BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION.

MOTOR CARS.

By H. MASSAO BUIST.

THE Palace of Engineering at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley is a building of such vast proportions that it would be possible for the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders and the Cycle and Motor Cycle Manufacturers' and Traders' Union to hold a single exhibition entirely representative in the international sense of the motor car, the motor cycle, the agricultural, commercial, and utility motor coachmaking, motor-boat building, aerial and marine motor industries, as well as of the tyre industry and all manner of accessory industries in the one building. Had this vast ferro-concrete structure been available three or four years earlier there would have been no possibility of enlarging Olympia. As it is, the society has taken a long lease of the building at Kensington; no doubt, therefore, our London motor shows will continue to be held on the group system, as distinct from having one enormous exhibition representing every phase of the movement, with the incidental gain that vast numbers of the public would be led to examine the commercial, aircraft, and marine sections who at present fail to attend when a special display is devoted to them. That, however, is by the way.

Meantime the society, in conjunction with the union, displays on 50,000 sq. ft. of space in the Palace of Engineering at Wembley 122 different types of motor vehicles, the contributors being 47 makers of cars, 23 builders of commercial motor vehicles, 27 motor cycle and sidecar manufacturers, 14 coachbuilders, 11 pedal cycle makers, 2 manufacturers of agricultural tractors, 124 accessory and component makers, and 8 tyre manufacturers out of the 78 car builders, 100 coachbuilders, 118 component manufacturers, 40 builders of petrol lorries, 18 builders of steam, and 16 manufacturers of electric vehicles engaged in the industry to-day and having an aggregate output of approximately 80,000 motor vehicles, which gives direct employment to upwards of 250,000 men.

NATURE OF THE PRESENT OPPORTUNITY.

This display has none of the crowded effect inevitable at Olympia. Yet it is not very much short of any one display ordinarily housed in the original part of the Kensington building. In the Wembley building it occupies but a fraction of the whole space available. The lighting is by an artistic roofing scheme, provided by the society, of red and cream with scenic wall panels. A standard form of plain notice board has been adopted, and one set beside each car bears a legend relating the chief particulars about it; the whole is a very attractive exhibit and cleverly conveys the idea of quality. Our manufacturers have risen to the occasion, and there is only one exception to the policy of adopting quiet coachwork schemes. The visitor has the opportunity of seeing what the cars will look like on the road, the scheme assisting this purpose, a point which is not always the case in exhibition buildings. Few bare chassis are shown. Many of the large cars are of no use to the average medical man, but the popular standardized types are well represented and it must be by no means concluded that the total exhibit is of colonial models only. On the contrary, many of the machines represent simply the latest standardized versions of the 1924 types of motor cars and motor carriages which were introduced to the public in their original forms on the occasion of the passenger car show at Olympia in November last. The current exhibition will not in any way clash with the next passenger car show at Olympia, the date of which has been advanced, because at Wembley there are shown only cars that are immediately available to the public, whereas in October next there will be shown at Kensington the cars that will be standardized for the 1924-25 purchasing season. Therefore those medical men who were not able to visit Olympia last November have

the opportunity now to inspect in convenient fashion the cream of the current products of the home industry. Nearly all the cars presented at Wembley are shown by the firms whose names they bear; in other words, the car assembling branch of the trade is very little represented. It is scarcely necessary to explain to the medical man the advantage to him of having a car built by the firm whose name it bears, as contrasted with the practice, which it is difficult for the public to detect, of enterprising financiers giving a car a name and buying the components of which it is built from specialists, each of whom works independently of the rest.

TO SUIT USERS OVERSEAS.

