

SPORT OF MOTOR RACING TO THE EXPERT DRIVER

Experience of Charles Jarrott,
Former English Champion.

PRESENT AND PAST ASPECTS

Regrets the Elimination of the Amateur Racer by Tremendous Cost of Modern Racing Machine.

Charles Jarrott, the English motorist and cyclist, remembered in New York, no doubt, from the fact that he, with Charles Wridgeway, contested on the high-banked track at Morris Heights the first motor tricycle race ever held in America, arousing tremendous interest and enthusiasm, the winner of several of the prominent European long-distance races, besides innumerable cycling contests, has written a book of experiences with motor racing and cars since the inception of the motor car as a racing engine, just ten years ago. In the course of a series of thrilling and exciting incidents, as well as humorous and tragic accidents, he writes of the conditions of motor racing to-day, regretting the passing of the old conditions. Regarding the sport as the greatest evolved by man, his criticism of some of the attributes of present-day racing may suggest the curbing of tendencies which he regards as deleterious. He says:

"I confess that motor racing appeals to me as the greatest sport evolved by man. Competitive effort for any reward except the gain of money is exhilarating and ennobling to the individual character. The curse of commercialism is the ruin of every sport, and any degeneracy of motor racing as a sport is due to the financial issues now involved in each race—the immense value of victory and the commercial disaster of defeat. The same story has been told of other sports where the gain of the victor can be used for commercial profit. The charm disappears, the sordid element is obtruded to the extinction of every other feature. If the racing of motor cars dies the death that is predicted for it, it will be because the sporting element has been obliterated by the all-devouring monster of commercialism—the curse of the twentieth century.

"I have raced because I loved it. I raced at the beginning of the sport because I loved it, and I would race to-day because of love of it, but a race of to-day presents little of the charm of the race of five years ago. It would have less of the sporting feeling—the good comradeship between fellow-competitors. It would be, instead, a play—a tragedy of commercialism, with each hired man striving for death of his rival commercially, showing no mercy, no quarter, because the winning car is placed on a pedestal in a Grand Marque; because the world places an enormous financial premium on its success, and supremacy must be obtained at all costs.

"Under the conditions that obtained in the old days the competitive element entered into it in the rivalry of the various manufacturers, for they entered in the hope that they could beat their rivals, but the purpose of the race was to prove to the general public that a motor car would go, and was capable of covering long distances in a speedy and reliable manner; the events were educational, and made for the evolution of the machines. The financial aspect was satisfied with the experience gained and the advance made. The individual interest was not exterminated.

"Dozens of the racers owned their own cars, and others raced at their own expense. New cars were built for every race, each new car making a big advance over former cars. Cars were not ready until the very last minute before the race, and in consequence none was particularly handicapped. In each event were lines of untried cars formed up to test their capabilities over hundreds of miles of unknown road. In addition to the excitement of driving a new car you always had the satisfaction of driving a faster car than you ever drove before, perhaps faster than any one had ever driven before, over a road varying in grade, character, and scenery, with every kaleidoscopic feature. You had to prove your power to control a high-speed motor car at high pressure, and prove your superiority over your competitors.

"There was no circular course over which you could practice and study every little curve and corner for months. You traveled hundreds of miles of straight road, narrow road, right-angle corners, treacherous turns, maybe mountain passes, rough surfaces, and dangerous obstacles, all enveloped in a dense pall of dust caused by cars which preceded you. The unknown presents itself at every turn, and your neck and safety depend on the soundness of your judgment. If you are better able to deal with the ever-recurring problems you gain; if not you lose. You wrestle physically and mentally with the difficulties until the excitement of it enters your soul and you realize that this is the sport of the gods. The glorious uncertainty, capped by the exhilaration of speed, would fascinate the most hardened.

