



Dinky Toys No. 516, Mercedes-Benz 230SL comes complete with a removable 'hardtop' hood.

THREE IN THE CONTINENTAL STYLE by Chris Jelley

AS many people know, Meccano Limited has a subsidiary company at Bobigny, near Paris. This company produces, among many other things, its own extensive range of Dinky Toys which are not normally available in Britain. However, we have obtained stocks of three outstanding French-produced Dinky Toys which should appeal to all collectors and more especially to those enthusiasts, of whom there are a great number, who like to obtain as many varieties of Dinky Toys as they can.

Packed in the striking Dinky visi-pak, the new French Dinkies will be coming along shortly and will give collectors the chance to add a 'Continental corner' to their layouts.

In addition to these, however, Dinky Toy dealers will also shortly be carrying stocks of two colourful new releases from the Liverpool factory—the Ford G.T. racing car and, by way of contrast, the 1913 (bull-nose) Morris Oxford, a really delightful 'oldie'. These are shown in colour in this month's 'M.M.' and I hope to give you fuller details about them in my next article.

Now, back to the three newcomers from France—all first-class replicas. To start with there is that elegant sports model the Mercedes-Benz 230 SL, to be marketed under sales number 516.

Detachable 'Hardtop'

First and most important, this model comes complete with a detachable 'hardtop' hood, as the top picture on this page shows.

Other features include opening bonnet, giving access to a detailed engine, opening boot, forward tipping seat backs, all-round suspension and full interior fittings. Also included are 'glass' headlamps, similar to those on our own

Mercedes-Benz 600, and a die-cast base. Finish is in metallic red with cream interior and hood.

The real-life vehicle is one which I should very much like to own myself. Power comes from a six-cylinder engine of 2,306 c.c. capacity, that develops a power-output of 170 b.h.p. All this gives the car a top speed of 125 m.p.h. and the amazingly high cruising speed of 110 m.p.h. A particularly surprising feature is the low fuel consumption—20-24 m.p.g.—in spite of the size of the engine. Transmission to the rear wheels is via a manually-operated four-speed and reverse gearbox, but automatic transmission is available as an optional extra. Riding comfort and road-holding are quoted as being magnificent, while disc brakes on the front wheels are a most important safety factor.

Sleek Beauty

Passing on now to our second release, it has often been said that the Citroen DS19 is 10 years ahead of its time, and this might well be true. Certainly, I can think of no other car in existence with such a distinctive, futuristic look as this sleek beauty and Meccano France have made an excellent job of producing it in model form. Sold under list No. 530, the Dinky version faithfully follows the lines of the prototype. Fitted with Prestomatic steering and four-wheel suspension it has, in addition, an opening bonnet, opening boot, windows, seats and steering wheel. Beneath the bonnet is a minutely-detailed engine, immediately in front of which a spare wheel is mounted. The final touch is given by jewelled headlights set into the front wings and a two-tone colour scheme of lime green with off-white roof and upholstery.

Manufactured by S.A. André Citroen of Paris, the actual

vehicle presents one or two surprises. By modern standards it is a big car—only three inches short of 16 feet—yet it is only powered by a four-cylinder engine. In spite of this, it has a maximum speed of 100 m.p.h. and can cruise over long distances at 80 m.p.h. But this is not really as astonishing as it seems when you consider that, although having only four cylinders, the engine has a capacity of 1,911 c.c. and a power output of 83 b.h.p. What is surprising, in view of the engine size, is that it has a fuel consumption ranging from 25 up to 30 m.p.g. This attractive Continental car has front wheel drive.

Two other particularly interesting features of the Citroen are the suspension — styled 'self-levelling hydraulic-pneumatic', and the front brakes, which are of the disc type. This latter feature, as regular readers of my notes will have gathered, is a particular favourite of mine because I believe discs to be far safer than ordinary drum brakes. Continental manufacturers seem to be much more advanced than we are from this viewpoint, although the position in this country is slowly changing.

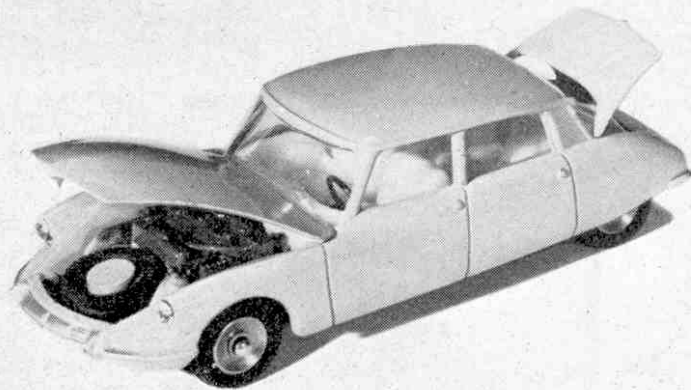
The Citroen Company, as already mentioned, is based in Paris and so are the producers of the car which forms the basis of our third French model—the Panhard 24C. Under sales number 524, this is a particularly attractive replica. In addition to standard fixtures such as suspension, Prestomatic steering and interior fittings, it has opening side windows—a feature which appeals to many collectors.

Minute Detail

An enormous amount of attention had been paid to body detail which is so minute as to embrace the titles 'Panhard' on the side and '24C' on the boot lid. 'Glass-covered' headlamp recesses are also in evidence, along with the correct amount of grille work. Body finish is dark grey, with red upholstery.

In real life, the Panhard is produced in two versions—a sports coupé and a saloon. The latter, serving as the prototype for our model, is identified by the designation 24C, whereas the number 24CT is allocated to the coupé. Power comes from a small, two-cylinder, o.h.v. engine of 843 c.c. that develops 50 b.h.p. Small as the engine may be, however, it succeeds in giving the car a top speed in excess of 90 m.p.h. and a cruising speed of 85. Average fuel consumption varies between 34 and 36 m.p.g. which, undoubtedly, could be termed economical.

Opening side windows are one of the features of the Panhard 24C (Dinky Toys No. 524). A very sleek little model.



The futuristic lines of the Citroen DS19 are well-produced in Dinky Toy No. 530. Note spare wheel in engine compartment

Twin headlamps are features of both versions, each pair being mounted in a single recess. This results in an unusual and not-unpleasant appearance, rather reminiscent of slanted Oriental eyes, that gives the car a character of its own. Both versions also have two doors but, inside, the saloon has fixed seating for four people—the coupé for only two, although two occasional seats are fitted.

As I write this, I have some official literature concerning the Panhard 24 in front of me (unfortunately, it is in French, which was never my strong-point at school!). As I understand it, the body is designed to 'aerodynamic conception'. Well, without being an aerodynamics expert, I can tell, from one glance at its sleek shape, that this is no idle boast!



American Display

Mr. David Stuart of Hollywood, California, has kindly supplied me with a photograph (reproduced above) and details of a display, incorporating Dinky Toys, that was mounted in the foyer of the Theatre Arts Building of Los Angeles City College. The function of this display and of a similar one set up at the University of California in Los Angeles by the Theatre Arts Department there, was to honour the American Broadcasting Company's contribution to higher education in America, and its 'unceasing efforts to improve the quality of television'.

The Dinky Toy's range of A.B.C. television equipment was ready-made for the job on hand, and was obtained and used accordingly to good effect, with Mr. Stuart himself playing an important part in preparing the scenes.

The accompanying picture shows only a small part of the display, which also includes two large buildings, a motorpool and a two-storey car park in addition to various outbuildings, a park, a lawn with a fountain and a second car park. In all, an extremely impressive layout.