floor, so as to offer as little resistance as possible to the air. The motorcyclists crouch down on their machines until the body lies parallel with the top tube, also with the same idea of offering no resistance to the wind, and on and on the go, mile after mile, 100, 200, 300, 400 miles, toward their goal.

It is an impossibility to carry out automobile road races in America on the same lines and in the same manner as on the continent owing to the roads. In France and Germany, where the best roads have been built for military purposes, where the surface is as smooth as a billiard table and where the gradients are so even, very high speeds are obtainable.

Regarding track racing, however, there is no possible reason why the sport should not be taken up right away. You have the tracks, and surely you must have the machines. As for the people, my experience in England makes me answer for the American public that no one would be more enthusiastic than they after having had an opportunity of witnessing a good race between good men mounted on powerful racing tricycles in keen competition.

THE PARIS-BERLIN RACE

"The Motorcar Journal" (July 20, 1901)

I got my car four days before the race, and tried it about 200 miles before the actual start. It is a 40 h.p. Panhard, belonging to Mr. Harvey du Cros. I had a fair idea of what a motor-car would stand upon ordinary bad roads, but I had no conception that it would be able to stand such a terrific ordeal, terrible roads and difficult corners, as the route from Paris to Berlin. The innumerable occasions upon which one either struck level crossings, *caniveaux*, etc., when the car practically left the ground and came down with a terrific crash, gave one the impression on every occasion that it would be impossible for the car to last very long under such rough treatment.

I started No. 13, and at the commencement of the race had some little trouble through my governors hanging up owing to the car being new, and also to the breaking of the spring pulling back the commutator. At first I thought the latter trouble was through the wire breaking, and as this wire was carried through a small copper tube, I did not see how I could repair it, as I could not get at it. I subsequently found it was the spring which had gone, and soon remedied this. These delays cost me altogether about half an hour. Between Epernay and Reims I began make up a little of the way I had previously lost owing to my stoppages.

Previous to this, at Viels-Maisons, after descending a very steep hill, and coming to a very sharp corner, owing to my *mecanicien* not hanging on tightly, he was thrown out, but no damage was done, and we proceeded on our way after a very slight delay. I probably took the corner somewhat faster than I should have done, owing to the fact that I was being pressed at the moment by Mr. Edge on the 50 h.p. Napier, who was close up behind.

The road through Belgium and that part of Germany leading to Aix-la-Chapelle was of the most “cornery” description, and there were innumerable danger flags put up for the benefit of the competitors. The very handsome manner in which we were looked after at every control in regard to champagne, food, cigars, cigarettes, etc., was not the least pleasant feature of the race. A magnificent reception awaited us at Aix-la-Chapelle, thousands of people coming out beyond the control to see the cars finish, and it was certainly strange to have to drive at top speed into what seemed to be a packed mass of people occupying the road, and which only parted and allowed enough room for the car to pass just as one seemed to be on top of them. I arrived thirteenth at Aix-la-Chapelle and consequently the next day started out from there for Hanover 26 minutes after Fournier. It was bitterly cold, and a mist hung over the road which prevented one seeing more than fifty yards. This mist, together with the dust made by the competitors in front, made passing impossible, and I could not catch anyone before getting to Cologne.

At Cologne my misfortunes, on the second day, began. I punctured, put in a new tube, which, after endeavouring to pump up, I found was nipped. I took this tube out, put another one in, but again, after an attempt to pump it up, took it out, and on testing it I found it was not screwed down tight at the valve seating. After this we made another attempt, and I found then that my pump had broken at the gauge. Altogether the delay in Cologne took me over an hour and a half, and a large number of cars had passed me before I got going again. Later on in the day I had further tire troubles, and it was only in the last hundred miles that I managed to regain in a small measure the

position I had lost. I eventually arrived in Hanover 25th. On the third day we started out with some sort of arrangement whereby the times occupied in the two days were taken into consideration, and we were supposed to have been started in the actual order in which we had arrived over the complete course on time calculation. I eventually got away at 6.46. The road was of a most tortuous description, and I am surprised there were not a number of accidents in the first portion of the journey. I steadily overhauled the leaders, and at Magdeburg got into the first ten. Five miles this side of Magdeburg I burst the right-hand front cover, and drove into Magdeburg on the rim, where I obtained new cover and tube, and fitted same without losing much time. Soon after this I had another puncture to my left-hand back tire, which took some little time to put right, and during this operation I was again passed by three or four cars. Two of these I managed to pass before reaching Berlin. I eventually managed to arrive tenth on the course, doing seventh fastest time for the day, and gaining eighth position in the whole race.

Tire troubles seem to have been universal, but I think I had rather more than my fair share, and, of course, had some of the time I lost — even a small portion of it — been saved, I should probably have occupied a still better position. I may say that I finished each day absolutely fresh, and although the physical and mental strain was at times somewhat severe, nevertheless I did not remark it particularly. The most exciting part of the racing was passing the cars in front, when one had to drive at least half a mile in the dust, through which absolutely nothing could be seen, and which was filled with stones and sticks flung up by the car in front, cutting the face, and imperilling one's driving glasses.

The reception of the competitors in Berlin by the German Automobile Club was worthy in every respect of the race. Fêtes, banquets, etc., were arranged on every conceivable occasion for the benefit of the visitors, and I personally look back upon the race as one of the most pleasant experiences I have ever had. I calculated to have done one stretch of 33 kilometres in 21 minutes. On the last day I did 6 seconds slower than Fournier over the course, and finished 1 hour and 20 minutes after him.

A PARIS-BERLIN RACE EXPERIENCE

"The Automobile" (September, 1901)

My chances in the race were none of the brightest when I was informed on my visit to the works, about a week before the race, that my car was not finished and would not be ready before the following Saturday. This left me three days before the race, and in none too happy mood, for the possibilities in regard to the running of a new car are many and varied, especially when you are to take that new car over such a trying course and in such a hard race as the Paris-Berlin promised to be. The car I was driving was a 40 horse-power Panhard & Levassor carriage belonging to Mr. Harvey du Cros, and ordered by him for the race.

The number of incidents crowded into the Paris-Berlin race were so many that one seems to have, after the event, only a vague idea as to what actually took place.

The start, with thousands of people, hundreds of motor cars, and the great excitement which prevailed everywhere, gave one some faint notion as to what it would mean over the whole course, and in this respect facts fully bore out the ideas I obtained even before I started.

The signal was given to go, and one had to drive full speed into a dense mass of people lining the road, who simply left a narrow lane for the car to pass. The possibility of one of the spectators in a forgetful moment stepping in front of the car seemed too awful, but the fact that the other competitors had to drive at a like speed, and that by slowing down one was losing ground, left no alternative but to go ahead as hard as possible.

The first portion of the road on the first day was very winding. There were very dangerous corners in some of the villages, and it seemed that the natives crowded out to the particular corners which were the most dangerous, and invariably stood in the position, that if the cars failed to take the corner successfully, the spectators could hardly help being annihilated. Why they chose these particular points of danger I never could understand.

Through the controls, of course, we had to go slowly, and here again there seemed to be a strong idea in the minds of the spectators instead of waiting to see the cars coming through the towns slowly, they must get out on the road some considerable distance from the controls to see the cars arrive at racing speed. The result was that for some miles on each side of the main controls the roads were packed with people who invariably stood in the middle of the road until the car was nearly on them, and then they moved aside, just giving sufficient room for the car to pass.

I am quite sure that any accidents that took place to spectators were mainly owing to this reckless habit of theirs.

In regard to the speed, of course, on the wide open roads a terrific pace had to be maintained, but on some of the more "cornery" portions this was absolutely impossible, as, after all, corners at certain angles can only be taken at a certain speed on any type of car, and one had to be most careful when negotiating a corner not to exceed the maximum speed, as, of course, it meant the car leaving the road, and a bad smash resulted.

I myself had a rather funny experience on the first day of the race upon the stage from Paris to Aix-la-Chapelle. I had been delayed in the earlier portion of the race through a spring on my commutator breaking (the only mishap I had to the car the whole time), and looking round I found

the 50 horse Napier close upon me. Not wishing to be passed by Mr. Edge I took a right angle corner exceedingly fast, and my mechanicien, Smits (who is Mr. Harvey du Cros' own driver) not hanging on to the car sufficiently tightly was thrown out. No serious damage was done, however, and he scrambled on to the car again and we only lost a few seconds, but our slight stoppage enabled me to see a big car drawn up to the side of the road, which had started in front of me and which had failed to take the corner, and consequently had been smashed to pieces.

In regard to the overtaking of a car in front, this was a most serious matter on every occasion. It meant that for some miles you had to drive in thick dust thrown up by the car in front, and for some distance it was quite impossible to see anything, and one had to take a rough idea as to the exact location of the road. Having got right up behind the car in front the difficulty then was to make them hear to enable one to get by, and for this purpose it meant sometimes hanging close in behind at top speed before the occupants of the car in front would hear the hooter and make way to pass.

A very serious accident happened to one of the cars through the driver of the same running into the thick dust of the car just in front. He thought that the road was straight, instead of which it took a sharp turn to the left. The result was that he cleared the road, went into a ditch and upset the car into a field, without damaging himself, however, but with very serious injuries to his mechanicien.

All these possibilities had to be most carefully looked for in the race, and although great risks had to be taken, nevertheless it meant that if too great a risk were run that driver was bound to come to grief sooner or later.

In regard to my own impressions of the whole race, as you are possibly aware, it was the first time I had driven a big car in a motor race, although I previously participated in the Paris-Bordeaux on a motor tricycle, and I can only say that of all the sports I have ever taken part in motor racing is unquestionably the finest.

Of course the risks are very great owing to the very high speeds which are now attained, but with anyone willing to take those risks there can be no question in regard to the sport.

I finished up every day surprisingly fresh, although as far as appearance goes I am afraid there are very few of my friends who would have recognized me owing to the thick caking of dust on my face and clothes through passing cars in front.

The first day on the Paris to Aix-la-Chapelle started 13th and finished 10th. I had no trouble beyond the breaking of the commutator spring, which delayed me altogether about half an hour.

On the second day from Aix-la-Chapelle to Hanover I was exceedingly unlucky, being delayed about two hours in Cologne with tire troubles and three-quarters of an hour later with more tire troubles, which put me into the 25th position in the race at the finish of the day's run, and even to get into this position I had to pass a number of cars which had previously passed me on the road.

On the third day we started from Hanover on time calculation and in our proper positions on the two previous days' run. This meant that I started from Hanover about No. 22, and on the third day I think I did the best performance of the whole three, inasmuch as I only took 6 seconds longer to cover the distance than Fournier, the winner.

From the 22d position I got through to the 9th position in the race, and then unfortunately burst my front cover. This delayed me, having to fit a new cover and tube, but after this I eventually got into 6th position, and here again I had the bad luck to puncture one of my back tires, and I was passed by two other competitors, and my final placing on the day was No. 8.

Bearing in mind the fact that with one exception all the cars in front of mine had greater horse-power than the car I myself was driving, my position in the race is explained to some small degree,

and possibly with a little better luck with my tires I would have finished in an even better position, but, after all, one has to take the incidents in a race of this description as being part of the race itself, and although if one man should be more lucky than another, that has to be considered as merely the fortunes of war.

Of course our receptions through the villages and towns were of the most enthusiastic description, and our cars when waiting in the controls for the signal to start were loaded with flowers, and champagne and cigars were offered to the various competitors, and everything that could possibly be done was done to accord them a hearty welcome.

As a sporting event I never enjoyed anything better, and I for one sincerely hope that racing on the Continent is not a thing of the past. I cannot think that it is so, as I feel confident if France drops motor racing that Germany will take it up, as the enthusiasm of the Germans was unbounded.

THE ARDENNES RACE

“The Badminton Magazine” (February, 1903)

I do not know why there should be a particular fascination in motor-racing, but I do know that there *is* a fascination, and that a very strong one. The exhilaration of speed, the ever-attendant danger, and the struggle which has to result in the survival of the fittest, combine to make the sport more exciting and interesting than any other I know. I have tasted the delights of competitive effort in most other things, yet at this period of my life there is nothing I enjoy better than driving a good car with a keen crowd of competitors all determined on one object — namely, to get to a certain place in the shortest possible time.

I am digressing, however, and must keep to my subject; but I wanted to say one word as to how motor-racing appeals to me personally; and before I come to the Ardennes Race, which I had the good fortune to win, I may briefly refer to the Paris-Vienna contest, in which I used for the first time my 70 h.p. Panhard. The run on the first day from Paris to Belfort was highly successful, my car travelling grandly, and I eventually finished third, covering the distance at an average speed of nearly fifty-six miles an hour; but after the first day my troubles began, that bad luck which comes at one time or another to all who take part in any form of competition visited me, and it was only after mighty efforts and much hard work that I finished the course to Vienna.

While in Vienna I entered for the Ardennes Circuit, first because the race was being held in Belgium, and I have always found Belgians very good sportsmen, and secondly because it was to be a real race from start to finish, without any neutralised stages. Also, although the fifty-three mile course had to be covered six times, knowing that there could be no possibility of mistakes occurring in the timing (such as I am certain took place in Paris-Vienna), and realising how much keener the race would be with no stoppages of this description, I determined to compete.

“32” was my number, and I was rather thoughtful when I realised that thirty-one cars would start in front of mine and that those thirty-one would be churning up dust through which I should have to pass. My car went back from Vienna to Paris, was rearranged and put right at the works, and I drove from the French capital through the wine country, along the historic road from Paris to Berlin — which I remembered so well from the preceding year — across into Belgium, helping *en route* another competitor who was making for Bastogne, the starting point, and had smashed one of his driving-wheels in endeavouring to take a corner too fast. I arrived at Bastogne the day before the race, and had of course many things to do to get my 70 h.p. leviathan ready for the start, which was to take place the following morning at 3.30. The fitting of new tyres, the weighing of the car, and a number of other technicalities occupied me till 8 o’clock in the evening.

The village was swarming with motorists (there were over ninety entries for the race), and racing cars of every type and description were flying about in all directions. I had been advised by many of the competitors who knew the course to have a run over it myself before starting in the race, on account of the number of very bad corners and turns; however, time did not allow of this, and darkness came on before I had finished preparing my car for the morrow. The scene in Bastogne that night beggars description. A large number of touring cars had come from Paris and other parts

of France and Belgium, and the tiny little village was thronged with people, who ate up everything that was to be found.

It was only after hearing enquiries in every direction for sleeping accommodation that I remembered I had not been to the rooms which had kindly been secured for me by that best of sportsmen, Baron de Crawhez, Secretary of the Sportive Commission of the Automobile Club of Belgium. These, I found, were at the house of the *lieutenant de douane*, and without waiting for dinner I hurried along to that worthy official to take possession. On reaching the house, however, I learned that, as I had not called before, he had come to the conclusion that I had not arrived, and had let my rooms to someone else; consequently I found myself in the unhappy position of being in a strange village in a strange country, with a very elementary knowledge of the language and nowhere to sleep. As circumstances of this description necessitated calm deliberation, I put my portmanteau down in the road, lit a cigarette, and wondered what I should do next. I had almost made up my mind — much to the misery of my mechanician, who had been looking forward to at least half a night's quiet rest — to go back to the wood shed where my car was stored and make myself as comfortable as possible on it for the night till the time to start next morning, when a very good fellow, an inhabitant of the village, came up to me, and, judging from the conversation which was taking place between my mechanician and myself that everything was not quite right, enquired whether he could be of assistance? I have already mentioned that my knowledge of French is limited, and it was only after considerable difficulty that I understood he was most kindly asking me to his house. As can be imagined, a *second* invitation was quite unnecessary, and I eventually found myself in a charming little place, situated amid pinewood trees, with the good wife serving me with food which I needed very badly; and then a difficulty arose: I could not at all understand whether he was offering my mechanician and myself a bed for the night, or whether the refreshments of which we had partaken were to be the sole extent of his hospitality, and we had still before us the problem of finding sleeping accommodation. However, when he enquired at what time I should like to go to bed the position was quite clear, and I slept until two o'clock the following morning in a more than satisfactory manner.

I cannot express sufficient acknowledgment of the hospitality of this worthy Belgian and his wife. Beyond the fact that they knew I was to drive in the race on the following day, I was an entire stranger to them. I shall always gratefully remember the kindness extended to me on my first visit to race on Belgian soil.

The following morning I was called at an early hour, enjoyed an excellent breakfast, and went down to get my car and take my position at the start. I do not think I ever felt less inclined to drive than I did on that particular morning. The air was keen, and excitement was evident in every direction, yet from some reason or other the mood was not on me, and the proceedings interested me but little.

The big Panhards, the big Mors, and a number of other cars were sent off, and eventually, after a shake of the hand from the Chevalier de Knyff — he who had made such a fight to hold the Gordon-Bennett International Cup for France in 1901, but came to grief on the precipitous roads of the Arlberg — I was dispatched on my journey. The course was 85,400 kilometres, and had to be covered six times, making a total distance of 512 kilometres; in shape it resembled a triangle with three very sharp corners coming back on themselves. There were two or three very small villages on the road, but they were not neutralised, and the inhabitants were drawn up well out of harm's way watching the race.

