RISE IN GASOLINE PRICE COST CONSUMERS $500,000 PER DAY—FURTHER BOOSTS EXPECTED

Gradual Increase During Past Three Months Swells Users' Outlay —Federal Trade Commission Investigating Causes Of Advance In Market—One Cent Jump A Gallon Means $183,151 Daily.

(By Nancy Hanks)

Days of thrift and nights of profit have come to pass in the oil industry. While public attention has been fixed on disclosures brought to light by the Senate Investigating Committee, gasoline prices, out of the spotlight for the moment, have been going upward gradually until consumers today are paying $500,000 a day or more for gasoline than they paid a few months ago.

From 85 to 90 per cent. of this sum, economists estimate, is paid by the automobile users of the United States. The remaining 10 to 15 per cent. is paid by other consumers of gasoline.

Nor does there appear at the present moment an end of the price-climbing. Further increases are expected by those who have been following the stormy course of the oil industry during the past few months. Another $500,000-a--day increase lies Another $500,000-a-day increase lies in fact, that it is regarded as quite likely.

How much of the past and prospective increases are due to economic conditions and how much to artificial manipulation of the market cannot be reliably estimated on the basis of available information. However, the Federal Trade Commission has undertaken an inquiry into those questions and is proceeding to develop such facts as it deems pertinent to the investigation.

Exhaustive figures made public by the Bureau of Mines show that the consumption of gasoline in the United States during 1923 averaged 18,315,165 gallons a day. Exports during the year brought the daily average demand for gasoline up to 29,701,786 gallons, of which about 90 per cent. was burned up in the United States.

One cent a gallon increase in the price of gasoline, according to these figures, means a rise in price of $183,151 a day to domestic users of gasoline, or about $5,500,000 a month. The average price increase since the low levels of last summer is roughly estimated at 3 cents a gallon at retail On that basis the increase already put into effect has mounted to about $500,000 a day, or at the rate of $200,000,000 a year.

Last year was the biggest, in point of production, that the refineries ever experienced. More than 7,500,000,000 gallons were produced—almost half as much again as the output during 1921 and more than 2½ times the ouptput of 1917. The immense yield of the new fields in California brought crude oil production to the highest figures ever recorded and increased gasoline output followed as a matter of course. So did lowered prices.

At the present time, however, the yield of crude petroleum is decreasing. Geological survey figures, made public recently, disclose an average decrease of more than 350,000 barrels a day during January. No great new fields are in immediate sight to bring the figures back to their high level, nor is such relief desired in the oil industry, according to well-founded reports. The oil men were buried under an output last year that shot prices sharply downward and cut heavily into prospective profits. Naturally, they do not want a repitition this year of that situation.

In the face of decreasing crude oil production, demand for gasoline is definitely increasing. Bureau of Mines figures show, although during December—latest month for which information is available—the usual seasonal decline in demand was shown. December gasoline production also, was the highest on record, exceeding demand by nearly 90,000,000 gallons.

The pickup in demand with the coming of spring together with the decrease in crude petroleum yield will necessitate, in the opinion of officials here, an increasing volume of petroleum imports, so that the United States will come more and more to depend upon foreign sources for its supply. That is, of course, unless a big new field is developed in this country in the near future. Even if that is done, from three to five months must elapse before its effect will be felt on the market, specialists say.

South America—notably Peru—is beginning to send much oil to the United States, and relief may be forthcoming from that quarter. Also fields in Texas and Arkansas promise increasing yield. These will tend to retard price increases somewhat, it is thought, but not sufficiently to prevent prices slipping up a few notchés higher as winter passes and better motoring weather comes. The days of 30-cent gasoline are not far away, it is believed. If they don't come this year, they may be expected next, unless, of course, other Bonanza fields are located.

MRS. HARMAN BURIED AT ELKRIDGE.

The funeral of Mrs. Catherine G. Harman, wife of James E. Harman, of Elkridge, who died at her home, took place at St. Augustine's Catholic Church, Elkridge.

Burial was in St. Augustine's Cemetery.

DUNDALK PASTOR TO GIVE LENTEN SERMON SERIES.

