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London)

Motor Omnibus Company, who have had experience in the working of motor omnibuses, have prepared an estimate of the profits to be derived from the company's business. They consider that each motor omnibus of the company should have a minimum average run of 90 miles per day and should earn a net profit of at least four cents per mile, or \$3.60 per day, or \$21.60 per week of six days. In arriving at this estimate of profit they have taken into account the conditions under which a company would work in London, and they are of opinion that their estimate of four cents a mile per omnibus should be naturally increased as the company's business develops, and also having regard to the fact that the Birmingham company is actually earning an average of six cents a mile on an average run for each omnibus of 90 miles a day.

Another estimate, of a different character, appears in the London *Electrician*. It is by an expert, and is as follows:

The working cost of a motor omnibus, including repairs, is from 23 to 24 cents per car mile, and its carrying capacity thirty-four passengers. The working cost of an electric tramcar is from 10 to 12 cents per car mile, and its carrying capacity from fifty to seventy passengers. The much greater margin between working expenses and earning power is far more than sufficient to cover the disbursements put upon the tramway owner for capital charges, track maintenance, paving maintenance and rates wherever anything approaching a frequent service is demanded.

Other countries are adopting the motor-bus, as the following shows: The Italian *Gazzetta Ufficiale* of February 13 publishes a law authorizing the Minister of Public Works to grant subsidies for the establishment and working of automobile services in districts which are not served by railways and tramways. The annual subsidy shall not exceed \$121.66 per kilometer (0.6214 mile), for a service carrying passengers, luggage and goods; \$77.86 per kilometer for a service carrying only passengers, luggage and small agricultural produce, and \$38.93 per kilometer for a service carrying only goods. The subsidy shall be granted for a term of not more than ten years, which term may be renewed.

Catalogues, price-lists, and other literature issued by manufacturers are requested by American Consul Urbain J. Ledous, at Prague, Bohemia, Austria, who proposes the establishment there of a commercial intelligence department for supplying information relating to American goods to foreign inquirers. Manufacturers are invited to send, in addition to such matter, the name of their firm, post-office and cable address, cable code, export discounts and terms, languages of correspondence, references or commercial rating and list of foreign branches and agents. All such information will be preserved in card index cabinets for ready reference, and there will be a folder for the catalogues of each firm.

PREDICTION OF 1905

Preparations for the Gordon Bennett.

Twenty-four Entries and \$30,000 Prize List for French Eliminatories—Drivers Already at Practice.

Special Correspondence.

PARIS, April 1.—The general committee of the Automobile Club of France has just confirmed the dates chosen by the sporting committee for the Gordon Bennett race, namely, Friday, June 16, for the preliminaries, and Wednesday, July 5, for the cup race.

Those prophets who predicted a Gordon Bennett without any competitors are sadly discredited, for twenty-four cars are entered for the race at the present moment, and nine hours yet remain between the departure of the American mail and the final closing of the lists. Entrance fees aggregating \$24,000 have been paid into the club's treasury.

The entries are as follows:

No. of Cars.	Maker.
1	Charron-Girardot-Voigt.
3	Panhard-Levassor.
1	Gobron.
3	Richard-Brasier.
3	Bayard-Clément.
3	Darracq.
3	Renault.
1	Automoto.
3	De Dietrich.
3	Hotchkiss.

Additional interest is given to this list by the decision of the Automobile Club committee to select the five cars representing France in the Vanderbilt Cup race from the winners of the preliminary races on June 16.

Every day sees an increase in the number of chauffeurs visiting the Auvergne circuit; not only are French drivers on the spot, but Italy is already represented by the Fiat, and the Mercedes people have begun to make themselves acquainted with the road. The German firm has taken an establishment at Clermont, and at the time of the race will have thirty employees, twelve cars and about twenty chauffeurs on the spot. Baron de Caters, one of the Mercedes drivers, has taken a villa at Royat for the season, and the Panhard firm has rented almost the whole of the Hotel Richelieu at Royat. The De Dietrich company has secured a villa for its staff, and the Automobile Club of France has obtained similar housing accommodation in the district.

For some time now Rougier, of the De Dietrich firm, has been on the circuit; Hémerly, one of the Darracq drivers, and two of the Renault conductors are also similarly employed. Girardot, with his 90-horsepower C. G. V. fitted with the engine to be used in the race, will in a few days be on the course, and intends to do 500 kilometers a day to thoroughly familiarize himself with the road. Albert Clément will also shortly spend a few days on the course,

using his last year's Vanderbilt race car. Heath, also with last year's Vanderbilt Cup Panhard, is at present in daily practice on the circuit. Rigolly intends practicing on his 100-horsepower Gobron, which is entered for the races without any changes of importance. One of the last year Richard Brasier cars will also be used to acquaint the firm's chauffeurs with the course.

The preparation of the circuit is in full swing. The officials of the Automobile Club are on the spot, and are aided in their task by the Auvergne Automobile Club committee. At Volvic, Laqueuille and Vauriac bridges will be constructed over the grade crossings, with a gradient of not more than 10 per cent, and at a cost of probably

Drivers.
Girardot.
Heath, Teste and Henri Farman.
Rigolly.
Théry, Caillois and Stead.
Albert Clément, Hanriot and Villemain.
Hémerly, Wagner, De La Touloubre.
Lisz, Edmond and Bernin.
Lapertot.
Gabriel, Rougier and Duray.
Achille Fournier, Le Blon and Lavergne.

\$9,000 for the three. It is probable that a foot bridge will also be erected to connect each side of the road in all the big villages on the course. In addition to this, \$10,000 will be spent on westrumiting the dusty parts of the road, and doubtless an equal amount will be necessary to pay the expenses of the 6,000 troops for patrolling the circuit. At several of the bends it has been found necessary to increase the convexity of the road, and this will be done by means of wooden planks. Three grand-stands will be erected on the plateau of Laschamps, one of the finest sites in this wildly beautiful country, and from which a vast view will be obtained over the surrounding district. The official stand will occupy the central position, and those on each side will be respectively for members of French and foreign automobile clubs, and for the paying public.

A short time ago a request was sent to all foreign clubs engaged in the race, asking their consent to a reduction of the distance, in order that the start and finish should both be at the same point. Careful measurement of the circuit, however, has shown that this is not necessary, for instead of 132 kilometers, as was at first thought, the distance around is found to be 137 kilometers, giving 548 for the total distance—but two kilometers short of the minimum stipulated in the regulations.

The total sum received by the Automobile Club up to date as prizes for the pre-