Immediately the starting signal was given, the indifference I had previously felt vanished, and I set off on my six hours' journey to do the best possible.

Soon after the start I passed Jenatzy's car smashed into small pieces, with the mechanician and driver badly mixed up in the *débris*. Before long the cars in front began to come back to me; one after another we caught up and passed some of the well-known names — Charron, Girardot, De Caters — and the race had begun in real earnest.

Not having been over the course previously, the first turn of fifty-three odd miles took us fifty-seven minutes; and now the dust was very bad as we began to catch up the tail end of the cars that had been started at two minutes' interval, and consequently left some time after us.

In the open stretches, where the wind was able to take effect on the dust, the road was clearer; but in the pine forests, where the dust was unable to escape, the air was more like a November fog in London than anything else I can describe. It was of no use slackening speed, however, and on and on we went, with no other means of knowing we were on the road than an occasional glimpse of the tree tops on either side.

The touring cars in the race, which had been entered under the touring section, gave a lot of trouble. They were out for sport pure and simple, and the limited speed they could attain did not make the race a serious business for them; added to which the occupants of the back of the cars, supplying the riders in the front with many good things, prevented the latter from realising that some unfortunate driver behind was making frantic efforts to attract their attention in order to be allowed to go by. Baron de Crawhez, after the first turn, had a most unfortunate accident due to this state of affairs, for when trying to pass one of these cars he caught his front wheel, had all the spokes pulled out, and a very bad smash resulted at a time when he was going magnificently.

The trouble of passing other cars was a very apparent one. The hooter was quite useless, human lungs soon gave way, and the only thing left to do was to watch for a favourable piece of road, take the opportunity, and rush by. That troubles were being experienced by other competitors we could see, as evidenced by the state of their cars, many of which were completely smashed up on various parts of the course. Baron de Caters, driving in my dust, struck a bank and broke up; Charron ran into another car and did likewise; Deschamps, Oury, and other well-known drivers all came to grief by accident.

On the third turn, not knowing how far my petrol tank would carry, I stopped at Haby la Neuve, filled up with petrol and water, and thus lost about seven minutes. It was soon after this that I caught up Mr. A. K. Vanderbilt, Junr., and then came some of the best racing I have ever enjoyed. With the two cars going wonderfully well, both of us taking all legitimate (and a good many illegitimate) risks, neither of us able to gain an advantage over the other, for over ninety kilometres we ran wheel and wheel; but I eventually succeeded in getting by at the corner at Longlier.

The experience of my mechanician in the race was a somewhat weird one, as from some cause or other he entirely lost his hearing within two hours after the start. Whether it was the speed at which we were travelling, the dust, or the excitement, I cannot say, but communication between the two of us during the rest of the race was most difficult, indeed the only way in which I could attract his attention to anything was by kicking him vigorously.

Eventually we arrived at Bastogne for the last turn, and here I decided to stop for the second time, to make sure that I had sufficient petrol and water to carry me through.

Up to that moment I had not the faintest idea as to whether I had caught everyone who had started in front of me or not. I knew that no one had passed me, but I had been constantly passing

cars all the time, and I did not know whether there were any which had started before me and which I had not yet overtaken. It was only at my last stop that I was informed that Gabriel on a Mors was only twelve seconds in front of me; and I realised that my last 53 miles would be a stern chase.

The dust on the last turn was fearful, and as we sped on I wondered whether I could ever catch my man. I had a certain advantage in view of the fact that he had started four minutes in front of me, and therefore, as he had only just preceded me, I was nearly this number of minutes ahead; but I had lost these through having to stop and fill up.

In taking the Haby la Neuve corner very fast my car turned completely round, and in straightening her up and pointing her nose in the right direction I again lost at least half a minute.

Could we ever do it? My car was travelling grandly with the top gear in; all one could hear above the roar of the wind was the vicious spit of the engine as we leapt down the long slopes at nearly ninety miles an hour.

Owing to the circuit, we were of course still passing cars which were a long way behind us in the race, yet I could see no signs of Gabriel on the Mors. Eventually, about thirty kilometres from the finish, I caught sight of a car far ahead, and I was delighted to find that we were gradually overhauling our one remaining rival. Sitting in the dust, unable to see a thing and yet unable to pass, I knew perfectly well that the car in front of me was travelling nearly but happily not quite as fast as mine; therefore it must be Gabriel. There was no question now of slowing at corners or taking things easily: the one thing to be decided was who would finish first! Striving my utmost I could not get by, when suddenly the car in front slowed, and it was only by a hair’s breadth that I missed dashing into it from behind. Gabriel had stopped! We were alone; only seven kilometres remained to be covered, and we thundered down the long hill into Bastogne and pulled up amidst the greatest excitement — 5 hours 53 minutes for 321 miles, including two stoppages.

No doubt the strain on the spectators must have been very great, as having seen the relative positions of the competitors and taken the times of each circuit, they were aware of the struggle taking place between the two cars.

I have said that the Belgians were excellent sportsmen, and I myself had a practical confirmation of this in the manner in which my win was received. They would of course have been better pleased had the winner been one of their own countrymen, but nevertheless it made not the slightest difference in the warmth of their congratulations to me on the result.

My own experience in France has been similar. Whether it has been because I was driving a French car, I cannot say; but I have always found that the very best feeling existed and have received the greatest possible kindness while racing either in France, Germany, or Belgium. It is a great pleasure to make this cordial acknowledgment.

Perhaps I should not fail to mention the remarkable performance in the race of Baron Pierre de Crawhez, to whom I have previously referred, and who met with an accident during the second turn in the race. Starting first on a clear road, and knowing the course like a book, he covered the first 100 kilometres in 1 hour 2 minutes, an astonishing performance and the fastest piece of driving that has been recorded over any lengthy distance. He was mounted on a Panhard somewhat more powerful than my own, in fact the identical carriage used by De Knyff in defending the Gordon Bennett Cup last year.

Many times have I been asked the question as to what incidents I met with during this race. Beyond the one or two I have mentioned it is quite impossible to remember any. If one were able to recall at the moment each episode as it occurred, it would probably in itself make a complete little

story. The passing in the dust of each individual car is an exciting business in itself, but having once got by it is lost to memory, the one idea being to keep on faster and faster till the next car is passed, and so on until the end.

As I started so would I end in making a plea for the sport — a sport from a spectator's point of view of the most thrilling interest, and from a competitor's view equalled by no other; and I hope that if the powers-that-be allow the Gordon Bennett International Cup Race to be run in Ireland, those who have never viewed a great motor race will have the opportunity of doing so during the present year, when, with France, Belgium, Germany, and America sending cars to wrest from England the International trophy taken after such a hard fight from France last year, the struggle will be one worth travelling the globe round to see.

THE PARIS-MADRID RACE

"The Autocar" (June 6, 1903)

As is well known, Mr. Chas. Jarrott, last year's Circuit des Ardennes winner, was lucky enough to start No. 1 in the fateful event of last Sunday week, so that, opining he might have something of interest to say with regard to the mad scramble (which has set so many folks venting opinions upon a subject of which they know next to nothing), we sought him at his place in Great Marlborough Street, and found him there late on Monday evening, struggling with the arrears of work his absence in France had piled up for him. It was perhaps not quite an opportune moment to tackle so busy a man, but Mr. Jarrott cheerfully resigned himself for a chat.

We naturally congratulated him upon coming unscathed out of the struggle, and were pleased to find him nervously unwrung by the incidents he had experienced and witnessed. He was just as cool and calm as when, sitting behind his snorting 35 h.p. De Dietrich, we had shaken hands with him under the "Départ" banner at Versailles, and wished him good luck.

"Now, Mr. Jarrott." said we, "you told us at 3.30 a.m. on that fateful Sunday that you didn't expect to get through, yet you seem to have done pretty well, on the whole."

"Yes, I know I did." he returned, "and so I thought at the time. for, as I told you, I had not had my fourth speed in before I left in the race, and the car, as I drove it was only delivered to me on the Saturday. Besides, I started without any knowledge of the road, at least to Chartres, and had only previously been over the course between Chartres and Ruffec."

"Well, you did very well for a stranger, Mr. Jarrott, but, tell us, did you find the spectator nuisance quite as serious and as perilous as has been stated?"

Solid Walls of People

"It *cannot* be understated," returned our subject, with considerable emphasis; "it was altogether too absurd. For miles from the start, I drove into a solid wall of people standing wedge-shaped across the road, and they only just cleared and gave way before me, very much in the way the City crowd gives way before the police heading a Lord Mayor's show. Even then they only separated sufficiently to clear my axle boxes, and then only at the last moment."

"That must have tried your nerves a bit?"

"It would if I had thought much about it, and I should have slackened frequently because of it, if I had not realised that I should do as much damage at forty miles per hour as at sixty, and so I let the car go. Indeed, the crowd was so bewildering that I nearly missed the road just after the start, and only just turned to the left in time."

"You had trouble with your engine, didn't you?"

"Yes, my motor had never been run fast before, and I was obliged to keep my mechanic at the lubricating oil pump almost continuously. Indeed, so badly did I go at the beginning that René de Knyff came up to me before I had covered ten miles."

"When did you actually lose the lead?" we asked.

"After the first control, when Louis Renault and de Knyff went ahead, and I was left third. Later, de Knyff's coil went wrong, and so I was shortly second again."

"We suppose you were surprised, then, that you were not passed earlier by others?" we asked.

"Yes, I was very much surprised," was the reply. "Just before Chartres I saw No. 14 — Werner on his Mercedes — come up, and, my petrol ceasing to feed a little later, and having to get down to disconnect and clear the tube, I expected the cars to come by in dozens, and could not imagine why they didn't."

"Were you much troubled by dust?" was our next query.

"No," said Jarrott. "I got pretty clear of it, for at Tours I had only Werner and Louis Renault in front of me, and they were too far away to matter. There Stead on another De Dietrich came up, looking very glum and black, on account of his engine not performing as it should. I tried to cheer him up, and said, 'Buck up, old chap. We shall soon be dead,' quoting a frequent expression of his to me, and little dreaming that before long he would come very near meeting his end."

Callous Crowds

"You passed Werner again?"

"Yes, about six or seven miles further on; his car was by the roadside, and I think the back axle had gone. This left me second again, with Louis Renault 35m. in front. From there I went well to Ruffec, having no bother except from the crowds of people in the villages, who this year crowded down into the roads instead of, as in former times, keeping well clear. How it was whole rows of them were not mown down, I cannot say. They were curiously unsympathetic towards the racing men too, and seemed disappointed if you went through without an accident. For instance, at one point, I saw two clusters of people, and, going slow, as I thought someone might be hurt there, I found they were standing by two bad *caniveaux*, awaiting the inevitable when cars took these humps at speed."

"But weren't such dangerous points flagged?" we asked.

"My dear sir," returned Jarrott, "if you had raced as long as I have, you would have learnt to expect nothing from flags. This was borne in upon me in the Paris-Vienna race. The flag-waggers get tired after a bit, and spread their flags for sitting upon a stone, to avoid peril from damp I suppose. No, I don't trust my life to the flaggists. But things will be better done in the Gordon-Bennett."

"You said you went well to Ruffec, Mr. Jarrott. What after that?"

"Oh, owing to little magneto ignition troubles, I had only three cylinders going, and had to stop to fit a new spring, and, later, to refix the plate. I had six stops altogether before I ran into Angoulême, and when I left there I was only 35m. behind Louis Renault, so that on actual running I had gained on him. After that my dotty cylinder chipped in, and the car went like a dream, averaging 97 kilometres, which, I think, will be found about equal to Gabriel's. I picked up 20m. on Renault in the last 110 kilometres, finishing only 15m. behind him at Bordeaux."

"You saw nothing of the smashes, then, Mr. Jarrott?"

"No, but I went out on the road afterwards and inspected them."

"What, in your opinion, was the cause of poor Marcel Renault's disaster?" we asked.

The Disasters

"There is no doubt but that he was overtaking a car just as it went for a level crossing, and in the smother failed to clear the left-hand gatepost. I also saw the scene of Loraine Barrow's awful crump. There was an opening sweep of the road to his right, and he swung into it to escape running over two dogs which were standing in the road. In swinging out he was unable to clear one of the line of trees bordering the road, and hit it with his left-hand spring hanger with most fearful force. The hanger, which was about 18in. long, was driven the whole way into the trunk of the tree, and so

great was the force of impact that portions of the strap securing the starting-handle and the wire and the sealing lead were driven into the tree, too. About a square foot of bark was cleared right off the tree where the head of his unfortunate mechanic hit it, but Barrow was thrown just clear, and fifteen yards away, into a ditch. The whole car was absolutely scrapped, and the motor was hurled in pieces ten yards clear of the tree. So small were the fragments into which the car was smashed that you might have swept all the bits up under the bonnet. Salleron collided with Stead, and the latter had a wonderful escape. The car was turned quite upside down over a ditch, with Stead beneath, pinned down by the gear lever sticking in his back. They had to lift the car to yet him out. He is terribly bruised all over, but has nothing broken. Another De Dietrich, driven by Delaney, turned turtle at an easy corner not far from the finish, Delaney being so done that he could not hold the car on the road. Delaney jumped, and was not much hurt, while his mechanic, who was hurled from his seat, escaped with bruises."

"And you drive in the Circuit des Ardennes?" we queried.

"Yes, certainly," was the reply.

"And the Gordon-Bennett?"

"Most decidedly," returned Mr. Jarrott, in tones of such surprise at being asked the questions that we did not pursue the subject.

"What faults do you find, then, with the organisation and arrangements for the Paris-Madrid race?" we went on.

Undue Horse-power

"Well, I think that indiscriminate horse-power was a mistake, as it was also a mistake to permit such immensely powerful machines — some of them capable, for a time at least, of ninety miles per hour — to be driven by men of little or no experience."

"Have you nothing to say about the time gap?"

"No. I don't think that very much matters, you know."

"Then you don't agree with the necessity for the seven minutes' interval in the Gordon-Bennett?"

"No, because the dust danger is not at the start, but in overtaking and passing, and overtaking and passing are bound to take place, even with seven minutes' intervals. Further, with the arrangements as made, there is a possibility of the first car being quickly on top of that last started. Five minutes between the cars would be ample."

"You think France has seen the last of automobile racing on the road?"

"I am afraid so, and I'm sorry, for motor racing is always a grand sport, even on 4½ h.p. De Dions. It might be again permitted if horse-power and minimum weight were restricted, and magnificent racing at reasonable speeds could be enjoyed. Manufacturers should only be permitted to run three cars at the outside, if so many, and I think 30 h.p., with vehicle weighing not less than 17 cwts., should be about the standard. But," continued our subject, "I think racing has served its object, and of late the true object of motor racing has been entirely overlooked."

"Were you sorry the race was prohibited ?"

"Very, for, don't you see, I was well placed at Bordeaux, and my new engine had fairly run into itself."

"You feel no anxiety *re* the Gordon-Bennett?" we asked, finally.

"Not as to the spectators." replied Jarrott. "Of course, it would be absurd to say that such a contest was without any risk to those taking part in it, but, after all, motor racing, even at such

speeds as those of last Sunday week, is not so dangerous as riding across country, and where is the charm of a sport in which is no danger? Why, even croquet——”

But we cut the illustration short by rising, for we felt no analogy could be made therefrom, and took leave of the man who has scored third, and perhaps second, berth in the first stage of the Paris-Madrid, scatheless.

MR. JARROTT ON THE PARIS-MADRID RACE

“The Car Illustrated” (June 17, 1903)

I have been much astonished, on my return from France, to read the comments of the English press in regard to the Paris-Madrid race. The feature which has surprised me the most is that everyone seems to have realised for the first time only that there is and always has been an element of danger in motor racing. To read the remarks of many of the writers in various papers one would almost imagine the Paris-Madrid race to have been the first one in which there was any danger either to the competitors or to the onlookers.

Until this particular race no one had declaimed against motor racing — at least so far as the English press is concerned — and it is interesting to read the comments of many of the papers dealing with the question of the Gordon Bennett race being held in Ireland, which were written prior to the start of Paris-Madrid. Why then, because some unfortunate accidents took place, does a howl go forth from the press as to the iniquity of motor-racing?

To ascribe the accidents which occurred to the increased speed is of course foolish. It matters little whether a car is travelling at fifty miles an hour or seventy; if it collides with another car or the gate of a level-crossing it is just as likely to come to grief. I have only to compare the accident to Mr. Loraine Barrow with that of M. Levassor in 1896, when the latter in driving a car which could not possibly travel at a greater speed than twenty-five miles an hour, swerved to avoid a dog in exactly the same way as Mr. Barrow. The car was upset, and as the result of the accident Mr. Levassor died soon afterwards — and this took place six years ago. I would not, of course, say that fifty miles an hour is not more dangerous than twenty-five, but there is little difference between fifty and eighty.

In the races last year in France, in the Circuit du Nord, the Paris-Vienna and the Circuit des Ardennes, a number of cars were smashed, and whether it was luck or good judgment on the part of the drivers I know not, but anyhow no one was killed, yet a large number of these accidents contained all the elements of a tragedy with the tragedy left out. Realising all this it seems particularly peculiar to me that no one appears to have appreciated that motor racing is dangerous, especially to the competitors, and remembering that this danger has always existed, I think that the number of accidents which have taken place may be considered as remarkably small. I would not for one moment suggest that motor racing under its existing conditions is possible, but I do suggest that motor racing is possible under the new rules which have been suggested in France, whereby each car is classified and restrictions are made as to the power of engine and weight of vehicle. An immense benefit would accrue from competition on these lines, and the evolution of the motor vehicle, which is eventually to come within the reach of every person of moderate means, would be helped along very considerably.