Some English firms have specialized very effectively in cars for overseas service; notably Arrol-Johnston, whose 20 h.p. vehicle is the result of Mr. T. C. Pullinger's recent world tour. Some of the Armstrong-Siddeley models are especially designed for overseas service, and Mr. Henry, the representative of this firm, is just completing a world tour to study conditions at first hand. Austin products are built by Sir Herbert Austin, who lived for some years overseas; and, at the other end of the alphabet, may be mentioned, for illustration's sake, certain of the Vauxhall and Wolseley models with specially suitable tracks, axle, steering, springing, braking, and ground clearance schemes, among other points. With a view to assisting medical men on vacation from overseas some manufacturers represented at the exhibition are holding supplementary displays of their overseas models in their showrooms in the heart of London; all information under this head is obtainable at the Exhibition at Wembley. Many makers are quoting prices that are exceedingly tempting to overseas visitors in that the figures are approximately the same as those for delivery here for ordinary home service. Moreover, in some cases, such as Crossley, the visitor from overseas is offered the further advantage that he can use his car here for any period up to six months, and thereafter have it packed and dispatched free of charge to his nearest port. These are but a few things that are being done with a view to catering for the market overseas and establishing trade in British cars there.

CANADIAN, AUSTRALASIAN, AND AFRICAN ENTERPRISE.

Apart from motor car models in the Queen's Doll's House and the full scale largest types of aero engines in H.M. Government buildings, there are in the Canadian, Australasian, and African buildings exhibits that bear on the problems of motoring. Thus there is at Wembley a representation, not of English and Scottish motor manufacturing merely, but also of such engineering work in the Dominions overseas. For example Buick, Chevrolet, Oakland, and Oldsmobile cars, as well as pneumatic tyres made in Canada, are displayed in the Canadian building. Australia sends us the interesting Wege engine, which is not particularly designed for service in this country, however, and New Zealand a very interesting example of a two-seat body made on the curved panelling system, and, therefore, in striking contrast with merely cheap construction.

The African exhibits include kerbside pumps bearing the word "Natalite" supplemented by a legend: "Why not grow your own motor fuel?" This is in reference to an interesting type of spirit that was referred to in these columns eighteen months ago when dealing with the prospects of the evolution of alternative motor fuels. That the Dominions, including Australia, will be producing in quantity forms of motor spirit derived from the special cultivation of various classes of vines, cereals, and tubers is assured already. But it will be a process of time before that production will be of sufficient quantity to effect any appreciable influence on fuel as we shall use it for motoring in the Mother Country. Further, it will not be an entire substitute for oil fuel, because so enormous a market is beginning to develop for the residuary products of distilling petrol from crude oil that petrol will be able to compete in price with any other form of motor spirit in the coming years. At the moment the price of fuel is apparently high, though perhaps not actually so if the purchasing power of money in pre-war times is had in mind as a basis

of comparison. As for Canada, though her total population is scarcely larger than that of London and environs, nevertheless her output of cars is very much larger than our own because one family in five in the Dominion owns a registered private car, apart altogether from the ever-increasing use of commercial and agricultural motor machinery there. Moreover, it pays American manufacturers with Canadian factories to export from there to this country and to certain other British Dominions, because they thereby save approximately one-third of the import duties into this country, and so on. The great improvement in coachwork standardized more in accordance with European lines, alike as to decorative schemes and general design, makes the Canadian exhibits at this exhibition extremely interesting. Australia has scarcely more than a nucleus motor manufacturing industry at the moment. That this branch of manufacture will be developed there to a considerable extent in a few years is assured already. At the moment Canada is the only overseas Dominion where motor manufacturing is really on a large scale. Therefore the motor exhibition at Wembley is very interesting and likely to be of great convenience to those who desire to study what motors are available to them at the moment.

Medical Notes in Parliament.

[FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.]

The Budget.

THE Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Snowden, on April 29th, introduced the Budget in a speech of an hour and three-quarters which was followed by a crowded House.