The Rev. Josepph L. Weidenham pastor of St. Rita's Catholic Church, Dundalk, will deliver a series of Lenten sermons at St. Mark's Catholic Church, Catonsville, beginning tomorrow (Sunday) evening. His subjects will be: "The Fool—Time vs. Eternity"; "The Cheat—Playing False with God"; "The Wrecker—Scandal"; "The Murmurer—Station in Life"; "The Dodger—Our Crosses"; "The Doer—The Real Catholic."

"LEAP YEAR ALL BUNK," SAYS "BILLY" PARKER.

"Billy" Parker, the genial marriage license clerk in the office of Clerk of the Court Wm. P. Cole, thinks Leap Year is all bunk and holds fast to that opinion despite the fact that figures show higher totals for marriage licenses for a corresponding period this year than last.

"Billy" thinks it is simply a reatcion against the slump in the marriage market that has been on since 1920.

Things are getting easier, he says, and with the hope of reduction in taxes and a lighter burden as to the cost of living people are willing to take a chance again.

FUNERAL OF H. J. MILKE TAKES PLACE.

Funeral services for Henry J. Milke, eighty, who died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. William A. Ritter, Philadelphia road and Spring avenue, Raspeburg, were held.

Burial was in Mount Carmel Cemetery.

NEW CATONSVILLE CHURCH HOLDS FIRST SERVICES.

The first services of the new Catonsville Baptist Church, formed recently, were held Sunday morning in Odd Fellows Hall, Ingleside avenue.

The services were in charge of the Rev. Dr. William H. Baylor, of Baltimore City.

CATONSVILLE CHURCH PASTOR FORMS SELF-DENIAL CLUB.

The Rev. Edward A. Williams, pastor of St. Mark's Catholic Church, Catonsville, has formed a Self-Denial Club among the children of the parish.

During Lent the members will deny themselves of candy and amusements, and money thus saved will be given to the poor.

MISS MARY E. GREEN BECOMES BRIDE OF LAWRENCE E. ENSOR.

Miss Mary Elizabeth Green, daughter of the late Dr. John S. Green, of Long Green, on last Tuesday afternoon became the bride of Lawrence E. Ensor, a prominent member of the Baltimore County Bar. The ceremonw was performed at four o'clock at the rectory of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, at Texas, by the pastor, Rev. Albert E. Smith. Relatives and friends of the couple were present.

The bride wore a blue cloth traveling suit with hat and gloves to match. She carried a bouquet of lillies of the valley and orchids. She was attended by Miss Catherine Hanley as bridesmaid, and J. Howard Murray as best man. The bridegroom, bridesmaid and best man are graduates of Towson High School.

The couple have gone on a wedding trip to Florida, and on their return will reside in the fine new residence which Mr. Ensor has erected on Pennsylvania avenue, at Towson.

THIEF ENTERS RESIDENCE AT COUNTY SEAT.

A thief broke into the residence of Mrs. Robert Francis, on Pennsylvania avenue, Towson, one night recently.

A pocketbook which was on a bureau of the bedroom containing $12 was stolen. It belonged to a student of the State Normal School, who boarded in the house. An entrance was secured by forcing open a rear window.

UPPER FALLS MAN HOME FROM HOSPITAL.

Mr. Charles Monmonier, of Upper Falls, who was badly injured when a horse fell upon him several weeks ago, is now at his home after having been a patient at St. Joseph's Hospital, Baltimore City.

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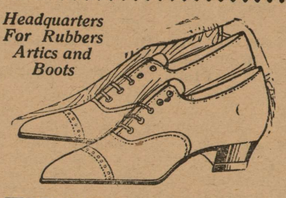

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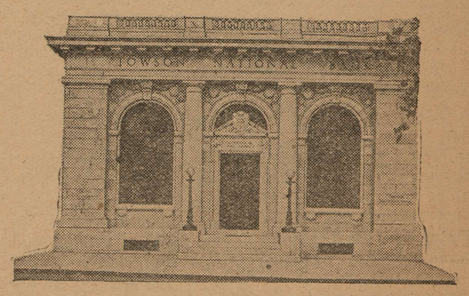

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