That both drivers and machines in these competitions should have a special qualification is absolutely necessary, as the suicidal policy adopted by the French Club in allowing any monstrosity to compete and anyone to drive, whether they have had previous experience in handling a fast car or not, would not for one moment be tolerated in any other form of sport. The dangerous element is minimised enormously where the competitors are men of experience and the machines of well-

known repute; although, of course, accidents are liable to happen even when these precautions are adopted.

Cycle racing has claimed many more victims than motor racing, although it is carried out on specially built tracks; yet there is no suggestion that cycle racing should be stopped. Nor have I heard of any suggestion of an Act to stop steeple-chasing because in this form of sport competitors are sometimes killed. It seems strange that in this twentieth century speed pure and simple should still be considered a crime. Inconsiderate and dangerous driving whereby the lives of other users of the road are endangered should undoubtedly be deprecated and very severely punished. At the same time let not the mere fact of travelling faster than a coach be considered a crime in itself.

In conclusion, one plea on behalf of the Gordon Bennett race in Ireland. In none of the races on the Continent have the conditions been anything like as favourable as those under which the race in Ireland is to take place; picked men, picked cars, a road kept free from the public, and what other precautionary measures are required. Assuming the machines are right, the whole question of possible accidents depends entirely on the drivers, as I have already mentioned, and considering they are the pick of the countries competing, I think it can safely be stated that every measure of precaution has been taken.

PARIS-MADRID

"The Automotor Journal" (June 13, 1903)

We have received from Mr. Charles Jarrott a *resumé* of his experiences over the Paris-Bordeaux course, which we publish below. Although the description brings forward no further facts, the impressions of this eventful race upon the mind of Mr. Jarrott are extremely interesting.

Mr. Jarrott writes us as follows: —

In endeavouring to give some short account of my experiences in the Paris-Madrid, I perhaps ought, firstly, to say something in regard to my troubles prior to the race.

The De Dietrich car which I was to conduct was put together and everything seemed to be in perfect condition until it came to the scales to be weighed, when it was found that a miscalculation had been made and that the car was considerably over the 1,000 kilogs. limit. Everything was done to bring the weight down but unsuccessfully, and at the last moment a new engine of considerably less horsepower had to be fitted. I may say that this new engine had been put through as a safeguard in the event of the weight being too heavy. The additional advantages we obtained here, however, were that much stronger axles and much stronger springs were fitted, as the weight saved in the smaller motor was very considerable, and we decided that, in view of the bad roads in Spain, it might be a better policy to build a carriage to stand the fearful strains it would have to undergo on the Spanish roads than a merely high-speed machine.

However the car had to be brought by train from Luneville without having been run, in order to be ready for the weighing on the Tuesday morning prior to the race, and although I drove it back to the garage in Paris it had nevertheless to come to pieces entirely to allow of a number of things being done which time had not permitted the Works to carry out.

On the Thursday prior to the race I managed to get a short run of about 20 kilometres, and found that I required several things altered, which were accordingly started. The net result of these delays was that at 7 o'clock on Saturday evening (eve of the race) I took my car out of the garage for a run half-way to Versailles and back, to see that everything was working satisfactorily. It was fitted with three speeds, but I did not get an opportunity of using the top speed at all, and only managed a run of a little distance on the second, so that when I started off for Bordeaux on the Sunday morning I had never been on the top speed of my car.

The imperturbable Stead, the genial Loraine Barrow and myself started off late on Saturday evening to Versailles and stayed at the Hotel des Reservoirs, where, after dinner, we managed to secure three hours' sleep before the start. At two o'clock I was awakened by Barrow, and I must confess that at the particular moment of my awakening I would cheerfully have resigned going to Madrid or anywhere else, if only I could have had another three or four hours' sleep. The only food to be obtained was a cup of chocolate and a roll in the coffee-room of the hotel, and there one found most of the prominent competitors in the race, chaffing and joking as to the capabilities of each other's machines and the prospects of each individual finishing.

Accompanying me in the race was my mechanician, Bianchi, who has been with me in most of my drives in England, including the Reliability Trials and the Glasgow to London Non-Stop Run, but has never accompanied me in a Continental race before. Not being able to speak French

handicapped him somewhat, as, although he has a foreign name, he is essentially British, and one of the strongest points I noticed about him was that he always seemed to be able to get what he wanted.

My first difficulty was on leaving the hotel, when I did not know which direction to take for the start. It was quite dark, and I wandered round a number of streets until I struck the familiar line of cyclists with their multi-coloured lamps, and these I followed until I found myself up against the line of cars. My car seemed to be running all right, at least the engine did not stop after I left the hotel.

Making my way to the front of the line (in view of the position I held, being No. 1), I found there many friends and a huge bundle of telegrams from England wishing me the best of luck and a safe journey, and I would here like to thank those one and all who wired me their kind expressions, many of which I have been unable to acknowledge.

3.30 came, and it was decided to give us another quarter of an hour, in view of the fact that it was then much too dark.

Fournier, De Knyff, and a number of French competitors came up, shook hands, and wished me luck, and I may say that from beginning to end of the race my reception right through was better than any I have ever experienced before in any race in France. Being an Englishman in competition in France is evidently not such a handicap as it used to be.

Thousands and thousands of people, cyclists and motor cars assisted in the composition of as weird a scene as one could possibly imagine. 3.45. On with the switch and away went the motor. “Five,” “four,” “three,” “two,” “one,” “Go!” and the race had started. Perhaps at this point my own personal ideas may be of interest. I had noticed that when I start in an easy going fashion, not feeling particularly keen, I seem to do best, and in view of the fact that I had to get to Madrid, and that Paris-Bordeaux was only one stage, I had no intention of hurrying, but at the same time I had made up my mind to get to Madrid with my car.

Another note of explanation is in regard to my knowledge of the road. I had previously been as far as Ruffec, the other side of Tours, but as I did not join the road until I got to Chartres, the only portion of the road I had been over at all was from Chartres to Ruffec.

The first corner at Versailles nearly led me astray. At the last moment I perceived that to turn to the left was the correct road, and here I had what one might term my “nearest squeak.” I was travelling very fast, saw I could just make the turn, and took it successfully. The people blocked the road in one dense mass, but my previous experience in motor racing told me that they invariably cleared at the last moment, leaving an opening through which the car was to pass. Although I suppose it is rather inclined to try one’s nerves to be obliged to drive at about 60 or 70 miles an hour at a dense mass of people, nevertheless it has to be done, and unless one is prepared to do this, time is being lost. It makes very little difference to the crowd whether the car is going at 40 or 70 miles an hour. They leave it to the last moment before making way, and as much damage can be done at 40 miles an hour as at 70.

I was not pushing my car in view of the fact that it was its first run, and had taken things quite steadily when 15 to 20 kilometres from the start De Knyff passed me and raised an enormous cloud of dust. This brightened me up a little and I hung on to his heels for some time although I was not extending my car in the slightest degree.

Then Louis Renault came up and passed me, and at the second control he was leading, De Knyff second and myself third. Soon afterwards Werner appeared on the Mercedes and went by at a very

fast speed. Then my engine took to miss-firing and eventually almost stopped. From the sound I located it as lack of petrol, and jumping down, disconnected the pipes from the carburettor to the tap, and the tap to the tank, and found that the stoppage was in the tank itself. Clearing this with wire I replaced the pipes, got the engine running again, and started off.

On and away to Tours — the road was good and I was pushing the car along to its utmost speed. My delay had enabled Louis Renault to gain on me very considerably, and at Tours I was 35 minutes behind. Werner was just leaving the control as I appeared and was, I should think, five minutes in front of me.

A grand run to Ruffec — in which I felt I was making up for lost time — was the next incident, and then I saw Werner's carriage smashed to pieces on the right side of the road, something having apparently happened to his back axle. Seeing that neither Werner nor his mechanician were hurt I did not stop.

Just before reaching Ruffec my engine took to running on three cylinders. I immediately stopped, found that I had a broken magneto plate, and had therefore to take the bonnet off and fit a new plate. The fitting of this on the side of the cylinder (the engine being fearfully hot) took me longer than would have been the case had I been doing the work with the engine cool and everything to hand.

Away we went, and again the engine dropped on to three cylinders, and this time I discovered that a small spring on one of the jumpers had broken. This also I had to replace, again having the trouble of handling parts which it was almost impossible to touch owing to the heat. Off once more for 20 kiloms., when the engine again began to run on three cylinders. I stopped and removed the bonnet of the motor, but seeing nothing wrong decided to push on, hoping for the best. Starting the engine I found that the cause of the trouble (whatever that had been) had been removed, and we were on four cylinders, the engine pulling grandly.

From here onwards we had not the slightest trouble of any description. I may say in addition to the four stops already mentioned I stopped twice to take petrol and water, so that in the run through I had six stoppages.

The road twists very much after Angoulême, and it was on this portion of the road that most of the unfortunate accidents took place, Stead, Loraine Barrow, Mayhew, Tourand, Georges Richard, and a number of others all coming to grief. This part of the journey, however, so far as my own performance was concerned, was the best. In spite of the corners, we managed to average over 60 miles an hour, although I was afraid that any chance of catching Louis Renault was lost.

He had started from Angoulême 35 minutes in front of myself; it seemed hopeless to endeavour to pick this up. However, we wiped out his advantage to the extent of 20 minutes, and finished in Bordeaux exactly 15 minutes after him, accomplishing the distance in 5 hours 51 minutes.

That I had a number of difficulties to contend with will be understood when I mention that the car itself was absolutely untried, and that I was driving in a position I had never driven in before, namely, sitting about 6 inches above the floor of the car with my legs stretched straight out before me and the steering wheel low down — enabling me to keep out of the wind — instead of in the orthodox fashion.

My De Dietrich certainly finished in splendid condition for the run on to Madrid, and I feel sure that with the advantages I possessed, viz., strong axles and springs, I would have been able to have made some very good running on the rough Spanish roads.

Gabriel's performance was remarkable, as apart from the fact that he had a very fast car, he must have driven magnificently to have finished in the time in which he did.

It was certainly pleasant to find at the control at Bordeaux so many English faces, and to feel that after all the stirring experiences of the road one was once more among one's own countrymen and friends. Of course, then, I did not know anything of the accidents which had happened behind me, as no one had any knowledge of what had taken place.

It was a hard race and a fast race, and to finish up in front of all the cars, with the exception of the Mors, and in front of the Panhards and Mercedes which had been so much dreaded at the start, was certainly a very great satisfaction to me.

The prohibition of the race was probably the wisest course, although there was in the decision an element of locking the stable door when the horse was gone. Had some discretion been shown by the French Club in the first instance by limiting the number of entries and refusing to let novices start on high-powered carriages, much of the trouble would have been averted, although, in the case of Renault, Stead, and Loraine Barrow, they were all experienced racing men who knew the game thoroughly. Regarding the case of M. Renault I can say nothing. He was evidently driving with the idea that all the arrangements for the road were perfect, instead of relying on his own judgment.

Arrangements may be quite perfect in regard to dangerous points, but at the same time it is far better to drive as if there were no warning flags. It may mean slower time, but it is much safer. Marcel Renault was taking one of the risks which one has to take dozens of times in motor-racing, and in deploring the accident it is with a feeling of deepest regret that one of the best of French chauffeurs has died playing the game.

The accident to Loraine Barrow and the accident to Stead, I personally investigated two days afterwards when I drove from Bordeaux to Libourne. From the evidence of bystanders who saw the accident there is no question but that Barrow was endeavouring to avoid a mix up between two dogs that were on the road, cut things too fine, was unable to get back on to the road again and struck the tree. The force of the blow was so terrible that the right-hand front-spring hanger was driven into the tree right up to the frame. It is unnecessary to enter into details, but had I not seen it I should never have imagined the effect. The way in which the car was smashed to small fragments was appalling, the motor itself being torn out of the car and thrown at least 15 to 20 yards away.

Farther down the road we saw Stead's carriage upside down, and I may say he owed his life to the fact that he fell practically into a ditch, over which the car, forming a bridge, was held off his body. He was severely knocked about, however, and the speed lever pinched him very badly. I saw him in the hospital at Libourne, and he made a statement that he had been cut by another competitor. The right-hand wheels of his car certainly showed signs of collision with what I should imagine to be the hub of another car. The effect was disastrous, and I marvel that he and his mechanician escaped. Stead, when I saw him, was progressing very well indeed, and I hope he will be about in the course of two or three weeks. The condition of Barrow, who is in the same hospital, is not as good.

The final scene of what one may term the Paris-Madrid fiasco was when the cars were escorted from the Exhibition to the station by armed police, the order having gone out from the Prefect that no one was to be allowed to drive them away, and that they would have to go back to Paris by train.

That motor racing on these lines is finished in France there can be no question, but that it is killed absolutely I do not think. The French realise (and this opinion was expressed by M. Combes in the Chamber of Deputies in the discussion which took place in regard to the race) that motor racing has been an invaluable aid to France in the building up of the automobile industry in that

country, and it will be a serious blow to the industry in that country if racing *is* finished, though, if not, it will certainly have to be run on different lines.

Restricted cylinder capacity with a minimum weight will put before the constructors problems in regard to efficiency and strength which cannot but have a marvellous effect on the evolution of motor carriages sold for ordinary use commercially, which, after all, is the real object of racing. That it is sporting there can be no question, but 120-h.p. is not necessary for sport, and I myself should derive as much pleasure in driving a racing vehicle of from 12-h.p. to 20-h.p. as one of 100-h.p., provided the rest of the competitors were on equal-powered vehicles.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RACING

“The Car Illustrated” (July 19, 1905)

I have so often been asked the question “how does it feel to drive a racing car” that I look upon it as one of the stereotyped questions which up to the present time I have in no instance adequately answered to anybody’s satisfaction, for the simple reason that I have never taken the trouble to analyse my feelings when driving a fast car. I must confess that I have no particular sensation other than a keen wish to win. Perhaps the most unpleasant part in connection with a race is the preparation of the car itself, and this I shall deal with first.

One has a very wearying experience the week before the race, when it is necessary to be at the factory and overlook the final work on the car just before it is ready for the road. Early in the morning until late at night one is at it. A little spin of half an hour, and then back to the works; the whole car then pulled to pieces, another wearying wait until it is ready to go out again, through some small point having to be changed; then out again for a ten minutes’ run, and again the car has to be taken down. So on until it is no wonder that at the beginning of the race one is tired to death.

I remember an English friend of mine, while I was waiting with my car at the start of the Ardennes race, which I eventually won, asking me how I felt, and I could only reply that I was exceedingly bored. Of course, this feeling goes immediately one is really started, and as the car settles down into her speed one idea dominates, namely, to get over the ground as quickly as possible.

The incidents in driving are so fleeting and varied that at the end of the race it is almost impossible to recall them, although at the time of occurrence they appear of vital importance to the driver. A slight hesitation of the motor or apparent slipping of the clutch are things in themselves to make the driver of the car fear and tremble that his troubles are commencing. A choked-up lubricator, and in imagination the whole engine is fired and he is stopped beyond all hope of finishing the race. I think really the most tiring strain throughout a race is this dread of something happening to cause delay, and the most comforting sensation that of hearing the vicious spit of the four cylinders, steady and regular, above the roar and rush of the wind.

Undoubtedly driving a racing car for a prolonged period has a curious effect on the driver himself. With the possibility of winning well within reach a grimness almost inhuman dominates his actions. It would be asking him to achieve the impossible if he had to go through those blinding dust clouds in passing a car in front if this task were set him in cold blood. One may be daring, but even daring has its limits with a calculating mind and fairly cool temperament. The exhilaration of speed is necessary before the chances are taken and the corners shaved.

The car in front must be passed; every second the delay takes is a second lost, and as the faster car catches its opponent the driver, calculating all his chances on the opportunities presented by the road, pushes his front wheels alongside his opponent. A moment’s suspense — the two cars seem to hang together — and the victor is by and away again. It is but an incident, however, forgotten in the next incident of passing another car. And underlying all the effort and governing all the movements of the driver is uncertainty — that uncertainty of not knowing whether everything is going well with him to the end.

The physical effect is curious. The sight of Théry and his *mécanicien* at the finish of the French Eliminating Trials was sufficient proof that the strain is very great on some men. Gabriel, in the Ardennes race last year, impressed me with the effect the struggle had made upon his system, whereas there are others to whom the sport is as other sports — healthily fatiguing. I must confess myself that I have always felt fitter and more capable of driving at the *end* of a big race than I have at its commencement, and for sheer enjoyment of a hard struggle Bianchi was an example in the Isle of Man Trials.

Temperament plays such an important part in the feelings of the driver of a racing car that I might say that, however one man may describe his *own* sensations, I have no doubt that they differ in every individual case. After having tried hard to analyse my own, I may confess that I have weakly described the feelings of participating in a sport which, from a competitor's point of view, is one of the most exciting and fascinating yet devised by man.