Mr. Snowden recalled that there was on last year's account a surplus of £48,329,000, which had passed automatically to the reduction of the National Debt. This was due to excess revenue of £18,500,000 on last year's estimates, and to a reduction of expenditure of £27,750,000 on those estimates, with a small balance otherwise obtained. Referring to the factors which gave this surplus, the Chancellor mentioned that the receipts from spirits exceeded the estimate by £6,000,000 and from tobacco by £2,000,000. The larger consumption of spirits was ascribed to a long and cold winter and the prevalence of influenza. He understood that whisky had a considerable reputation as a specific for that complaint. The increased revenue from spirits was obtained notwithstanding that at the end of the year large clearances did not take place. Death duties exceeded the estimate by £5,800,000; income tax by £8,331,000; super-tax by £2,640,000, and corporation profits tax by £3,340,000. On excess profits duty there was a deficit of £12,000,000. The surplus on income tax was attributable mainly to the arrears from the previous year proving more productive than was expected. In regard to expenditure, Mr. Snowden, after recalling what had been saved on the fighting services, mentioned that the Civil Service savings amounted to £12,250,000. Coming to the National Debt, he stated that since December, 1919, the reduction had been over £850,000,000—practically the amount of the National Debt at the beginning of the war—and thus the annual interest charged had been brought down by £40,000,000.

Passing to the estimates for the present year, Mr. Snowden showed that he had to provide for £790,026,000 as compared with £816,616,000, the estimate for the previous financial year. The estimates for the fighting services showed a reduction of nearly £7,000,000 on last year's, in spite of the expansion of the Air Force. Coming to revenue, the Chancellor reckoned that on Customs and Excise there would be a rise of 2½ per cent., and that the total of taxed revenue—Customs, Excise, and Inland Revenue—would be £19,000,000 more than last year's estimate, and £1,000,000 more than last year's receipts. Before stating how he proposed to deal with the surplus of £38,074,000 which such estimates of expenditure and revenue would give for the purposes of relief of taxation, he announced that the Government did not see its way to take up the Imperial Conference proposals bequeathed to it by Mr. Baldwin's Government. Existing preferences would be retained, but liberty would be reserved to propose reduction or abolition of such preferences. It was intended to allot a day before the Committee stage of the Finance Bill to allow of a discussion of the preference proposals of the late Government adopted at the Imperial Conference, and to leave the House free to unfettered decision upon them. Next, Mr. Snowden indicated certain small modifications in motor vehicle licences—to allow the owner of a licence to obtain refunds for each complete calendar month unexpired on surrender and on payment of a small fee; and to reduce the surcharge on quarterly licences from 20 to 10 per cent. No change would be made in the main scheme of income tax allowances. It was intended, however, to remove the limitation of the allowances granted in respect of a housekeeper to a widower with young children. Legislation had also been promised on several legal points, and it was intended to introduce a bill to enable small sums of income tax to be recovered by proceedings under the Summary Jurisdiction Acts instead of costly and cumbersome proceedings in the High Courts.

Mr. Snowden then reached the most interesting part of his pro-

nouncement—what was to be done with the surplus of £38,074,000 already mentioned. In the first place he proposed to reduce the sugar duty from 25s. 8d. per cwt. to 11s. 8d. per cwt.—that was from 2½d. per lb. to 1¼d. per lb., a reduction of 1½d. per lb. This change, except for imported manufactured or prepared goods, would operate at once, and in the latter cases from July 1st. The cost would be £17,700,000 this year, or £18,400,000 in a full year. Next he proposed to reduce the tea duty from 8d. per lb. to 4d. per lb.—that is, by half. Tea from India and Ceylon would continue to have a preference of one-sixth, and thus would pay a duty of only 3½d. per lb.—the alteration would apply from May 5th. The estimated cost was £5,000,000 this year, or £5,400,000 in a full year. The reduction would bring the duty below pre-war rate. Similar reductions would be made in the duties on cocoa, coffee, and chicory. The cost would be £800,000 this year or £843,000 in a full year. Thirdly, the extra duty of 50 per cent. on dried fruit imposed in 1915 would be allowed to lapse on August 1st. The loss was put at £200,000 this year or a quarter of a million in a full year. Thus on duties on food there would be a reduction of £23,700,000 this year, and the Chancellor was confident that these reductions would reach the consumer. Further, the small duty of 4d. per gallon upon sweetened table waters would be abolished, and the duty on herb beer would be repealed. The cost would be £200,000 this year, or £300,000 in a full year. Imported waters would be taxed on a sugar content.