"But these conditions have changed. The terrific speeds of latter-day contests and the disasters of many of them have ended what need never have been ended with ordinary foresight, until the only form of motor racing that is possible is that which is confined to a circuit which cars travel round and round to complete the distance. The dreary monotony of these rounds destroys the charms and, instead of judgment, success hangs on reckless and daring driving rendered possible by knowledge of the course.

"The first circuit race was the Circuit des Ardennes, in 1902, and although I succeeded in winning, I never was more bored in a contest than during the last three-quarters of the distance. The continuous passing of the same landmarks and the knowledge of each turn and twist made it most tiring—an uninteresting driving strain instead of a delightful sporting event.

"It has been realized, too, that speed has its limitations; that reliability scores over speed, and that the combination of the two wins success, so that any slight stoppage may mean defeat in a race decided by seconds. The unlimited expenditure of money in preparation gives the cars of one make a big advantage, and win at all costs is the spirit. It is a pity. The result is that only men who make a business of driving can hope to be successful. No amateur owner would enter the contest unless a man of limitless means and leisure, so that he can take weeks for preparation and study every stone in the circuit. The business man finds racing an impossibility.

"And as a result of making driving a matter of dollars and cents and of increased speed, the contests are become gladiatorial. Fast speed adds interest, but is not necessary. There would be more interest if twenty keen automobilists would take twenty cars of like build drawn by lot on the day of a contest, and start on a stretch of road for a given point. When the twenty arrived at their destination there would be more to tell of roads missed, mechanical derangements met, and kindred subjects. Uncertainty of the road, uncertainty of your machine, uncertainty as to how your competitors were faring would give the interest, not the speed; you would pray for more, but be satisfied that your rivals were on an equality with you.

"It is simply with motor racing as with any other sport. Put a man in competition, with an interest in common and a chance of winning, and it does not matter whether it is riding or driving horses, sailing yachts, or running a foot race, it's good sport. Enjoyment comes from environment, companionship, temperament, and conditions—from equality and uncertainty. I look on motor racing as the full all the cravings of a restless, adventure-loving temperament."

New Orleans Entries To-day.

FIRST RACE.—Three and a half furlongs. Parisian Model, Elvira M., My Love, La Snamada, Edna Matter; Full Moon, Beola, Sea, and Sainesaw, 108 pounds each; Bensand, Bucket Brigade, Bayou Lark, Brawny Lad, and Truce, 109 each; Lawless, 118.

SECOND RACE.—Steeplechase, short course. Kara, 127 pounds; Pittkin, 130; Henry A. Schroeder, 137; Harefoot, 134; Lady Fonse, 140; Willie Newcomb, 148; Rules, 155.

THIRD RACE.—Six furlongs; selling. Blue-dale, 90 pounds; Spion, 96; Lady Carol, 100; Columbia Girl, 104; Ohlyesa, 106; Happy Jack, Goldie, and Dr. Sprull, 108 each; Goldproof, Salvage, and Cobmosa, 100 each; Dargin, 111.

FOURTH RACE.—Mile; the LaGarde Stakes; selling. Elfall and Grace Larsen, 100 each; Lamp Trimmer, 103; Tom Dolan, 107; Tileing, 111.

FIFTH RACE.—Six furlongs. Belmina and Tanbark, 100 pounds each; Prince Rover, Steelforth, Decklaw, Grace George, and Soprano, 105 each; Lens, 107; Capt. Hale, Bud Hill, and Eched, 110 each.

SIXTH RACE.—Six furlongs. Cora Price, Nellie Racine Excuse Me, Rose Marion, Imposition, and Nedra, 100 pounds each; Belsay, Voting, and Turbulence, 102 each; De Oro, 105; Coltness, 110.

SEVENTH RACE.—Mile and an eighth; selling. Dr. McCluer and St. Noel, 102 pounds each; Lady Ellison, 105; Fonsolca, 107; Torchello, 109; Ed Tierney, Arthur Cummer, Sanction, and Chamblee, 110 each.

The New York Times

Published: February 4, 1907

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