THE ARDENNES RACE

“The Automotor Journal” (August 19, 1905)

The Ardennes Race has, to my mind, always been *the* race of the year. The conditions under which it is run, and the fact that the spectators are able to follow the position of each car at any point of the circuit, gives an interest to the event which is missing in all the events in which controls are fixed.

Our party on this occasion was a small one, consisting of Mr. Harvey and Mr. Willie du Cros, on a 50-h.p. Panhard, and myself, on my 22-h.p. Crossley.

In order to save time, we crossed from Dover to Calais on the Friday night prior to the race, and there found the 50-h.p. Panhard awaiting us at one o’clock in the morning to take us on to Boulogne, where we were staying for the remainder of the night, and from which place we were leaving at six o’clock for our run through to Belgium.

My own car was at Boulogne, and, consequently, for some reason best known to the other members of the party, it was decided that I had to drive the 50-h.p. Panhard from Calais to Boulogne. The generosity of this idea can be appreciated when I say that the night was inky black, and the car was provided with a tiny oil lamp which helped but to make the darkness more intense. I am not quite clear how we got to Boulogne, because it was quite impossible to see the road, but I believe that part of the journey was made cross-country. As an interesting sequel, we landed somewhere at the top of the town in a little square full of turnings, and it seemed impossible to get out of this square, do what we might, as every time we made the attempt we seemed to land back at the spot from which we started. However, daylight breaking gave us an idea of where we ought to be, and we eventually landed up at Bailey’s Hotel, thankful that our troubles had been no worse. At 7 o’clock we were off again for St. Hubert, as we intended to make the run through in one day.

I must confess that the road is not particularly alluring for anyone intending to go to the Ardennes by this route, because a considerable portion of it is very narrow and winding.

Montreul, Hesdin, Mt. of Peronne, Hersan, Mezieres, Sedan, and on to the frontier, the passage being made easy by the aid of the papers obtained from the Automobile Club. Then a magnificent run over the Ardennes roads saw us landed safely in St. Hubert before dark — over 400 kiloms. — without a hitch of any description.

My Crossley was running perfectly, and on the straight stretches was averaging 60 kiloms. an hour comfortably, consequently the waits considerately made by the Panhard were not of very long duration.

St. Hubert saw us in the midst of the Panhard crowd. It was rather pleasant to meet once again some of the old racing brigade, who had retired from the heat of the fight, and had come to participate as spectators in a sport in which previously they had played a prominent part.

Amongst others at the hotel were the Chevalier Rénè de Knyff, M. Lemoine, M. Prevost, Comte de Vogué, who had such a narrow escape when the Panhard boat sank which he was driving in the Monaco races; Teste and his faithful mechanicien, Artois; Tart, and Le Blon, who was making his *debut* ona Panhard in the race. The hotel was full when we arrived there, and I was accommodated

with a room by one of the villagers, spotlessly clean, and overlooking a breadth of forest of pine trees and open country spread out in a gloriously coloured panorama.

The excellence of the food served at the hotel was explained when I was informed that *chefs* from Paris had been specially engaged by the Panhard firm for the special preparation of food for the guests of the firm.

On the Sunday, a run round the course to Bastogne gave one an idea of the splendid arrangements which had been made by the Belgium Club for the event. No race has ever been run on a better course. It was certainly in a finer condition than any racecourse I have yet seen. The dust-laying preparations had been spread with a liberal hand, and everything had been done to secure the safety of the drivers and the spectators. The surface was beautfully smooth, and it was easy to anticipate that a battle royal at a big speed would take place.

Bastogne itself was full of people, and here I may mention as a point of interest that there were only five of us from England over to see the event, namely, our own party, Mr. Kerr Seymour, that good sportsman and a friend of Rénè de Knyff, and H. T. Arnott. It is certainly surprising that with the easy facilities for getting to the event that more of our sporting English automobilists did not turn up to see the great speed race of the year.

Everybody who is anybody was at Bastogne; cars of all sizes, makes, and conditions were running about in all directions, and the chances of the various competitors were eagerly discussed. I had a chat with the Baron de Caters, and was considerably surprised to hear that he had decided to start in the race, as he had been suffering from gout for some time past, and looked sufficiently ill as to make one doubt his capability of going through. However, he had made up his mind that he would attempt the race, and the only thing we could do was to wish him the best of luck.

Jenatzy appeared on his car, looking as demoniacal as usual, belching forth black smoke, and, in fact, most of the drivers in the race on the following day were to be seen either on or off their cars.

3.30 on the following morning saw us up and off to the start at Bastogne, 26 kiloms. from St. Hubert. On this occasion, instead of having the start actually in the village of Bastogne, it was arranged at the foot of the long hill just before the village. The stand was built right across the road in the same way as the stand in Ireland, and gave the occupants an excellent chance of seeing the cars dash by beneath them.

The first car along the line was the C.G.V., driven by Behr. The timekeeper gave the signal to go, and immediately he raced the engine and dropped in the clutch. The car, instead of shooting forward, seemed to rise in the air and fall on its four wheels with a crash. Something in the gear had broken, and the car had to be dragged ignominiously off the course — to use an Irishism — finished before it had started.

All the other cars went away in excellent style.

In our opinion Gabriel made the best showing to the top of the hill, closely followed by Wagner and Jenatzy.

120 kiloms to go, and we calculated that the first car, *i.e.*, Hemery, would be round in about an hour and 15 minutes. To say that astonishment was caused by his appearance in 1 hour 5 mins. is to express one’s self mildly. Everybody appeared to be stupefied, and the excitement was intense. We realised that the race was going to be fought out to a bitter finish, and that at a terrific speed.

Jenatzy came down the hill like a shot out of a gun, and caused a sensation with the manner in which he disappeared under the stand placed across the road.

Rougier, on the De Dietrich, was also going magnificently, and it eventually turned out that he accomplished the fastest circuit in the race — 1 hr. 4 mins. for 120 kiloms. After the cars had passed we made our way back to our cars, and cut across country to Neufchateau, where there was a big De Dietrich, Panhard, and Darracq depôt. We arrived just in time to see Heath arrive for replenishment of petrol, lubricating oil, etc., and here we were able to appreciate one of the smartest pieces of work I have ever witnessed in this direction. From the time the car was stationary to the time it was started again was exactly 1 min, 25 secs. In that time the petrol tank had been refilled, lubricating tank had been also replenished, the driver had been given food, and the car had been generally looked over.

Teste arrived just before Heath got away, and he was sent off in even quicker time, namely, 1m. 18s., so that on this particular point undoubtedly the Panhard gained considerable advantage for their smartness. The story of the drivers, however, was that of continual tyre troubles; in fact, the story of the race on the part of every driver was the trouble he had had in connection with his pneumatics.

Le Blon had three punctures in the first round, a small indication of the manner in which he must have driven to have finished in third position; in fact, as far as one could gather, the whole question now — owing to the power of the cars utilised in racing — appears to be one entirely of tyres, the man having the best luck in this direction being the winner. I have no doubt that Hemery had a big advantage in this direction with his light Darracq, especially in view of the fact that Tart on the last round at Neufchateau was only one minute behind him, and had been gaining ground rapidly. It is reasonable to suppose that if Tart had not been so unfortunate as to have punctured again in the last few kilometers that he would have overhauled Hemery and been the winner of the race.

Teste was making excellent time, but only at one period did he appear at all dangerous.

The Baron de Türckheim said he had received news of Gabriel, and whilst he was talking to me Gabriel appeared with his mechanicien, having smashed up his car at St. Hubert. The accident was due entirely to himself through endeavouring to take a corner too fast. His description of the accident was somewhat graphic, and he explained that he was flung out of the car into a hedge, and saw something black passing over him which afterwards turned out to be the car, which was smashed to fragments — giving a slight indication of the very narrow escape he had. His mechanicien appeared particularly joyful at having escaped with his life, and in a corner of the tent was performing a little step-dance to show that he was sound in body and uninjured. However, both of them felt the effects of the smash, and before I left were lying down in the tent somewhat subdued and rather stiff and sore.

Rougier on his De Dietrich, we heard, had broken his clutch-pedal, a very small thing but impossible to repair, and his magnificent dash in the first two laps was rendered quite useless.

Duray was travelling well, but had a lot of trouble with his tyres; in fact, as I have before mentioned, it was a tale of tyre troubles all the way through.

Jenatzy on his Mercedes, punctured, and endeavouring to reach the next control on a flat tyre, hammered up his rim to such an extent that it was impossible to fit a new cover. He had travelled well, and completed the first circuit in 1h. 6m.

A dash back from Neufchateau to Bastogne for the finish gave us a chance of trying the paces of the “50” over a portion of the old racing course which I know so well from my 1902 race. With a four-seated body and four up, we clocked 32 secs. for the kilom., and the 26 kiloms, were accomplished in 19m.

Close on behind our heels came de Knyff on the spare racing car, considerably anxious as to the result.

The question was, Who would arrive first, Hemery or Tart?

We did not know then that Tart was to have tyre troubles in the last 60 kiloms. After a wait of ten minutes, the bugle was heard, and a grand piece of racing was witnessed. Hemery, finishing, was being chased six inches away by Le Blon just starting on his last round, he having started last and Hemery having started second.

The two cars crossed the tape practically locked together, travelling at a speed of over 90 miles an hour, and the effect was thrilling.

The next question was as to whether Tart would finish within the time limit, and thus beat Hemery. Exactly half an hour had to elapse after Hemery finished, in which time, if Tart had finished, he would have been the actual winner of the race, but he did not arrive and time went on, and as we stood with stopwatches in our hands, everyone was feverishly excited as to what would result. However, he did not appear, and Hemery won one of the hardest fought races on record at an average speed of over 62 miles an hour.

A great race worth travelling a long way to see.

Tart eventually finished in 6h. 13m., with Le Blon, who had driven a very fine race in view of the troubles he had had with his tyres, in 6h. 22m.

Heath, who last year won the event in 6½ hours, only finished fifth, although he beat his last year's time by over 6m.

Immediately after the race we started back for the coast, the Crossley being allowed a little start. After a splendid run without incident, we were successful in making Hersan the same evening, and up early the following morning saw us in Boulogne at three o'clock in the afternoon, enabling us to be back in London on the evening of the day following the race.

It is always very interesting to me to go over to the Ardennes, as evidently the fact of having won the first race has apparently turned me into a local character. Certainly a great many more people knew me than I myself knew, but this made everything the more pleasant, and I only hope that interest in racing will secure a perpetuity of a race over a course which is, as at present arranged, the finest racing course in the world.

It is very interesting to notice in connection with the Ardennes the growth of speed.

In 1902, my own average was 53 miles an hour; in 1903, when the race was won by the Baron de Crawhez, 54 miles an hour; in 1904, when Heath was the winner, there was an average of over 57 miles an hour; and in 1905, Hemery put up the astounding performance of averaging 62 miles an hour; and one is almost compelled to ask the question — when will increase of speed cease?

MOTORING TO THE AUVERGNE CIRCUIT

“The Automotor Journal” (July 8, 1905)

Of course, the chief difficulty on the morning of the start was to get the various members of the party out of bed. We had three cars, and had arranged to make the run through from Paris to Royat, 390 kiloms. in the day. Mr. Nicholas Wood, accompanied by Mr. J. Charlton and M. Deland, was driving his 50-h.p. Panhard; Mr. G. Du Cros with Mr. Willie Du Cros, Mr. Alfred du Cros and Mr. Harvey Du Cros, were on a 24-h.p. Panhard; and Mr. Letts and myself on a 24-h.p. De Dietrich with a racing body. The start from the Hotel Continental was fixed for 6 o’clock, but by the time the various members had been roused from their slumbers, and had collected their luggage, &c., it was nearer 7.30. A stop at Messrs. Panhard and Levassor’s Works in the Avenue d’Ivry for spare tyres made a further delay, and it was half-past eight before we passed through the gates and got upon our way.

The three cars proceeded in a very sedate fashion until a car of uncertain h.p. came by, having discarded its exhaust-box with the idea, I presume, of obtaining more speed and emulating a racing car. With a broad, wide-open road stretched before us, the supercilious expression of the driver of the car of uncertain h.p. was more than human flesh and blood could stand, and immediately throttles were opened, and away we all went in pursuit. Something happened to the 50-h.p., though what it was none of us knew. The chase was a stern one, and we found ourselves at Melun almost before we realised that we had started, having succeeded in convincing the little man on the car of uncertain h.p. that the 24-h.p. De Dietrich, even with the exhaust-box on, was a little bit better than his car without one.

The only member of the party who had not appeared was Mr. Wood, on the 50-h.p. Panhard, and although we waited a considerable time, we had to resume our journey, believing that he would eventually pick us up on the road. A glorious day on a speedy car on a French road is to my mind an ideal of luxury, and of the many enjoyable runs I have had in France none have I enjoyed more than my run to Royat on that occasion. The 24-h.p. De Dietrich was upholding the reputation of its makers in splendid style, and we were able to keep company throughout the whole of the journey without difficulty, the magnificent stretch of road through Nevers and Moulins being as good as anything I have yet travelled over. By the way, I would like to mention that the Hotel de France at Nevers is excellent, the proprietor having been *chef* at the Lord Warden Hotel at Dover for a number of years.

Arrived at Royat, one of our difficulties was to find garage accommodation, and it was only by the ingenuity of the French mechanician I had on my car that we were able to find any room at all for storing the cars for the night.

So much has been said about the scenery in and about the racecourse that it is unnecessary for me to say anything beyond stating that it is exceedingly charming.

At four o’clock in the morning the 50-h.p. Panhard arrived, having had exceedingly bad luck all the way through with tyre troubles, and unluckily meeting with rainstorms which we fortunately in our flight had escaped. The next morning saw us out on the course viewing the weighing in of the cars. I must say that I was agreeably surprised with that portion of the course that I had an

opportunity of going over. Undoubtedly it is very “cornery,” and if proper caution is not exercised serious accidents will doubtless result; but at the same time the road surface itself is good, and some of the bad corners have been beautifully banked, and compared with the road over which our English cars were tried in the Isle of Man, the course is almost luxurious. Undoubtedly to get the best average speed it has to be studied carefully, but I certainly fail to understand why the course has been universally condemned. One thing is evident, and that is that only an excellent car and an excellent man can hope to make the race successfully; and after everything is said and done, if this is not the result which is aimed at in automobile racing what is the use of it? We have been convinced through the Ardennes Races and the Paris-Madrid Race that terrific speeds can be attained along straight roads, and therefore I can see no objection to a difficult course being chosen, and the makers induced to construct special vehicles specially suitable for a hard and trying race.

From a racing point of view one could not help being impressed with the construction of the Richard-Brasier cars. Even the day before the French race they looked capable of winning, and there was no question but that all the competitors looked upon the three Richard cars as being particularly deadly. The De Dietrich vehicles struck me as being specially fine specimens of racing cars, and they were undoubtedly the best racing cars Messrs. De Dietrich themselves had ever made. There was no doubt about the cars being strong enough to stand the course and they were unquestionably very powerful. The Clément cars were also rather nice vehicles from a racing standpoint, and altogether it was very clear that a terrific fight would take place on the following day for the first three places. Our party had the pleasure of sitting down to luncheon with the Chevalier René de Knyff, and with M. Clément and M. Hocmeille, and it was evident from the information the Chevalier gave me in connection with the arrangements made by the Automobile Club de France for the race that everything possible had been done to make the event successful in every way, both in the direction of obtaining information of the various competitors during the race and in the safeguarding of the public and competitors.

At three o’clock on the following morning we were up and away to the start. There is a long climb which has to be made out of Royat up to La Fontaine de L’Arbe. At this point a tunnel has been constructed beneath the road, which enables cars to be driven through, and thus get inside the circuit. A little narrow rough road has been constructed from this point right round to the Grand Stand erected at the starting point. We drove over this narrow road, and left our cars close to the Grand Stand, and after we had seen one round of the race we were able to take our cars along round the Puy de Manson to Olby, and from there to the course, being in a position at this point to see the cars in full flight.

The race itself has been described at length, but I received a few impressions which are perhaps worth mentioning. Firstly, I was exceedingly impressed with Wagner on his Darracq. Timing all the cars up to a given point at the start of the race, he was certainly travelling faster than anyone else, and afterwards I had the opportunity of seeing him take two dangerous corners on the course, and his driving was magnificent. Other drivers in the event took the corners in beautifully clean fashion, but no one with the devil, dash, and speed of Wagner, and at the end of the third round I believed him to be certain of a place in the team. Duray, also, on his De Dietrich, was exceptionally brilliant on this spot, whilst the driving of Théry and Hanriot was remarkable for its cleanness, the curves being taken in an exceptionally fine manner. Whilst we were viewing the race at this portion of the course, I had the opportunity of a long chat with my old friend the Baron de Caters, and he told me, from his own experience, that whilst the course was not good, in view of the fact that there were so

many corners, at the same time it was not exceptionally bad. He was very confident that the Mercedes would put up a very fine fight for the cup.

