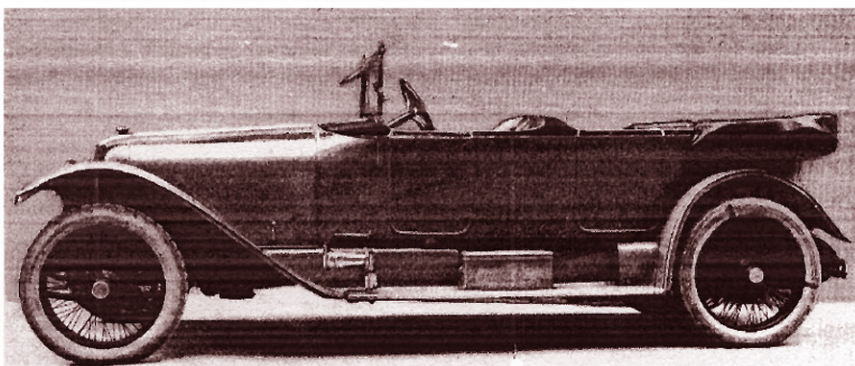


V A N I T Y F A I R

European Styles in Cars

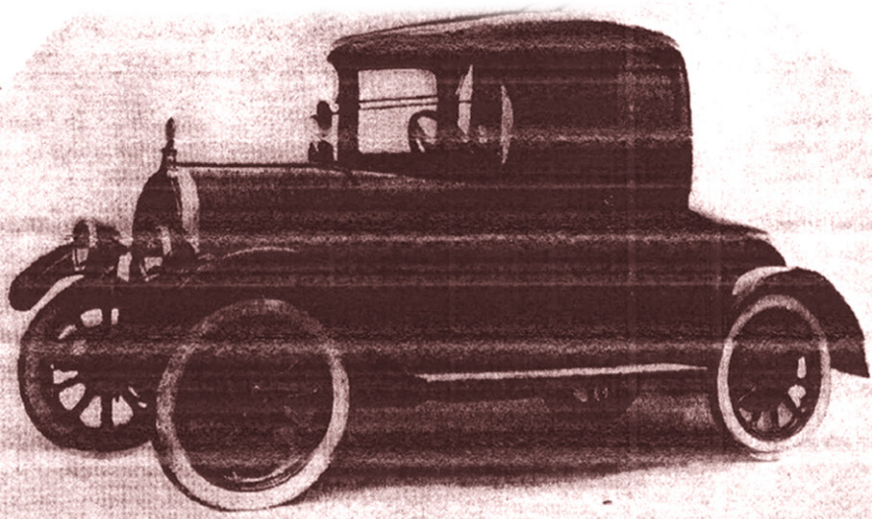
By GERALD BISS



PHOTOGRAPH FROM JOHN J. IDE

An interesting Belvalette 4-seated touring body on an 18-22-hp. Delahaye chassis. The varnished mahogany deck tapers to a point on the cowl.

PROBABLY the most interesting development at this season of the year, when motor affairs are always at their lowest ebb, has been the appearance on the Brooklands track of the team entered by the Sunbeam factory for the Indianapolis and Grand Prix races. By the time this is printed at least one of these cars will have shown its prowess in the International Sweepstakes, and the secrets of its construction will have become common property. Contrary to the original intention, the whole team is of the same design, from the drafting board of Mr. Louis Coatalen, and all were built at the Wolverhampton works. These little three litre machines of 130-hp. are simply another, and very convincing, proof of the interest being taken in the "straight eight" motor, at least for racing. They are low, short and particularly compact. Four Claudel-Hobson carburetors are fitted and, instead of a flywheel, there is a heavily balanced crankshaft which results in extraordinary acceleration. This allows of setting the engine very low in the chassis without sacrificing road clearance, and the mean center line from crankshaft, gearbox and propeller shaft inclines downward toward the front rather than toward the rear, in the ordinary way. The body and the engine are not set centrally between the wheels, but the right hand "halves" of the axles are longer than those on the left, so that left hand turns may be taken at a higher speed than would otherwise be possible.



A special coupe body built by Allen & Simmonds of Reading on the 11.9-hp. Bean chassis. The Bean is produced probably in greater quantities than any other British car. It has a wheel-base of 102 inches.

It is not clear yet, in spite of their popularity for racing, whether or not "straight eight" motors will become the fashion for medium sized touring cars. For contests, the design keeps the hood narrow and reduces wind resistance, while the construction is light, rigid and accessible. Up to the present, however, the only touring cars of this type are big, costly machines.

However, from France several "straight eights" are already reported among next season's models. Incidentally, the Voisin Company, in addition to its famous four-cylinder sleeve-valve engine, is producing a high grade twelve-cylinder machine for next year's market. This is the first twelve built in France, formerly the pioneer in new design.

In England, the tendency is largely in the direction of economy and the light car, for obvious reasons, which we hope will prove only temporary. Further, there is even a tendency to trim off all accessories which are not absolutely essential, such as electric starters, lighting sets, instruments and other comforts. Prices are still being cut vigorously, most sensational being a second £300 reduction on all Vauxhall products, followed by one of £250 to £325 on the Crossley models.

It has been arranged to hold a heavy vehicle show in October at Olympia and again to hold a double concurrent show of passenger cars at Olympia and the White City from November 3rd to 12th, to be followed by a motorcycle exhibition at Olympia.