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# The Daily Record

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

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## A BRITISH INDUSTRIAL TRIUMPH. FREE TRADE'S SINGLE VICTORY.

The Motor Exhibition now proceeding at Olympia, London, is unique in that it represents perhaps the only British trade which has thrived under the generally depressing influence of Free Trade. The story of motor manufacture in the United Kingdom is one that every Englishman should read with pride. How the home manufacturers, entering the competition under a tremendous handicap, confronted on every hand by a stream of foreign cars pouring in duty free, with practically every record held by French, Italian, American, or German cars,—how they set their shoulders to the wheel and, by dint of true British perseverance and skill, succeeded in evolving a series of British-built cars second to none in capabilities of speed, durability, and general efficiency, would make a splendid narration. The accomplishment of this great feat is partly described in a letter printed by a London contemporary from a trade correspondent, as follows:—

The epoch-making motor show now open at Olympia presents the most striking evidence in favour of Free Trade as opposed to Protection, under whatever name it may masquerade, which the nation has seen, perhaps, since Free Trade was introduced. It will be well within the memory of those of your readers who have taken an interest in the motor trade since its inception in this country that British motor engineers were regarded as handicapped by the antiquated regulations regarding speed and other matters which were then in force in the United Kingdom, while their French rivals were not only free from such restrictions, but were encouraged by their paternal Government and by a generous Press. It thus befell that French engineers, with their historical association with internal combustion engines and their well-merited reputation as skilful mechanics, had several years' start of our engineers, who were prevented from testing their vehicles on the road and had no market had they succeeded in producing them. The restrictive "Act" was repealed—Emancipation Day, 14th November, 1896, arrived, and the memorable scramble to Brighton heralded the birth of a new British industry. Promptly the British engineers, with Napier at their head, with all his unrivalled experience in exact workmanship, stepped into the arena, and, undaunted by the handicap against them, challenged the supremacy of their rivals in the field which they had regarded as their own.

A stern chase is proverbially a long chase, and this was no exception. Principles had to be evolved, tools had to be designed and made, operatives had to be trained, and, feeling that some compensation was due to them for the position in which they were placed, it is small wonder that British engineers should have suggested that some encouragement and support should be accorded to the infant industry in the shape of a tax upon imported cars. In view of Colonial practice under similar circumstances the proposal seemed reasonable, but the principles of Free Trade were, and are, too sacred to be violated even under such exceptional conditions, and it is to the eternal credit of British engineers that with no adventitious advantages at home, and with tariffs against them abroad, they have, by their skill and enterprise, overtaken and passed their competitors, and have caused British cars to be accepted as the standard of excellence for design and workmanship wherever, all over the world, motor-cars are in use. And now, while we sympathise with the French engineers under the altered circumstances, we cannot fail to recognise that, despite their old prestige and accumulated experience, they have taken the second place; their trade, sick unto death; their great races, abandoned; their "Salon" closed; while we find at Olympia this week the greatest motor show that the world has ever seen.

Now I venture to think that the altered relations of the motor trade in the two countries are mainly due to their respective fiscal arrangements. The decadence of the French trade is, I believe, mainly due to Protection, for, although I do not know the duties payable upon the materials of which cars are made, it is safe to assume that whatever portion is imported must pay both "Douane" and "Octroi," while the report of the Board of Trade inquiry (Cd. 4512) upon the cost of living in France has

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shown us how heavily food is taxed in that country. But apart from these matters, which affect the cost of producing a car, the trade is to a still greater extent handicapped by the cost of running it, which is so great as to be prohibitive except in the case of very rich people, a limited number in all countries, and notably so in France. A French gentleman who formerly owned a motor-car in Paris told me recently that he had to give it up on account of the high price, due to duties, of petrol, which he said cost in Paris, I think, about 2s. to 2s. 6d. per gallon, and put the use of cars beyond the power of all men of moderate means. On the other hand, I am disposed to think that the refusal of our Government to assist British motor engineers by putting a duty on imported cars was a blessing in disguise, since it compelled them, as a condition of existence, to devote all their energies to improvement in the quality and reduction in the cost of their cars, while the low price of petrol in this country, despite the small duty which is to be expended for the benefit of motorists, permits makers to develop the trade in cars of moderate price for men of moderate means, upon whom the trade must mainly depend for its support and success.