Of course, during all this time we were entirely in the dark as to who was actually leading, and we therefore made our way back to the starting and finishing point to ascertain the news. We then learned that Théry had finished, and that other cars were finishing quickly all the time, but no one could say who had actually won owing to the fact that all the telephone wires to the various controls had been cut, thus making it impossible for the times to be worked out, allowing for the stoppages in the controls. However, M. de Knyff gave us the names of Théry, Duray, and Callois as being the three leaders, and we left for Royat gratified beyond measure that we had witnessed one of the finest automobile races that had ever been run. The fight throughout was of the fiercest description, Théry, Wagner, Duray, Callois, Sizsz, and Heath all apparently having the race in their hands at one time or another. There is no question but that three magnificent cars will represent France in the race for the Cup on the 5th.

I may say that I left the course feeling very gloomy, as we had the news given to us, at almost the last moment, that Giradot had had a terrific smash and was killed, and, remembering him as one of the old sporting crowd in the days of Paris-Bordeaux, Paris-Berlin, Paris-Vienna, and a dozen other races, it seemed an unhappy ending after having safely escaped so many dangers, and it was with a feeling of the greatest relief that we heard afterwards in Royat that the news was happily untrue, and that Giradot, though badly knocked about, was still in the land of the living.

Once back in Royat, we lost little time in getting on to the road again, and eventually arrived back in Paris with the three cars at two o’clock on the following afternoon, in ample time to catch the four o’clock train back to London.

The Gordon-Bennett Race of 1905, will, I believe, excel in excellence any race before run, and as automobile racing, seen under the conditions it will be seen under in this event, will undoubtedly soon be a thing of the past, I for one do not propose missing the closing scenes and events of a sport of which there is none greater, my one regret being that I shall look upon the fight as a spectator and not as a competitor.

IMPRESSIONS OF A SPECTATOR

"Motor Year-Book and Automobilists Annual" (1906)

The 1905 season being the first one since motor racing assumed any importance in which I have figured as a mere spectator in place of an active competitor, I availed myself of several opportunities of witnessing important speed contests in more or less disinterested fashion. "Yes" and "No" is my answer to the question as to whether I have given up racing or not — "Yes" while racing is carried on under present conditions, because the amount of time now necessary for the preparation of a circuit race prevents any one who is actively engaged in business participating in them; and "No," because I should be sorry to feel that I had entirely done with what is to my mind the finest sport yet conceived by man. I am admittedly an enthusiast on automobile racing, and my present great regret is that business responsibilities prevent me from taking part as of old. I must confess, however, that though I was successful in winning the first big circuit race ever run, I nevertheless look back with longing to the days when Paris-Berlin and Paris-Vienna events were possible, when the sport was to race over roads unknown, and natural skill and judgment played a more important part than mere practising over a comparatively small circular course, the shaving of corners, and the luck of tyres. But Paris-Madrid killed all that, and I am to-day out of the arena, a figure in the gallery, whilst my heart is in the sport and in the playing of the game.

If I cannot drive myself, however, it takes but little time to see others struggle for supremacy, and therefore I have not missed being present at all the great motor races of the year, other than those run in Italy and America, and I have been amply rewarded for my enthusiasm. I saw that desperate finish between Heath and Teste for first place in the 1904 Ardennes — a finish which reminded me of my own tussle with Gabriel in the 1902 Ardennes race. I was in the Isle of Man last May to congratulate my former mechanician Bianchi on his splendid driving in the English Qualifying Trials — driving worthy of a veteran. When Théry gained his place in the French team for the Gordon Bennett race, I saw how his dogged perseverance carried him home a victor, and never shall I forget the meteoric and brilliant driving of Wagner in the same race in his splendid attempt to place his Darracq in front. Lancia's driving in the Gordon-Bennett race, his look of triumph as he passed Théry, and the philosophy of the latter as he started off in pursuit, I would not have missed for a great deal of money, and I thanked fortune for placing me at the particular place of Théry's stoppage at that particular moment. Later on, in the Circuit des Ardennes, Hemery was another revelation. Consummate skill with splendid devilry secured him a magnificent victory. It was worth travelling a long way to witness all this, and how I should have regretted had I not been there. It was all so novel — new impressions and new ideas. I saw the game under a different aspect — as a spectator instead of a competitor — and I appreciated it as few other spectators could appreciate it.

And what were my impressions? Firstly, of speed. Have you stood at the bottom of a long slope when a mass of metal, steered, controlled, and directed by human hands, has hurtled by at 90 miles an hour? Has it not appalled you? Did you not wonder how it was possible that such a struggle between machine and man could go on for hours without disaster, and with the ultimate victory of the man over machine?

All this I marvelled at. It seemed incredible and impossible, and yet I knew from my own experience that the man on the car was coolly noting each varying circumstance of the road and car, physically feeling but little strain, and eager to travel faster and yet faster towards the distant finish, not the least bit appalled, but enjoying the fight as only an expert can enjoy it. That hair-raising skidding at the corners, so horribly dangerous as it looked, was done deliberately, and was calculated to a nicety. The appearance of the car as it dropped down hill, with the front wheels apparently swaying in mid-air, was merely usual, and all quite ordinary to the man on the car; but how horrifying it looked from the spectator's position!

These and many more were my impressions in watching motor racing, and after each sensation, mixed with the longing to have been one of the participants, was the feeling of admiration for those who had so strenuously throughout the long day fought the fight and had brought their machines home without disaster. Not all were winners, but they were victors in the sense that they had finished so successfully.

Possibly, from my own point of view, to be actually a competitor would not be quite so interesting as before, because the "old brigade" have finished. When all those taking part were one's personal friends, an added zest was given. De Knyff, Girardot, Edge, the Farman Brothers, Pinson, Berteaux, Chauchard, Fournier, and a host of others are all resting on their laurels, and possibly, therefore, there would be less interest for me were I to endeavour to win from among a number of men I know but little of. At the same time, were it possible, I have the idea that I should be in the midst of the fray as keen as ever, if not to win, then at least to make a creditable finish in the carrying out of the gospel according to my old mentor, the Chevalier René de Knyff, to "Finish first and win afterwards."

THE GRAND PRIX AS SEEN BY CHARLES JARROTT

“The Automotor Journal” (July 13, 1907)

I do not know all the circumstances which affected the decision of the Automobile Club de France to hold the great automobile race of the year on a northern circuit, having Dieppe for its headquarters. That the move was a right and popular one was unquestionably proved by the huge attendance at the meeting. It cannot be said that the Grand Prix is a very popular race, and, to my mind, its interest is spoiled by reason of its non-international character. The Gordon-Bennett race, with its representatives from each country, was undoubtedly more interesting to watch. For a meeting of the leading racing makes of the world, however, I have no doubt that the Grand Prix race this year was the most important one yet held.

I only decided to cross over to France on the day preceding the race. The result was that Mr. Alfred Du Cros and myself caught the 9.10 train from Victoria to Newhaven the same evening, our sole baggage consisting of small hand-bags. The short train journey was appreciated by me much more than the long sea journey, but the sea was calm and the weather was fine, and our arrival at the early dawn at Dieppe was made without incident. A hurried change at the Hotel Royale, and we were soon being whisked up to the start by Mr. H. G. Price, of the Dunlop Company, on his car. I had no idea of what the course was like beyond that conveyed by a map, and consequently I can say little about it. We arrived at the Grand Stand, and stayed there during the whole of the race, as it appeared to be the only place where one could obtain information as to the progress of the racers.

I would here like to compliment the Automobile Club de France upon the splendid organisation and management of the meeting in question. I should say that the organisation in connection with the race for the Grand Prix for 1907 was more complete and thorough and perfect than for any race previously held anywhere. The huge Grand Stand was crowded with spectators, and presented a sight I have never before witnessed at any automobile meeting. Certainly the motor cars in the enclosures were more numerous than at any previous meeting, and everything seemed to work smoothly and without a hitch. The competitors were allowed a certain quantity of petrol for the whole of the race, which had been measured out the previous day, and specially-sealed tins were handed to them to make up their given quantity during the race itself. Every stoppage was arranged to take place at a sort of siding adjoining the Grand Stand, so that the work of replenishing was dealt with out of the way of other competing cars. It was at this particular spot, where the various depôts were situate, that we took our stand, when we were able to see not only the cars passing at top speed on the course, but also everything that was done to them when they were compelled to pull up.

At 6 o’clock precisely, the first car, driven by Lancia, was pushed on to the starting line, and he started up his engine a few seconds before his departure. It was very curious to notice that the earlier competitors, in their anxiety to save consumption of petrol, desisted from starting their motors until the very last moment, with the result that most of them stopped their engines when they let in the clutch, owing, I should imagine, to the motors not being sufficiently warmed up.

One by one the cars were started on their long journey of 470 miles, the circuit being 47 miles in circumference and having to be covered ten times. Some of the cars themselves were rather

interesting, the Panhard vehicles being quite novel in shape and resembling the earlier Mors cars of Paris-Madrid fame in appearance. Christie's American front-driver was also a novelty, and the one thing I marvelled at in connection with this car was that it was possible to steer it at all judging from the way the front wheels danced off the ground at each revolution of the motor. It was curious to see Wagner, of Darracq fame, on a Fiat. Caillois, whose name has always been associated with Brasier, was on a Darracq. Hémery, the brilliant Darracq man, was driving a Mercedes. One recognised old friends in Heath and Le Blon on Panhards, Rigolly on his Gobron-Brillie, Jenatzy on a Mercedes, while the famous De Dietrich trio, namely, Duray, Gabriel, and Rougier, were once again at the helm of De Dietrich cars.

It was a beautiful morning, with just enough sun to make it warm without being uncomfortably so, in fact, an ideal racing day.

Forty minutes and a few seconds had elapsed before Lancia dashed by, having completed his first round and retaining his position of No. 1. When Duray, who had started fourth, appeared, however, it was clear that the De Dietrich driver had gained on the Fiat, and then, one after another, the cars began to rush by. Jenatzy pulled up in the special roadway outside the replenishing depots in trouble through having lost his driving glasses, and, having obtained a new pair, he dashed off again. It struck me, however, that he was not particularly happy, and, as he had not made a very good round, I assumed he had already started with trouble of some description or another. Christie was the next one to stop at his depôt, evidently in serious trouble with lubrication. From his efforts, I should imagine that he required an air vent in the base-chamber, and a cold chisel and a hammer were requisitioned and wielded in vigorous fashion, the desired result eventually being obtained. Dutemple then stopped to change his plain tyres to non-skids, and upon being asked for an explanation, he said it was raining heavily on the other side of the course. It was obvious from the times accomplished in the first round that a fierce fight was in progress, even at this early stage of the race. Duray, Lancia, Nazzaro, Wagner, Gabriel, and Szisz had all done splendid performances. On the second round Duray was two minutes ahead of Lancia, and was travelling magnificently; Nazzaro and Gabriel also came through in great style.

Soon after we had an opportunity of witnessing some of the troubles the Weigel cars were suffering in connection with their detachable rims. Laxen pulled up at the depôt and immediately proceeded to change his front wheels, and complained that his rims had come off four or five times and that he had been considerably delayed in consequence. The time lost by the car in making this change can well be realised. Ordinary front wheels were fitted, and they proceeded on their way again.

On the fourth round Rougier, on his De Dietrich, pulled up in the control in the most deliberate fashion, and it certainly appeared as if he were touring rather than racing. The extra petrol was poured into his car, and the replenishments of lubricating oil and water were made, but he appeared to be in no hurry at all to get away, even though it was clear from the way in which his engine was firing that there was really nothing the matter with the car. At the end of another round, however, he had retired, but what the cause of his trouble was I do not know.

We then witnessed the very dramatic entry of Richez, on his Renault. It appeared that Richez and Bablot, on a Brasier car, were having a big tussle on the road, when unfortunately they collided, and both of the cars were turned upside down and the occupants flung into the air. It speaks much for the construction of the cars and the pluck and skill of the drivers, that both of them got their cars on the road again and went on racing. From the appearance of Richez's car, it was very clear that the

car had really turned upside down; the bonnet was smashed, the radiator was badly bent about, and there were sundry other evidences of a very bad collision, but Richez, having filled up with petrol and attended to one or two small details, mounted into his seat and was off again after the leaders.

Szisz then appeared, quite unrecognisable from oil and dirt. He was travelling exceedingly well, but was not capable of accomplishing the speed of the leading cars. He very quickly changed his tyres, and dashed off again. At this period, Pryce Harrison, on the second Weigel, arrived, and had a terrible tale to tell of the troubles he had also been having with his rims, in fact he had his rims come off the wheel five times, and he had to follow his fellow driver's example, and take off his wheels fitted with detachable rims, and fit ordinary wheels to proceed on his way. The rumour then came in that one of the tyres attached to a rim, which flew off his car, had knocked down and seriously injured a woman, and it appeared that this was the case, as she was presently brought in for medical treatment for concussion of the brain.

At the end of the fifth round, Duray made a dramatic arrival. He was then leading Lancia by 2 mins., in addition to the 3 mins. he had in hand owing to Lancia starting that time in front of him. Just as he started to replenish his car with lubricating oil, petrol, &c., Lancia also dashed up to his depot, and we had an opportunity of seeing the two teams feverishly endeavouring to get away first. Duray decided to change his back tyres, whereas Lancia elected to go on, with the result that he got away first, but Duray was almost immediately on his heels, and at the end of the next round had passed him once more. Shortly after this, a fine bit of racing took place between the two Mercedes cars, driven by Jenatzy and Salzer, who came by the Grand Stand all out, almost locked together.

One of the most exciting episodes of the whole race, however, was when two cars coming straight down the road all out, suddenly met three cars — including Gabriel and Nazzaro — swinging out of the side road where the depôts were situated. For a moment it looked as if a collision and a general smash up was inevitable, but in the midst of smoke and dust the drivers sorted themselves out, and the five cars hurtled down the road one behind the other. Beyond the Grand Stand the road came back on a very sharp corner, and we had the opportunity of seeing these cars racing on the other side of the triangle, within full view of the Grand Stand and about half a mile away.

The whole race was teeming with incidents. Those cars which had not dropped out were travelling splendidly, and when at the end of the eighth round Duray flashed by, leading Nazzaro, who was next best on time, by 6 mins., a terrific shout went up from the Grand Stand, for France once more was to claim her position as the winner of the great yearly race. Ninety-four miles to go and 6 mins. in hand, and it looked as if a De Dietrich win was a certainty.

Then suddenly Lancia arrived with his engine missing badly. Two or 3 minutes' stop was sufficient to enable him to satisfy himself that it was impossible to do anything, and off he went again, making the best of a bad job.

And then we had the great surprise! A sudden roar from the crowd announced something unusual happening, and everyone was horrified to see Duray walking back along the road followed by his mechanician. One kilometre after passing the Grand Stand a ball-race in one of his bearings had broken, and he was finished. At one moment six minutes in hand and a certain winner of one of the hardest races run in France, and the next moment his car was disabled and he was not able to go another yard.

Duray is a popular favourite in France, and sympathy was showered upon him, but I am afraid it gave him but little comfort. "Hard luck" would hardly explain the situation correctly. It was,

however, the fortune of war. It was the great game of motor racing, in which no man has won until the race is finished.

I had an opportunity of inspecting part of the broken ball-race, and it was certainly a breakage of a character which would not happen once in twenty years.

With Duray out of it, the crowd began to wonder as to whether it would be possible for Szisz to wrench the lead from Nazzaro. Both of them started on the last and final round travelling in great style, but Nazzaro's lead was too great, and eventually he ran into home a winner of one of the finest races run on the Continent, Szisz being second. Baras, on the Brasier, and Gabriel, on the De Dietrich, finished third and fourth respectively, both of them having driven most consistently all the way through without being particularly brilliant.

With Duray out of the race, and Nazzaro almost a certain winner, we did not wait for the finish, and dashed for our car and made up our minds to endeavour to catch the afternoon boat back to England to enable us to arrive in London at 7 o'clock in the evening. Our ride back was almost more exciting than the race itself, With twenty minutes to go and 7 kiloms. to cover we had three inlet-valves break, one after another. I will not mention the name of the car, but I would like to say that they were automatic inlet-valves, and we poured blessings on the head of the man who ever thought of them. However, our French mechanician was a man of energy, and we all three worked vigorously, and soon had new inlet-valves fitted, and a top-speed scramble into the town enabled us to catch the boat with seconds to spare. A glorious sunny afternoon made even the lengthy passage from Dieppe to Newhaven appear short, and as we rolled into London at 7 o'clock we were satisfied at having crammed a great deal into twenty-three hours.

I have already referred to the detailed organisation of the meeting, but another point which struck me forcibly was the magnificent condition of the road. I only saw two cases in which drivers were suffering from eye troubles, whereas in previous years this has been a very serious source of complaint.

The road itself was smooth and hard, and absolutely devoid of dust; and never has any race been run under more ideal conditions in every respect than the Grand Prix race of 1907.

The petrol allowance of each car appeared to be ample, and I do not know of any case in which the car was stranded through running out of petrol.

The speed achieved was magnificent. To cover 475 miles in 6h. 46m. on the road is undoubtedly one of the finest achievements yet recorded in automobile history.

MOTOR-RACING AS IT WAS

"The Badminton Magazine" (December, 1907)

I have just returned from Brooklands, the greatest speed arena in the world, and my mind and vision have been occupied in watching the motor leviathans of the twentieth century hurtling round its steep banks and down its broad straights — one ton and a half of men and mechanism spinning inside a huge bowl — at more than ninety miles an hour.

