

McGregor of Ford

RECENTLY ONE OF OUR FRIENDS FROM ACROSS the line was standing on the sidewalk in one of our larger Canadian cities viewing a march past of some of our soldier boys. The Kilties were going by.

"How typically Canadian are the kilties," he remarked. "We, on our side of the big pond associate the Highland uniform as much with Canada as with Scotland. Why is it?"

The reply was to the effect that it was because the Scotch had contributed so largely to the settlement and upbuilding of the Dominion and so many Canadians of Scottish ancestry had made themselves worthy of high ranks in the history of Canada.

Among these Canadians of Scotch parentage who have won a place among Canada's great builders of industry we must reckon Gordon M. McGregor of Ford, Ont.

About the year 1850 Mr. McGregor's grandparents set out from Glasgow, Scotland, to settle in what was then a new and far away country—Canada.

A few years later we find them located at Sarnia, Ontario, where a son, William, was born.

When still a young man William McGregor took a very active interest in the business and political life of the country and was elected a member of the Dominion Parliament, serving his country and his district well and faithfully for twenty years.

Gordon McGregor about whom this is written was the son of William McGregor and was born at Windsor, Ont. As Gordon McGregor grew to manhood he capably assumed much of the business cares of his father.

William McGregor eventually became interested in the Walkerville Wagon Company, at Walkerville, Ontario, and, shortly after, his son Gordon McGregor, was made manager of the firm. Here the son began to show that business foresight that has made him one of the prominent figures in the business world of Canada.

About this time an event took place in the carriage and wagon industry that caused the greatest concern. This was the advent and the establishment of the automobile as a practical vehicle.

Some dealers and builders were so alarmed that they thought their business would go to immediate rack and ruin and that the auto would supersede horse-drawn vehicles entirely. Others were cool-headed enough to see the advantages that this new industry afforded and governed themselves accordingly.

Among the latter was Gordon McGregor, who believed that he could successfully enter upon the business of manufacturing automobiles and looked about him for wise methods of doing this.

He got in touch with many manufacturers and looked over many makes of cars. Finally, he decided on one make and effected arrangements for its production in this country. The car he chose was the Ford.

He then tried to induce some of his friends in Canada to invest in the project and encountered all the usual cold, disheartening difficulties attendant upon the organization of a new and untried proposition. If they could have but looked ten or eleven years ahead he would have had no worries over the organization of a company even double or quadruple the size.

No stock was offered for sale outside of the Dominion until all Canadians had been given an opportunity to subscribe.

Finally, in August, 1904, they organized the company with a capital of \$125,000.

Then came the difficulties of manufacture and for three years it was a constant struggle to win success.

But success came and a greater success than the founders ever dreamed of—a success abounding in truly marvelous facts and figures.

And this is the story of Gordon McGregor of Ford, Ontario, and of the establishment of the Ford Motor Company of Canada, Limited.

To-day, half the population of four towns depend upon the Ford Company of Canada for their earnings. These are Ford City, Walkerville, Windsor and Sandwich.

The last census states that the average family consists of five persons. As there are over 3,000 employees in the towns

mentioned above whose work is devoted to the manufacture of Ford cars, this official census figure shows that there are over 15,000 people that look to the Ford Company for their support. This does not include the nine cities in Canada in which Ford branches are established, which would add over 3,600 more.

And Ford employees are paid three times as well as the average as shown by government wage reports.

In April, 1915, a time when most Canadian manufacturers were following a policy of retrenchment, the present Ford schedule of wages was adopted by which the company virtually handed to its employees, \$50,000 a month increased wages and reduced the working hours from nine to eight per day.

Surely, this is a great boon to Canadian workmen and their families. It is a boon to Canadian merchants who benefit by the increased purchasing power of all these families. It is a boon to the entire country in time of war when living expenses are higher than ever before.

And these employees have responded in like measure to the Empire's need for her people's support, Ford City alone having made what is probably a record contribution to the Patriotic Fund of \$34 per capita.

More than 300 Ford employees have enlisted for overseas service, and the Company is spending thousands of dollars in moving pictures which are offered free to assist in recruiting work all over the Dominion.

What an immense expression of confidence in the ultimate and unquestionable success of British Arms, and the allied cause was this great wage increase!

But it was not the only evidence of the Ford Company's faith in the Empire.

Before the outbreak of hostilities the company decided to reduce the price of the car by \$60. When the war came upon us the company might well have been pardoned for withholding this reduction for a time. But they never even considered it. The reduction was made the same day war was declared.

And you can realize how real this confidence in the victorious prosperity of Canada was when you consider that the prices of Ford cars are set in accordance with the estimated production for the coming fiscal year and not by any means are they based on the profits of the preceding year.

\$652,000 has been spent on new buildings in Ford City since the war began.

Over \$1,000,000 has been spent on new buildings in four Canadian cities since war began, making a total expenditure for new buildings of approximately a million and three-quarters.

\$1,000,000 has been spent in new equipment since war began.

900 men have been added to the pay roll since war began.

And if there is needed further proof of this company's absolute conviction in the progress and prosperity of the Dominion, it may be found in the fact that another \$60 reduction in the price of the car was made last August—making a total reduction of \$120.00 since war began.

This new price requires an output of 40,000 cars this year.

Then, too, the price of Ford parts has been reduced by \$147 per car—a reduction that means a big increased economy to Ford owners.

Such immense expenditures and price reductions as these are of the greatest benefit to the general welfare of the nation under existing conditions. They form one of the greatest possible influences towards boosting the prosperity of Canada.

Remember that all but \$16.88 worth of the material that goes into the construction of a Ford car is bought here in Canada—and it would all be bought here if it were possible to get it.

Truly, the Ford is, after all, a Canadian Car, built by Canadians. Very few Canadian manufacturers are able to show such a support to Canadian industry as this.

The Canadian Ford Company is basing this year's factory production plans on just double the business done last year.

They stake everything on the conviction that Canada is bound to prosper. They place all on the belief that Britain and her allies are bound to win.

McGregor of Ford and his Canadian associates may be pardoned for feeling proud of this record.—Adv.