## NEWS OF THE WORLD.

WASHINGTON (D.C.), Friday.—The Navy Department will shortly propose to Congress the building of two battleships, each of 26,000 tons, and a fleet repair ship. LONDON, Friday.—It is now officially reported that the British Admiralty does not intend to establish a fleet base at Scapa Flow, Orkney Islands, as previously stated.

LONDON, Friday.—This morning's papers report that the Second Division of the Home Fleet, consisting of battleships of the King Edward class (16,500 tons), five armoured cruisers, and 24 torpedo-boat destroyers, will be permanently based on the Orkney Islands from the beginning of next year. The First Division of the Home Fleet, comprising four Dreadnoughts, four other battleships, two Invincible (Dreadnought) cruisers, and two further armoured cruisers, will be stationed at Sheerness instead of Portland, as heretofore. The Atlantic Fleet will be based on Dover. The old Channel Fleet will also probably be reinstated. By these measures the number of

battleships in home waters will be increased from 22 to 28.

WINDSOR, Friday.—Reuter's representative has been accorded an interview by the Portuguese Foreign Minister who is accompanying King Manoel on the present visit. The Minister emphasised the importance of King Manoel's visit which proved the notably excellent relations between Great Britain and Portugal. He expressed a hope that the Anglo-Portuguese commercial treaty, now under discussion, would supplement everything which was still lacking in the relations between the two countries. Between the British and Portuguese administrations in South Africa the best of good feeling prevailed. The rumour that Portugal intended to abandon part of her possessions in Africa was absurd.

(From our correspondent.) LONDON, Thursday.—It is announced today that the Budget must not be regarded as finally killed by the introduction of Lord Lansdowne's amendment. The second reading will simply be postponed until the country passes judgment on the measure, and the Bill may still pass if the Liberals are returned. In any case, a new Budget must be speedily framed if the Unionists get in, and the task will be one of stupendous difficulty. Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who will be Chancellor if the Unionists win, is reported to be already engaged on a new Budget plan. It is everywhere admitted that the rejection must produce a temporary period of financial chaos, but the results will not be so far-reaching or disastrous as the Liberal Press is trying to make out.

CARACAS, Friday.—The black plague has reappeared here. Up to the present three deaths have occurred, and several other cases are under observation.

CHERRY (Illinois), Friday.—The shaft of the St. Paul mine was reopened last evening to permit of the descent of a rescue party, including three inspectors. In one of the galleries they came across a large number of dead bodies, the removal of which is now proceeding. The death-roll is now estimated at between 350 and 400. All the men must have been dead for over four days, and in some cases the recovery of the bodies is doubtful. State experts and firemen have been on the spot since Tuesday. The resealing of the shaft had to be carried out because, the moment the pit was open, fierce flames shot up into the air. It was at once closed, and carbonic acid gas pumped through a small aperture to extinguish the blaze. Many relatives of the entombed miners gathered round the pit-head protested strongly against the resealing of the shaft, which they took to mean that all hope of rescue was at an end. In some cases they attempted to forcibly prevent the work of the men detailed to close the mine. The cause of the disastrous explosion is still unknown. The inspectors say that recently the electric installation in the mine failed to work, and the men were accordingly equipped with electric torches, one of which caused the disaster. The affair is shortly to have a thorough investigation at the hands of a Government commission.

SALONIKA, Friday.—The Villa Allantini, the residence of ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid, is now completely surrounded by high walls. The former Sultan is thus cut off from all communication with the outer world.

WASHINGTON (D.C.), Friday.—An incident which may have sensational developments has occurred between the United States and Nicaragua. According to reports which reached here last night, two American citizens who took an active part in the revolutionary movement against President Zelaya and were captured in one of the fierce fights last week, have been condemned to death by the President. One cable message says the men have already been shot. The State Department is taking vigorous steps in this matter, and two United States warships are leaving this morning with orders to proceed at full speed to Nicaragua, the senior commander being temporarily armed with plenipotentiary powers. In consequence of the incident, the reception by President Taft of the new Nicaraguan Minister has been indefinitely postponed. Travellers arriving at New Orleans state that more than 500 persons, suspected of sympathising with the revolutionists, were summarily shot, and that President Zelaya has ordered many other executions to be carried out.

(Continued on page 2.)