Motor-racing under these new conditions has a certain fascination because of its novelty, but the driving of a racing car on such a track is a different problem from the old driving conditions of the road races of years ago. The swinging of the cars from the bankings, the *finesse* of the drivers for position, and the passing and repassing in such a short distance, are all new conditions and part of the new idea of racing motor cars.

And as I ponder over the events of the day, the gossip of the track is still in my ears; the claims of the rival motor makers for the credit of their machines, the challenges to race for thousands of pounds, the merits of this make and the demerits of that, the excellence of one driver, the madness of another — and sitting in the comfort of an old armchair, under the soothing influence of sweet nicotine, my mind wanders back a few years and travels across the breadth of water dividing us from the *grandes routes* of the Continent, over which so many classic motor races have been fought and won.

A mental journey along the tree-fringed roads from the coast to Paris, and I am once more among the cafés and restaurants, and in the bustle and excitement preceding a big road race.

Who will win? De Knyff, says one, the participant in a hundred such battles, who is driving a car of enormous power and if fortune favours him, who can touch him in a fierce fight? Fournier, says another, for the hero of Paris-Bordeaux and Paris-Berlin at his best is invincible. And then the question arises whether he is at his best, and whether his having changed his fortunate make of car may not bring him bad luck. Giradot, or perhaps Charron, may be the lucky one; and still there are the Renault Brothers, Maurice and Henri Farman, and a dozen others; who can tell?

Some croaker then talks about the extraordinary speed qualities of the German cars which are taking part. The roar of their motors has already been heard, and the sound was ominous in its suggestion of power. Their drivers were formidable in their appearance of being capable of risking everything to win.

And so the chatter goes on, and each racing driver is a central figure in the public eye, a public character; his ways and habits are known, and his followers are many — for those were the days of the Great Sport.

Then there was the supper at the Taverne Royale, and the running out of Paris in the darkness of the early morning to Champigny for the start of the race; the long line of light extending from Paris itself to the starting-point, composed of thousands of cyclists all carrying multi-coloured lanterns; the roar of the racing cars and the shrieking and clatter of the ordinary touring cars, loaded to the full with enthusiasts. At length the breaking of the dawn, and one was able to distinguish among the long line of racing cars waiting there for the signal to start off on their long journey some of the men whose names had been under discussion the previous evening. There were the racing monsters

they were to control, and there were they themselves, clad in oilskins and mackintoshes, fiercely be-goggled, ready to take their cars to the distant goal eight or nine hundred miles away. At intervals of a minute they are started off on their long journey, amidst the applause and cheers of the enormous multitude assembled, and in a second they are out of sight and the struggle has begun.

The fierceness of the contest is only witnessed by the drivers and mechanicians on the cars themselves, for it is in the long, straight, open stretches, away from villages and away from towns, that the cars pass and re-pass each other, and it is in solitude, without the cheers of an audience, that the racing driver fights his battle.

Villages are passed through and towns are traversed, but these controls are merely resting places where the driver has a respite until the time has elapsed when he is allowed to dash off once more. In reviewing it all, my mind is instinctively drawn to the men who were the leading figures in these great events, for to-day the Great Sport does not exist, and the drivers of racing cars are not those who drove them five years ago.

I wonder what has become of all those drivers? Are they alive? Have some of them paid the penalty for continually worshipping at the altar of the god of speed? Are they still in Paris, or have they scattered to all the quarters of the earth? Let me think — why, I saw De Knyff in Bond Street but three days ago, examining with the air of a connoisseur the stock of cigars of a big factor, as though the only thing in life he had ever cared about was the flavour of a good weed. He was looking very much the same as of old, and yet, there was a difference — the brown beard is streaked heavily with grey — the disfiguring scar across his face is the result of that awful smash two years ago, when in saving a woman's life on the road he splintered his car to pieces and nearly killed himself. He does not now look like a Speed King. That memorable race for the Gordon Bennett Cup in Ireland which nearly proved my undoing, saw him in his racing seat for the last time in a desperate attempt to win back for France the coveted trophy. He drove a great race that day — one of his very best — and although he only finished second it was because he had as his opponent the "red devil" Jenatzy, who placed his fate in the hands of Providence and drove to victory. De Knyff knew the joys of racing when it took eighteen hours to drive from Paris to Bordeaux, and I remember the keenness with which he fought out with me the finish of the first stage from Paris to Belfort in 1902, when hatless and begrimed with dirt he led by twelve minutes into the frontier town, averaging fifty-six miles an hour. De Knyff's unhappy day in that race was two days later, when as the last representative for France in the Cup Race, his car failed him in the descent down the famous Arlberg Pass. I dare say the French roads still know him well, because he is to-day what he always was — an automobile sportsman — but it is not behind the wheel of a racing monster, but rather in the guise of a lowly tourist.

Giradot, again, was another. Right away back in 1899 I remember seeing him run down the steep hill into Boulogne the winner of the Paris-Boulogne race, clattering over the cobblestones on a bare and tyreless rim, he having punctured some distance before and not daring to stop for fear of losing precious time near the winning goal. Although he drove in dozens of races, this was one of the very few events which he won, as fate seemed to hold in store for Giradot the second position, so that he earned the title of "The Eternal Second." The fierce struggle which he had with Fournier in the Paris-Berlin race is one of the most memorable in automobile racing history. For three whole long days he hung on to Fournier's wheels, losing nothing and gaining nothing. On the last day, throughout the whole of the wild dash from Hanover to Berlin, Fournier said that Giradot's close proximity became a veritable nightmare, and that he mentally heard the roar of Giradot's motor and

the whirl of his wheels pressing on in the distance throughout the whole of that thrilling time. Fournier, however, held his own, and once more Giradot occupied his usual position as second. After the finish of the race, and as the cars slowly made their way into Berlin, one of Fournier's driving chains broke, delaying him half an hour. Had such a thing happened ten miles before, Giradot's luck would have changed and he would have been hailed as the winner of one of the greatest of the classic road races. Giradot fought many a battle, but his racing career was finished on the hilly course in the Auvergne in the French eliminating trials for the Gordon Bennett Cup in 1905, when the inevitable happened, his car was broken to pieces, and he himself was so seriously injured as to prevent him from ever racing again.

Marcel Renault, the hero of the Paris-Vienna race, paid the penalty in the memorable Paris-Bordeaux stage of the Paris-Madrid race. The road obscured by a driving dust cloud — a sudden bend — a railway crossing — a terrible smash — and the life was finished, not only of a pioneer famed in automobile history, but of an automobile sportsman who raced for the love of it.

Louis Renault, his brother, was at the moment of his kinsman's death miles in front, fighting out with me the honour of finishing first in Bordeaux, and the sweets of his victory were turned to the bitterness of sorrow when, later in the day, came through the news of the great disaster. But Louis lives today as the head of one of the most famous and prosperous firms in the industry; and if he does not himself race, he has benefited by the splendid experience he gained in the earlier sporting events.

And then there was Charron — slim, slight, and wiry. He was "King of the Road" when racing cars were fitted with nothing larger than 12-h.p. engines. Paris-Amsterdam was one of his great victories, whilst he won the classic Paris-Bordeaux race on more than one occasion. His was not a reputation built up by the handling of cars capable of averaging sixty miles an hour, but by the driving for long periods and over long distances, grimly persevering, with a strong determination to win at all costs.

The winning of a race in those days meant sitting at the driving-wheel for many long hours. Pneumatic tyres were not built as they are built to-day, and the motors were weird and strange animals with many vagaries.

Charron won the first race for the Gordon Bennett Cup, which was run in France, and had many exciting episodes. Fournier was his mechanician in that race. A long distance from the finish a collision with a dog deranged the water-pump, and the race was won by Fournier hanging over the side of the car holding the pump in position with one hand, whilst Charron made use of every bit of the road to finish before disaster overtook him.

I remember in the first motor-cycle race in France in which I took part — from Paris to Bordeaux — Charron was driving a 12-h.p. car. Our start was made at the bottom of the Suresnes Hill, out of Paris, through Versailles. A huge crowd assembled at the foot of the hill leading down into the town, and watched with bated breath the cars appear at the brow and dash downwards at almost incredible speed. The first to appear was Charron on his Panhard, and as he approached the narrow octroi gates in the middle of the hill it seemed impossible for him to steer the car through at the speed. The excitement was so intense that one spectator died from the shock.

Needless to say, Charron was through the gates and at the bottom of the hill almost before it was realised that he was in sight. Since those exciting days he has acquired wealth in the automobile business, and entered upon the manufacture of large cars. Only this summer he married the daughter of one of the wealthiest of the great French motor manufacturers — M. Clément.

And so the names all recur to me one after another. Maurice Farman was the central figure in many an exciting struggle, possessing the English characteristic of grim determination, combined with the brilliancy which characterises so many of the best Continental drivers. Maurice Farman had always to be reckoned with in any event in which he drove. It was in the Circuit du Nord that we had a desperate struggle over the slippery and treacherous *pavé* roads in the north of France. The Paris-Vienna race would have been won by him had he not collided with a touring car on the road only a few miles from the finish, and thus provided a splendid example of the old saying that a race is never won until the winner is past the post.

His brother Henri was as famous and fine a driver as Maurice; in fact, of the two it was a difficult matter to know which was the better. Whilst Maurice won the heavy car section of the Circuit du Nord race, Henri finished first in the light car class. Maurice failed to finish in the Paris-Vienna, but Henri — ever pressing at his heels — not only finished, but won the race. The fight for the first position in the first stage of the same race to Belfort was fiercer between the two brothers than between any other competitors, and Henri Farman always started one of the favourites.

Like Giradot, the Auvergne Circuit on which the French eliminating trials for the Gordon Bennett race took place practically finished his racing career, and provided him with a miraculous escape from death, his car running off the road, falling from a great height, and being wrecked, luckily without injury to Farman or his mechanic.

I was astonished to see him this year driving in the race for the Grand Prix on the Dieppe Circuit; but he had none of his old dash, and it was obvious that he was driving merely with the object of finishing, rather than making any serious attempt to win; and yet he cannot have lost his nerve, for it was only the other day that the world was startled by his extraordinary achievement in securing the world's record for the flight of a flying machine at Issy, and he evidently aspires to further fame in the world of aeronautics.

Maurice Farman never raced again after the memorable Paris-Madrid race in which his very close and intimate friend, Marcel Renault, was killed. His name has since only been heard in connection with the balloon ascents which he has made.

Pinson was another great driver of the old school. Away back in the nineties he won several races in the South of France, but in the more strenuous days he drove his Panhard more with the idea of finishing in a good position than of entering into the desperate struggle which always attended the actual winning. My first experience of him on the road was at the finish of the run from Paris into Aix-la-Chapelle in the Paris-Berlin race. He had the advantage of me up-hill, but the impetuosity of youth served me on the down-hill rushes, and but a few yards separated us for many kilometres. He was then one of the oldest of the Racing Brigade, and knew every phase of the game. Afterwards I came to know him better, and I have very pleasant memories of a delightful trip in his company from Paris to the South of France. He was one of the first to give up racing when the old conditions changed.

Paul Chauchard — bearded and stalwart — was another well known figure who took part in every important contest. It was in the Paris-Berlin race, when, passing through Sedan, he refilled his car with petrol, and intentionally or otherwise some miscreant poured into his tank a tin of water, with disastrous results. Eager to get going again and to lose no time, the tank was forthwith emptied into the roadway, and the usual clever bystander being present with the inevitable match, in a moment huge flames were ascending to heaven. The store of petrol kept by the side of the road also ignited in one huge bonfire. In the midst of the excitement Chauchard started up his engine and sped

away out of danger, but it was not until the military were called out that the flames were subdued. Chauchard never had the good fortune to win an event, but he was a familiar figure on the road.

Loysel I sometimes see at the French Club, and always remember, with some amusement, his attempt to batter a brick wall down in the Paris-Berlin race. A sharp right-angle turn caused the disaster, and failing to negotiate it he dashed into a house, luckily with no ill effects to himself or *mécanicien*.

Lorraine-Barrow and Zborowski have passed into the unknown, the former having been killed with his mechanic in the ill-fated Paris-Madrid race, and the latter at the foot of La Turbie — two fine sportsmen whom the sport could ill afford to lose.

W. K. Vanderbilt, jun., later on tasted the joys of handling a racing car in many of these events, and if he does not still race is still interested in racing.

Baron de Caters and Baron de Crawhez, both Belgians by birth, were formidable opponents in any race. The former is known better to us in England by reason of his very fine driving in the Gordon Bennett race in Ireland in 1903, when he formed one of the German team. He showed the old sporting spirit when he stopped in that race to inquire as to my injuries, and although he has apparently given up driving racing cars, nevertheless on the last occasion when I saw him, not very long ago, he displayed the same keen interest as of old.

De Crawhez was of the dare-devil type, and his great driving ground was in the Belgian Ardennes. Had he not met with an accident in the early stages of the first Ardennes race, I think it probable I should not have won it. He knew that particular road like a book, and his true form was shown the following year when he achieved what he had failed to do on the previous occasion, namely, won the gold medal of the Automobile Club of Belgium — which is the only award the winner of the Ardennes race receives.

And so I could go on mentioning names one after another, and to each name would attach a particular story, or some incident of the road would be associated with it which would bring back a vivid recollection of some of the earlier races. In reviewing it all the greatest interest undoubtedly lies in seeing how extraordinarily rapid has been the evolution of automobiles and automobile racing. Motor-racing in the earlier days was carried out in a happy-go-lucky spirit which is almost ludicrous when compared with the present-day ideas. It was not at all unusual for a car to start in a race — as its first experience of running on the road, untried and untested. It often happened that the car was not completed or ready for the race and out of the workshop until the evening prior to the start — and it was on these machines, and under these conditions, that the drivers risked their necks!

At first the races were run from one point to another regardless of villages or towns; there was no slowing up; every driver did his best to get to the finishing point in the quickest possible time. This, of course, was only possible while the power of the cars was small and the speeds attained not excessive; but as the power grew and the speed correspondingly increased, all racing through populated districts was prohibited. The whole of the roads were kept clear, and it was in the broad open country that real racing took place. A certain time was allowed for each car to travel through each neutralised distance, and the time occupied in running through these neutralised distances was deducted from the gross running time.

The start of the race took place at the break of dawn, before four o’clock in the morning, and by one o’clock on the same day most of the cars would have arrived and finished the stage of the race for that particular day — probably 350 miles. The afternoon would be spent in recounting

experiences, and in exploring the strange city in which the night had to be spent. A banquet would frequently take place in the evening, at four o'clock on the following morning the next stage would be started on, and three or four days' running would see the finish of the race in a city some nine hundred miles from the start.

The catastrophe of the Paris-Madrid race stopped all this, and small road circuits, guarded and barred and protected by the military, have taken the place of the straight-away races — in fact the racing partakes of a circus performance on a huge scale. Grand stands are erected in various parts, for as the cars probably pass round the course ten times during a race, the spectators have an opportunity of seeing what is happening on every circuit. The drivers are men, with one or two exceptions, who make the driving of motor cars, and particularly racing cars, their profession and means of living. The easy-going racing idea has departed, and each contest is a desperate struggle for victory between various manufacturers.

Racing under these circumstances of course involves enormous expenditure, and it is only possible by special Government permission.

And so the last great development appears, the Brooklands Racing Track, placing England at an advantage over every other nation in the possession of a speed arena built specially and solely for the driving of motor cars at practically unlimited speed. There no sharp corners have to be negotiated, no clouds of dust to be encountered in overtaking, no excited spectators to be avoided — only the holding of the speed weapon on the track, guiding it round the bends, and the short sharp effort of getting every ounce of power out of the car over the distance.

It is usual and so easy to colour the cloudy past with a rosy tint, and it is so orthodox for an old-stager to look back and consider that the world was much finer and the sport much keener in the days when he figured as an active participant in the arena, that I need not ask for indulgence if I look in like manner on motor-racing. But in my musings I hear the rhythmic rattle of the open exhaust, and the spit of the motor, and the roar of the wind, I feel the stinging pain from the flying gravel, and the swing of the car as she leaps to the distant goal.

Before me lies a fair country, dipping down and then meeting the horizon many miles away, green with the freshness of spring, and fascinating in its strangeness of formation. And away in front, straight as an arrow, lies the white road with tall sheltering trees overhead, stretching to the point where earth and sky meet. In front can be seen a speck of dust, and a long distance behind it still another speck; and the wind howls by, and the muscles are set, and the grip on the steering wheel is tightened with the realisation that those two cars have to be caught, that ahead are two blinding dust clouds which have to be passed through without slackening of speed, that two separate and distinct fights have to take place before those opponents are conquered — with the knowledge also that behind are other cars struggling in a like manner.

And leaving aside the glamour attaching to the past — because it is the past — comes the acknowledgment that the universal adoption of the all-conquering motor vehicle, the increase of power, and the great increase of speed, have made the repetition of such racing necessarily impossible.

So the dream ends — for after all it is but memory that writes the story. The rumble of motor omnibuses, the patter of motor cabs, the screech of the siren on the high-powered touring car, and the noisy clamour of the little voiturette are everyday sounds, so usual that it makes it difficult to conceive when such things were not.