Touching the McKenna duties, Mr. Snowden recalled that these were imposed in 1915 on imported motor cars, motor cycles, other than commercial vehicles, musical instruments, watches, and cinematographic films. They had been renewed each year and stood to expire on May 1st unless revived. He had decided that the time had come for these duties to disappear, but would give until August 1st next in order to enable the trade to clear off duty-paid stock. The cost of the abolition would be £2,500,000 this year, or £2,750,000 in a full year. In regard to the entertainment tax, he announced that duty on payment for admission up to and including 6d. would be abolished, and there would be a reduction of the duty on payment over that amount up to and including 1s. 3d. This would mean a loss of about half the revenue from such source. The change would operate from June 2nd at a cost of £3,400,000 this year, or £4,000,000 in a full year.

The Chancellor afterwards referred to steps which were being taken for the suppression of the evil of drinking methylated spirits. Arrangements had been made under the existing law whereby methylated spirits sold to the general public for domestic purposes would contain a denaturant which he was advised would make the spirits noxious and difficult to swallow, and, if that obstacle were overcome, would make the victim so ill, but not mortally so, that he was not likely to attempt to defraud revenue by continuing to take the drink. (See BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, April 19th, 1924, p. 729.)

In remarking that there would be no alteration in the rates of income tax or super-tax, Mr. Snowden said he must not be taken to imply that he anticipated the permanent maintenance of a 4s. 6d. income tax—only that in so far as concerned the relief he could afford to give this year he must prefer the claims of other taxpayers. Mr. Snowden next announced the repeal of the inhabited house duty. It has existed with a short interval for a century and a half as the historic successor of the "chimney and parlour tax." To large sections of the working and professional people of moderate means it was an unnecessary and irritating addition to their burden. The remission would give greater relief to the married man with an income of £500 a year than a reduction of 6d. in the income tax. It would cost £1,750,000 this year, or £2,000,000 in a full year. Finally, the Chancellor intimated that the corporation profits tax would be abolished from June 30th next. As a considerable interval elapsed between the time the profits were made and the duties were assessed the difference this year would not be very large. The change would cost £2,000,000 this year. Next year it would cost £5,000,000, and in a full year £12,000,000. Thus reductions in taxation would amount to £34,050,000 this year, or £40,443,000 in a full year. Thus would be left an estimated surplus of £4,024,000. He did not suppose it would be sufficient to meet all the expenditure Parliament might sanction during the year. The House was committed to the removal of the thrift disqualification for Old Age Pensions and there would be calls for housing and unemployment. But he was convinced that it was still possible to effect considerable economy, the saving from which would be available for new expenditure. Apart from the Finance Bill, legislation would be introduced to restore powers for land valuation.

Mr. Snowden claimed that the Budget had been arranged to confer the greatest benefit upon the greatest number, and avowed the belief that by increasing the purchasing power of the people it would stimulate trade and industry.

Sir Robert Horne, for the Opposition, followed custom in not attempting a detailed review at that stage. He remarked, however, that, subject to some qualification, this Budget might have been introduced by either of the old parties, and observed that the money being used for the remissions had been provided by Mr. Snowden's predecessors in office. Coming to points of disagreement, he deplored the action of the Government as to imperial preference and its decision as to the McKenna duties.

Mr. Asquith declared himself in hearty agreement with the main features of the Budget, especially as it was a Free Trade Budget.

The debate was adjourned. [In his speech Mr. Snowden made reference without particulars to some telephone charge concessions. The rates for local calls are to be reduced for the first unit calls (a radius of five miles) from 1½d. to 1d.; and for the second unit calls (a radius of 5 to 7½ miles) from 2½d. to 2d. For trunk calls a small reduction is to be made in the scale. The charges for removals will be modified. These changes are to apply from July 1st.]