A grand march of progress has taken place. The motor car is a money-making machine, the racing of it is a financial proposition, it has taken its place among the manufacturing industries of the world; but the days of the Great Sport are no more.

MY RUSSIAN EXPERIENCES

"The Autocar" (April 17, 1909)

It all happened one evening after dinner at the Motor Club, when I was introduced to Mr. T. E. Stephens, the Russian manager of the Dunlop Tyre Co., who resided, when at home, in Moscow. Talking about Russia and Russian roads, he gave me a long description of the 1907 race from Moscow to St. Petersburg, which was won by Duray on a De Dietrich car. My enquiry as to the character of the Russian roads was met with the response that they were not good, but that Duray had averaged forty-five miles an hour between the two great Russian cities, and therefore the road could not have been particularly bad.

While talking I suddenly made up my mind that I would like to visit Russia and see the country in which so many exciting happenings have taken place, and almost before I realised what I was doing I had handed in my entry to Mr. Stephens for the race to take place in 1908.

In order to preserve the balance of equality between the St. Petersburg Automobile Club and the Automobile Club of Moscow, the race was this year arranged to be run in the opposite direction to last year, namely, from St. Petersburg to Moscow — a distance of 645 versts. Stephens told me with a grim earnestness that left no doubt about the matter that the road would be quite clear, because Cossacks would be requisitioned for that purpose, and usually they were very thorough in their work.

I had as my companion on one or two long distance jaunts, including my Land's End and back run and my Monte Carlo run this year, Mr. Charles Pinnock, an old friend and a real sportsman, who revels in long distance journeys, and whose keenness in automobile matters is only rivalled by his popularity in the City; and therefore when C.P. heard that I was off to Russia there was only one thing which had to be done, and that was for him to accompany me.

The next question which arose was as to the car which I should take over, and eventually I obtained Messrs. De Dietrich's permission to use the car which they had placed at my disposal for record breaking at Brooklands.

Between the month of November, when I entered for the race, and the month of April, when I commenced to prepare for it, I heard many and varied stories regarding the condition of the Russian roads, and in particular of the vile condition of the road between St. Petersburg and Moscow. The 1907 Grand Prix De Dietrich, however, which I had been using at Brooklands, had been put through such a severe test that I had every confidence that it would stand up and negotiate safely any road, however bad.

The tuning up of a racing car is an interesting matter under any circumstances, and after lowering the gear and making other necessary modifications for the road my car was shipped on the *Tosno* from Hull to St. Petersburg on Saturday, the 23rd May, in charge of my mechanician, young Bray, who was accompanying me through the race.

At nine o'clock on the following Wednesday morning (the 27th May), an interested little crowd assembled at Charing Cross Station to wish *bon voyage* to C.P. and myself on our long journey to the Russian capital, and the least cheering remark I received as we rolled out of the station was one

from C.P., who observed that he thought we should be very pleased to see Charing Cross Station again — an observation remarkable for its accuracy.

An uneventful run down to Dover, a glorious day, a perfectly calm crossing, and almost before we realised that we were properly started we were over at Ostend and in the train bound for the Russian frontier.

We passed over the Belgian frontier into Germany that same evening, and another amusing incident happened on the train in connection with the Customs officers. A party of Frenchmen, who were going to St. Petersburg for a shipping convention, produced a pack of cards after dinner and started to play, and continued to do so after the frontier was reached. An examination of the luggage was made on the train, and when passing through the dining car one of the German Customs officers suddenly realised that the cards with which our French friends were playing had not paid duty, and as cards are subject to duty in Germany the players were forthwith called upon to pay 50 pfennigs to the Government, and a receipt was gravely given for that amount.

Berlin was reached in the early morning, and throughout the whole of that day the one thing which impressed us was the spotless cleanliness of the German uniforms. Every stationmaster and soldier seemed to be wearing a new uniform, and we occupied some of our time in working out abstruse calculations as to the amount per year which uniforms cost the German nation.

Our Entry into Russia

At seven o'clock that evening we reached the Russian frontier, and immediately the whole aspect of the country was changed. As we approached Wirballen Station the first thing that met our gaze was a strong Russian military guard, and as we pulled up at the platform it seemed to be crowded with military, all of whom appeared to be well equipped with firearms, the private soldiers carrying rifles with fixed bayonets. Here our passports were taken from us, and we were shown into a huge waiting room while they were examined. I may say that before we left we had procured passports properly *viséd* by the Russian Consul in London — in accordance with the regulations — and it was only when we arrived in Russia that we realised what an important part of one's personal property a passport is. We found that without a passport no one is allowed into the country, and that upon arriving in any town a passport must be produced before accommodation can be obtained in any hotel, and that without it one is not allowed to live in any hotel, and neither is one allowed back over the frontier without an enquiry. The system of checking and examination of passports is so complete that it is only to be experienced to be believed, and it was with some feeling of relief that we received back our precious documents, had our luggage examined, and were free to take our seats in the train in which we were to complete the latter portion of our journey.

I had one surprise whilst waiting, as four officials came up to my luggage and placed labels on it, passing it through without examination, and I was proceeding to have it carried out to the train when I was stopped and asked my name, and it then appeared that I had been mistaken for an important diplomat who was travelling on the train, and to my disgust and sorrow the labels on my luggage were torn off and I had to take my turn with the rest.

We used to look forward with great interest to the various meals on the train, by reason of the fact that as we passed through each country the particular food of the country was served up to us. Hence for luncheon on the last day of our journey we had our first taste of Vodki, and both came to the conclusion that it was not at all bad, but our opinion of Russian tea served in a glass tumbler with lemon was not favourable.

Two o'clock in the afternoon brought us within sight of the gilded domes and spires of St. Petersburg, and our troubles had really commenced. As C.P. kept remarking to me, it was not as if we were going into a country where we could understand a little bit of the language, or even read the letters of each word. Russian to us was an unknown language, and the Russian letters to my mind resembled a mixture of geometrical problems mixture with a dash of Pitman's shorthand.

At St. Petersburg

Arriving outside the station at St. Petersburg we discovered our fears were well-founded. We managed to get our luggage upon the Hotel d'Europe's station omnibus — a most magnificent vehicle fitted with pneumatic tyres, and, luxury of luxuries, Dunlop detachable rims — and we were then surrounded by an army of drosky drivers clad in the most extraordinary padded coats and beaver hats, shouting at us in the unfamiliar Russian language. Having not the faintest idea as to where the hotel actually was, we thought the best thing to do was to climb into one of the cabs and trust to luck. The vehicle was on the lines of a little open victoria, but more of the size of a bath chair, and there was certainly not enough room for the two of us, but we squeezed in. Instructions to the driver, "Hotel d'Europe," met with no response whatever, and it was not until one of our friends on the train came along and said "Europeeska," that our charioteer had the faintest idea as to where we desired to go.

Hiring a cab in Russia is an important business — a bargain has to be made at the commencement of every journey. For instance, you instruct a cabman to go to a certain place, and he thereupon probably asks for three roubles — equivalent to about 6s. 6d. After a lot of talking — on our part it always took the form of gesticulation — he generally undertakes the journey for about 75 kopecks — about 1s. 7d. My experience was that, being a foreigner, they tried to charge me about four times the fare on every occasion, and one of the first things I endeavoured to acquire in the Russian tongue was certain words in the language which in themselves convey much more than many sentences.

The Hotel d'Europe at St. Petersburg is, I suppose, the best hotel there, and it is certainly modern in every degree. It was there we met on our arrival Mr. Stephens, who had come over from Moscow to complete the official arrangements in St. Petersburg prior to the race, and was leaving that evening by slow train for Moscow, giving directions at all the stations on the route regarding the controls in connection with the race which was to take place on the Monday morning.

Bray then appeared, having arrived safely after his sea trip with the car, but reported that, owing to Customs formalities, the car had not been cleared, and would not be free until the following day (Saturday).

That evening we saw Stephens off to Moscow, and the following morning we proceeded down to the Docks (threequarters of an hour's drive) to get the car. With the assistance of Messrs. Gerhard and Hey (the shippers) this was eventually accomplished, and at five o'clock in the afternoon we were at the St. Petersburg Club Garage, having everything fixed up ready for the race. There I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Ludwig Nobel, of explosives fame, and chairman of the Technical Committee of the St. Petersburg Automobile Club.

It would be impossible for me to say how much I was indebted to Mr. Nobel for his kindness and consideration to me whilst in St. Petersburg. Placing his own private garage at my disposal he did everything to assist in every possible way in getting my car ready for the race. At the St. Petersburg end he was largely responsible for all the arrangements — which were remarkable for their completeness.

On the evening of our arrival he called upon us with his Charron and insisted that after our three days' journey it was necessary that we should partake of what he called a real good dinner at one of the restaurants situate on the islands over the Neva, and, nothing loth to conmence our experiences, away we went.

Nobel as host was incomparable, and when, at a late hour, we left the restaurant it was with the feeling of having fared sumptuously. It was a weird drive back to the City that evening — 10 o'clock had struck, and the sun setting in the west cast a ruddy glow over gilded domes and flowing river, and when, in the dimness of twilight, Nobel dropped us once again at our hotel it seemed incredible that the night was well advanced and within an hour or so would dawn yet another day.

It had originally been intended that C.P. should accompany me on the car through the race, but at the last moment he very generously stood down, in the belief that I should have a much better chance of winning if I was accompanied by Bray — who had assisted me in tuning up the car at Brooklands. Hence. it was decided that he should take our baggage and go on to Moscow by the 11 o'clock train on the Saturday evening in order to be in Moscow on the Monday to see the finish of the race. I may explain that trains do not run frequently in Russia — one fast train a day is unusual, and the average is nearer one express every three days.

Incidents of Travel

After finishing all our work on the Saturday and making all our arrangements it was very late, and Mr. Nobel had to drive hard to get back to the hotel in time for C.P. to pick up his luggage, obtain his passport and catch the 11 o'clock train for Moscow. Arriving at the hotel the luggage was rushed on to the car, C. P. obtained his passport, and we were whisked off to the station — Nobel remarking that it would be a very close thing to catch the train. I shall never forget the tremendous crowd at that station — the name of which I cannot give. Russian railway travelling is cheap, and everybody apparently travels. It seemed to me that there were thousands of people travelling by one train or another on that Saturday evening. The next thing I remember is being left at the station with my two bags, and seeing Nobel with C.P.'s luggage, assisted by C.P. himself, fighting his way through the crowd to the train. Fifteen minutes later he was back again, breathless but triumphant, having pushed Pinnock on to the train at the last moment with his two bags. I was dismayed because my luggage had not gone, and I was wondering what was to happen to me when I arrived at Moscow without any change of clothes, but the only consolation I received from Nobel was that I ought to be very thankful that C.P. had caught the train at all.

On to the car, and we drove back through St. Petersburg again over the rough cobblestone roads — on which it would seem impossible for any car to last for any long period — and we eventually arrived at the big compound which encloses the Nobel workpeople, and in which Mr. Ludwig Nobel's own chambers are situated. The compound is a small town in itself, with iron gates and a sentry, and is evidently built with a somewhat more comprehensive idea than that of being merely a dwelling place.

Preparations for the St. Petersburg-Moscow Race

The following Sunday morning all the cars had to present themselves at the Royal Horseguards' Riding School, St. Isaac's Square, close to the great Cathedral of St. Isaac, and, proceeding there at 10 o'clock, I found the drivers of the other cars assembled for examination by the Technical Committee of the St. Petersburg Club, to see whether the rules regarding construction and classification had been complied with.

The scene in the Riding School on that Sunday morning was chiefly remarkable for the manner in which the various drivers left the building.

Receiving permission to leave, every, or nearly every, driver dashed to his car, started up the engine, and rushed to the exit. Being somewhat narrow, only one car could leave at a time, and in a few seconds the whole building was filled with dense blue-black smoke, thicker than any London fog, and in the midst of this twenty racing engines roared and trembled, and collisions and counter-collisions took place. If the whole building had been on fire the scramble could not have been worse, and, leaving my car to its fate, I slipped out into the open air and witnessed the scene from the safer precincts of the Riding School square — and marvelled.

The day preceding a big race is always to my mind somewhat trying. Everything has to be gone over, every eventuality considered, and every adjustment tested, and then at the end there is the wait until the actual start.

This had been fixed for 1.30 on the following Monday morning. I may here explain that at that time of the year it is never really dark in St. Petersburg. Lamps are unnecessary, and almost immediately after the darkest hour it becomes light again very quickly.

At 5.30 on the Sunday afternoon I conceived the mistaken idea that I should do well to obtain some sleep, and turned in for this purpose. It is not an easy thing at any time to retire to bed in broad daylight, and it is even more difficult when the day is brilliantly sunny and hot, and, do what I would, the cries of the drosky drivers and the rumble of passing vehicles would penetrate to my room, and after five long sleepless hours I gave up the effort and arose for a late dinner at 10 o'clock. A well-known St. Petersburg motorist and member of the St. Petersburg Automobile Club in the person of Mr. Harold Thornton was at the hotel to guide me firstly to the garage, and from there to the start. It was an exciting experience getting across the city in the dim twilight. No street lamps were alight, and we had no lamps on the car, and my De Dietrich was not built for town driving; hence our escapes were many and various.

The Russian Roads

And now just a word about the roads. I was somewhat astonished on my arrival in St. Petersburg to find that the streets were all paved with cobblestones, and very badly paved, too. Certainly down the Nevski Prospect — the principal thoroughfare, I suppose, in the city — there are two narrow strips of wood pavement, but the majority of the streets are terribly rough *pavé*, with huge holes in many places. This looked bad as a start, but I hoped that when we came to the macadam of the open country matters would be better. It was only about ten miles out to the start, but even this short distance told me very plainly that we were in for a bad time. The cobbles going out of the city were really terrible, and on one occasion in the bad light I nearly drove into a big trench dug in the middle of the road. A little farther on I put in my third speed, and suddenly hit a huge boulder carelessly dropped into the middle of the road by a passing cart. An examination proved that my car had sustained no damage, but it was a near thing.

The St. Petersburg-Moscow Race

By one o'clock all the cars had turned up, and the scene somewhat resembled the start of some of the old time French long distance races. There was the same air of excitement, the same roar of cars, the same rush and bustle — in fact, the only thing once missed was the myriads of coloured lanterns carried by the host of cyclists who always turned up at the start of a big French race. I do not think they cycle a great deal in Russia, and I do not wonder.

Walking down the line, one found Duray (the previous year's winner) and Rougier, who could always be counted as a finisher, both of whom, like myself, were driving De Dietrich cars. Duray's car was one of the standard 60 h.p. chassis, specially strengthened, fitted with one of the 1908 Grand Prix engines, and a very fine car it looked. Rougier was driving the car which Duray steered to victory in 1907, and I was driving one of the 1907 Grand Prix cars. Hémery had a powerful and strongly built Benz, Demogeot was there on a Darracq, Pope on his Itala, and the other cars included two 135 h.p. racing Mercédés, and it was clear that the struggle was going to be a severe one.

I had noticed in the Club garage that several of the cars which had previously been over the route were minus springs, which were in course of being repaired and strengthened, and my inspection of the cars at the start showed that the various drivers anticipated spring troubles more than anything else, and so it proved.

My own car was fitted with very strong springs — tested to their utmost over the bumps at Brooklands — and in addition I fitted shock absorbers and rubber buffers. My great fear, however, was that the clearance between my flywheel and the road was insufficient, as, according to some of the drivers who had been over the road, some of the small bridges were "a yard wide and a yard high," and I imagined what might happen if I struck one of these *dos d'anes* at full speed. Duray's tip was to take the bridge at an angle, and I saved myself on several very bad bridges and bumps by adopting this course; but the excitement of driving a 120 h.p. car in this manner can be better imagined than described.

At 1 o'clock it became light once more, and at 1.30 the first car was sent off by Mr. Gustav Nobel, followed at two-minute intervals by the rest. My number was eleven, and Pope's was nine, we being divided by a 135 h.p. Mercédès driven by a Russian who not only knew the road, but had the reputation of being a daredevil. Pope was wondering if he ought to let him go by early; but I noticed he did not do it, and as I caught and passed our Russian friend soon after the start, neither Pope nor myself worried very much about him afterwards.

Just before the first car was despatched some excitement was caused by a rumour that the peasants had placed trees across the road some little way down the road, and a car was sent off at top speed with a police officer to investigate, but soon returned and reported that the road was perfectly clear.

Incidents on the "Road"

At 1.50 I had the word to go, and I quickly realised that the pace set by those in front was very hot, considering the state of the road. It was a question of putting in the top gear and holding on, and that is what the whole of the race consisted of. It took me but little time to further realise that my car — built for the perfect French roads — could never stand such a strain for 450 miles, but away in the distance were the dust clouds denoting other cars, and I had to go. Nothing I could say or do would adequately describe that race. Imagine the very worst macadam, deep holes, cart ruts, miles of loose stones in patches, every now and then huge boulders to be missed, and then, as a grand finale, the bridges. Imagine yourself swinging and swaying all over the road, being thrown about from side to side, and being bumped up and down, and then suddenly, without warning, coming on to a small humped bridge, not to be distinguished from the ordinary road more than ten yards away, and hitting it at top speed. Flung into the air (both feet off the pedals), two tremendous crashes as the car comes to earth again, and a jar as you come on to your seat on the rebound, and you have an idea of what happened to us at short intervals throughout our journey. The marvel was

that every car was not absolutely smashed to pieces. The road is just possible on a touring car driven at a reasonable speed, but it is the speed which always kills, and this we found out.

However, it was make or break, and as we overtook one car after another, my one prayer was that our car would stand the strain over the full distance.

The first control was at Tosna (48 versts). Here we merely had to have our cards signed, and there was no other stop. At this point, according to the times telegraphed to Moscow, I had accomplished second fastest time. Soon after this, however, we were in trouble, as, finding the car bumping badly on one side. I stopped, and found that one of my shock-absorbers had broken, and the bolt holding thy leaves of my springs together had sheared. A further examination showed that all the shackle bolts on the springs were loose, in spite of spring washers and lock-nuts.

Roadside Experiences

Prior to the start of the race I had been strongly advised to carry a revolver, in case of trouble with the peasants, and I almost regretted that I had not taken this advice. A small crowd of very ruffianly-looking individuals surrounded us when we stopped and I got out a couple of specially large tyre levers and placed them in a handy position ready for any emergency. With Bray and myself lying on our backs underneath the car, I am afraid we could have made but little resistance. but the only inconvenience we suffered was caused mainly by the close proximity of human beings clad in garments which they had probably never taken off for twelve months.

Here Bray, having a desperate encounter with a refractory nut, managed to hit me in the mouth in a very effective manner with a large and heavy spanner, and my usual placid temper was somewhat disturbed in consequence; but I found a satisfactory outlet in waving off the peasants in vigorous fashion with one of the tyre levers.

Into our seats and away again, and then we had a narrow escape through suddenly encountering in a cloud of dust some big tree trunks placed right across the road by some miscreant. I had to make a big swerve to avoid them, and in doing so only just missed a massive telegraph post.

I cannot say that the peasants *en route* looked upon us with favour. Scowls were more noticeable than smiles, and curses more frequent than cheers, in the small villages, although in the larger towns it was just the reverse.

Then we had our first puncture, but, thanks to our Dunlop detachable rims, we were going again in less than two minutes, and I thanked Heaven that tyre repairing during a race was a thing of the past.

And so we struggled on, the road apparently getting worse and worse, until at last Tschoudovo, the first neutralised control, 106 versts from the start, hove in sight. Ten minutes were allowed for us to get through the town, and at the outer control we filled up with petrol, had a glass of Russian tea and a sandwich, and were away again, only exceeding our neutralised time by one minute.

After that our stoppages for our springs became more frequent, and the bumping from the road became much worse. I was by this time black and blue, and Bray was rapidly getting to the “knocked out” stage. All our shock-absorbers had gone and three of our springs, but it was a case of repair and push on until we eventually got to the point that it was impossible to drive at a greater speed than twenty miles an hour.

We had passed many cars on the road, and had — through our stoppages — been passed again in our turn. We came upon Rougier, evidently in great trouble, and I stopped to see if he required assistance, but he said that he had broken both his front springs, and was repairing and pushing on slowly to the next place. Other cars on the road all seemed to be in trouble with springs or tyres.

I would like to explain here that there is one serious point in connection with a race of this sort in Russia. It is quite possible that a car may hopelessly break down miles away from any village or human habitation and fifty miles away from a railway station, and the plight of a driver under these conditions would be an unhappy one.

I had been considering these possibilities since we left Krestzi — our last checking place. We were hopelessly out of the race, and when Valdai hove in sight, and I found we were near a railway station, I took a prudent course in steering for it and not risking the eighty versts between Valdai and Vischnu Volotschek.

I was told afterwards that the road was very much better from Vischnu Volotschek to Moscow, but I do know that my car would not have reached Vischnu Volotschek, so the fact would not have helped me much.

The End of My Race

At Valdai we were in further trouble, but from a different cause. Arriving at the little railway station I commenced to try and make myself understood. English, French, and German were useless, and Russian I knew not. I had a small conversation book in my pocket, and by its aid I explained that I wanted my car sent to St. Petersburg, whilst we desired tickets for Moscow. The stationmaster — at least I suppose it was the stationmaster — the military guard, the porters — in fact, everyone in the vicinity — endeavoured to assist me, but it took just one hour and a half to make matters clear. Luckily, I had a special open letter from the Russian Embassy in London, written in Russian, which helped me considerably.

The loading of the car on to the railway truck was a matter of much excitement. I enlisted the aid of the station military guard — who superintended matters — and, judging from the motley horde, they required managing.

Remembering the quantity of petrol in my car I considered it wise to empty the tank before loading the car on the train. Petrol was evidently an unknown fluid in Valdai. I was first told to empty the tank in the station yard, but, thinking that the station would probably be required after I left, I decided to back the car into a field near by. I had to explain by gesture that smoking was dangerous, and it was amusing to watch each moujik grasping this point early, endeavouring to explain it to one of his less intelligent companions.

Bray at this point had the brilliant idea of getting a pail and utilising some of the petrol to clean my white cap which was somewhat soiled. The success attending his efforts astonished the bystanders, especially when he subjected his own tweed cap to the same treatment and produced it cleansed from all oil and dirt stains. Evidently this marvellous fluid was too precious to be wasted, and before we knew what was happening pots and pans were produced from every direction, a scramble was taking place around the car, and pans of petrol were being taken across to the village for cleaning purposes. It was obviously impossible for me to explain its dangerous qualities and any attempt to stop the raid would have ended in a riot.

It was a difficult job to get my car into the railway truck, and the marvel was that it was not severely damaged. My soldier-man, however, by dint of much shouting and much swearing at the mob, eventually succeeded. To show my sense of gratitude I presented him with a rouble (two shillings), and gave another rouble to be divided among the crowd — not a large sum as compared to what one would pay a similar multitude in England. This generosity, however, overwhelmed them, and after making general *salaams* to me they proceeded to fight between themselves for their proportion. Each one claimed to have done the most work, and I cleared away from the scene,

fearing a general fight. I was afterwards told that I should have given them nothing at all, but this seemed hardly right, even in Russia.

Food and drink we found at the small buffet, and I endeavoured to send a wire to C.P. at Moscow and another to London saying what had happened. My visit to the telegraph office was not a success. Here, again, Russian was the only language anyone knew. I then started out to scour the village to ascertain if anybody spoke French whom I could persuade to translate my wishes into Russian. It was a hot morning, and I toiled along the road, thinking that, whilst motor racing was a great sport, it had occasionally some disadvantages. Suddenly I was greeted in English by a young man who said he had heard of my visit to the Post Office, and as he knew English through being in America for some years he had been searching for me to render assistance.

Here at last I was out of my troubles, and after sending off my wires we proceeded back to the station, to find that another car had arrived — a Berliet — driven by Addeline, with broken springs, and this in like manner was put into a truck and booked back to St. Petersburg. Addeline was a good sportsman, and was heartbroken — as was also his professional mechanic — at having to give up the race.

Never shall I forget the heat and weariness of that long afternoon. At four o'clock we heard that another car had broken down, and was in a stable in the village, the driver being a Russian. Soon after this a Werner came into the station yard, having used up all its tyres and had other troubles. The driver and mechanic were two young sports who were out for the fun of the thing, and as both of them spoke French we were soon a merry party sitting down to dinner at six o'clock. One of the party had been on a foraging expedition, and an excellent meal resulted. Never had Valdai seen so much of automobilism, and the talk at dinner was all petrol. Then one genius had the brilliant idea, in view of the representative character of the gathering, of forming the Automobile Club de Valdai, and I was forthwith voted into the chair and made president — a little joke kept up throughout the whole of our journey to Moscow, and referred to with much amusement at the dinner of the Moscow Automobile Club two days later.

Russian Railways

Walking through the village that afternoon with my English-speaking friend, I was able to get some information regarding the position of the cars which had passed through the village, and found that Hémery had taken just four hours and ten minutes to cover the 312 versts (about 330 kilometres) — an almost incredible speed considering the state of the road — and had gone through the village much faster than anyone else following him. Demogeot, however, was close on his heels. Duray had passed forty minutes later, but I found afterwards he had stopped at Vischnu Volotschek (eighty versts out from Valdai) in trouble with the frame of his car. Wagner was also in a good position, and the race at Valdai was still an open one, with Hémery leading.

Eight o'clock that evening, and in came the train — just an ordinary Russian train, which averaged about twenty miles an hour, and the engine of which used wood as fuel. I may say that wood is practically the only fuel used on Russian railways, and one of the most interesting sights along the various railway lines is the huge stacks of cut logs.

Puffing and snorting, and throwing out vast clouds of sparks, we laboriously plodded along to Vischnu Volotschek, where we had to change and wait an hour for the direct train to Moscow.

On the arrival of the train I was horrified when I found that no first class carriages had a vacancy, and that we should have to travel second class. Those who have not travelled in Russia will hardly

appreciate what this means. There are four classes on the trains — the first is possible, the second impossible, the third awful, and the fourth unmentionable.

Arrival at Moscow

We had a sort of double carriage, and I think there were about sixteen people in it, with every window closed, and for eight long hours during that hot night we had to endure it. Thanks to the fatigue of the day sleep was at times possible, but I look back to that journey with profoundly thankful feelings that it only lasted eight hours.

At seven o'clock we reached Moscow, much to our relief, and out of the train poured drivers and mechanics who had broken down during the race, and who had joined the train during the night. As one of the party remarked — never before had so many drivers arrived at a control so close together.

On my arrival at the Hotel Metropole I had to dig C.P. out of bed, and found that I had arrived at least three hours before I was expected.

The Finish of the Race

He was particularly pleased to see me, because he had discovered upon his arrival in Moscow that he had accidentally taken my passport instead of his own — a fact which I had found out on the Sunday in St. Petersburg — with the result that when he came to take rooms at Moscow he was immediately in serious trouble with the police, and received notice to produce his passport within twenty-four hours. Hence, had I failed to turn up in Moscow his plight would have been somewhat serious, and I am afraid mine would have been equally serious, because the passport I held was bearing his name. Upon the passports being produced, however, all was well.

From him I learned that Hémery had won the race at an average speed of over fifty-three miles an hour — a remarkable performance in view of the condition of the road — and an examination of his machine afterwards explained why, because he had practically no trouble of any kind, and all his springs were intact.

Demogeot's luck on the Darracq was bad, as he was leading by some minutes from Hémery, whom he had passed, and then 6½ versts from the finish he broke a petrol pipe, and Hémery dashed by him whilst he was stopped.

The finish of the race some ten versts from Moscow was a scene of great animation during the day. The Governor of Moscow and other high military officials were present, and a huge crowd. Cossacks guarded the road, and when Hémery arrived the excitement and enthusiasm were intense. Of the twenty-nine cars which started from St. Petersburg only ten arrived in Moscow, and from this some idea can be gathered of the condition of the road.

Moscow Motor Show

The exhibition in Moscow was a revelation to me. I found a magnificent building full of cars — and very fine cars, too — and I found that nearly all the leading foreign motor firms were represented. The French firms were particularly in evidence, whilst Italy, Germany, and America had good exhibits.

There were only two English firms showing, but the Dunlop Tyre Co. was very much in evidence. It was a fine show — far better than any show I have seen, excepting, of course, Paris and Olympia.

Moscow struck me as being a very interesting city, and was peculiar by reason of its strong Oriental character. St. Petersburg impresses one with its idea of power.

In Moscow one is impressed with the beautifully gilded towers and the famous Kremlin, and instinctively one's mind is carried back to the day when this city in its desolation dealt death and ruin to the army of the great Napoleon.

In both cities, however, there is the same feeling that strong forces are at work, and that at any moment one may be precipitated into happenings of an exciting character. The facts that the police are all bearing arms, the sight of the postman making his rounds armed with a repeating rifle, the military guard in every bank with loaded rifles — all tend to make one feel that law and order in Russia are obtained not by the actual inclination of the people so much as by the firm hand of the authorities, and consequently I must confess that when we crossed the frontier again into Germany I breathed a sigh of relief, as a man might who had just been released from prison.

Muscovite Amenities

Our stay in Moscow was brief, but it enabled us to partake of Russian hospitality to the full, and here again our dear old friend Stephens excelled himself as a host. The banquet given by the Moscow Automobile Club at the conclusion of the shew was an immense success, and I found many old friends and faces, chiefly from France and Germany. Here again Russian hospitality was to the fore, and C.P. remarked as we drove home in the very early hours of one morning that if we did not clear out of Moscow soon we should be dead men — killed by kindness.

The morning of the day we left provided us with some fun. We had bedrooms adjoining, with a connecting door. I was awakened by a yell from the next room, and, calling out to ask what was the matter, heard C.P. in a shaky voice reply, "They have come for me at last over that wretched passport business. There is a fellow in my room with a gun and fixed bayonet, full uniform, top boots, and a very terrible expression, and I can't understand a word he says; it is Siberia for a certainty."

Jumping out of bed I went into the other room, and sure enough there was a very fierce-looking military personage, and the more we talked to him the fiercer he seemed to get. I rang for help, and then we discovered that we had only received a visit from the postman with some jewellery I had sent on by registered post to Moscow from St. Petersburg before the race.

We arranged to leave Moscow on the Wednesday, in order to be at the Brooklands Race Meeting on the following Monday, and booked our sleeping berths on the first train leaving for Berlin and Ostend that afternoon. Here, however, we met with disaster, as we lost the train owing to the stupidity of the Russian hall porter. It appears there are three different times in Russia — one is adopted by the town, another by the railway stations, and the third is Central Europe, or something else. I know there are three, and we took number two instead of number one, or number one instead of number three, and the train was gone.

On expostulating with the porter, we had a good example of the speedy manner in which the world moves in Moscow, as he appeared to be very much surprised at our indignation, and said everything was all right, as another train went the *next day*. I had the greatest difficulty in restraining C.P. from laying violent hands on him after this comforting assurance.

We eventually decided to leave that evening on a slower Russian train and go to Berlin *via* Warsaw, and bitterly we regretted it.

Warsaw

We left Moscow on the Wednesday evening. Our sleeping carriage was not bad, but there was no restaurant car on the train. Therefore we had to forage at each station buffet we came to, and our limited knowledge of the Russian food and the Russian language landed us into innumerable

scrapes. They are apparently unused at Russian railway stations to foreigners helping themselves to what they require, and as there was no other means of our obtaining anything except by this method, the result was on several occasions extraordinary.

To see C.P. bolting down the platform with his arms full of bottles of soda water, wine, and food, chased by the whole buffet staff, was a sight for the gods. Our procedure was to bolt our carriage door and argue prices out of the window. We had a sumptuous repast on the second evening of our journey to Warsaw, as we captured some eggs, and persuaded the conductor to cook them for us.

We arrived in Warsaw on the Friday, and there we left our train and drove across the city to another station, whence we booked to Berlin.

Warsaw is a fine city of the usual Continental type but does not resemble either St. Petersburg or Moscow. It seems incredible that such a busy-looking place should be so subject to scenes of disorder and riot. Here, again, the military were in strong force, and we were interested in watching the movements of a detachment of Cossacks on their wiry little horses.

The Hotel Bristol gave us a most excellent and acceptable luncheon, though here again neither English, French, nor German was of any use to us, and, in fact, the trip confirmed the opinion I have always had, viz., that the most useful language for travelling all over the world is money.

Impressions of Russia

We arrived in Berlin on the following Saturday morning, and half an hour later two happy individuals were disporting in hot baths; then a change of clothes saw us ready for a day in the city. I had not been to Berlin since the days following the famous Paris-Berlin Race, and as it was C.P.'s first visit, we had much to see and do.

That same evening we left the Frederickstrasse Station, and on the following day (Sunday) we arrived back in England again, our wanderings over.

It would hardly be fair for me to give my impressions of Russia as a country, because I saw it under somewhat adverse conditions. Undoubtedly winter is the time of the year when the country presents itself at its best. In May it was hot — very hot — and as far as appearances went, extreme cold might never have been known. That mighty river, the Neva, was flowing deep and strong, and it seemed incredible that a few months later it would be possible to drive upon its frozen surface right out to the open sea.

As I have already mentioned, the roads were terrible and the streets little better, but one has to remember that for seven months in the year the surface is composed of smooth, hard frozen snow, when wheels give way to runners, and the inequalities of macadam are known no more.

Russian Automobilism

1 was told that in the winter motoring was possible in St. Petersburg itself, but, of course, not in the open country. Considering the difficulties the automobilist has to contend with, it was surprising to see so many cars, although of course in the summer months there is plenty of driving to be done if a moderate speed is not exceeded, and one has a really strong car.

Every new country has a fascination for me, and I received more new impressions in Russia than in any country I have visited. Everything was so totally different, and the novelty of continuous daylight veneered the sensations with a feeling of unreality.

I have only touched upon some of my experiences — I had others pleasant and unpleasant. I shall, I hope, go to Russia again, but there was a depth of feeling in the hand grip with which C.P. left me at Charing Cross Station on our return, and we both agreed that England requires a lot of beating as a place — to live in.