



Nothing is More Striking in Motordom Than the Popularity of the Large Freight Trucks. This is a White Gasoline Three-ton Truck.

The Future Commercial Vehicle

By MAIN JOHNSON

TALK about this being an age of revolutionary and unorthodox ideas! Do you know one of the latest theories being seriously advanced? Nothing less than that the railways are doomed, and that the transportation vehicles of the future will be motor cars! Visions are already pictured of smooth, wide roadways from city to city, crowded with commercial trucks carrying produce and goods from one point to another. It is said that in this way the individual dealers and manufacturers will be able to have their products conveyed on their own cars, and will be independent of all delay on the part of outsiders.

The real facts of the case probably will be that there will be enough and even too much business for both railroads and interurban motor trucks. Moreover, the railroads need not be unduly nervous as to a threatened loss of prestige, for there will always be a large class of long distance hauling, on a continent like America at any rate, that can be done only by a railroad system.

Advocates of the commercial motor do not need to look far into the future to gain encouragement. Even to-day, with the bulk of business confined within the limits of cities and towns, the growth of the industry is amazing. Of course the greater array of statistics come from the States, but Canada also is advancing rapidly in the use of motor trucks. In Winnipeg, for example, there were only four commercial cars in 1910; to-day there are over 150. The streets in the western metropolis are suitable for trucks, and many firms are negotiating at the present time for the installation of the modern form of transportation. Within a short radius of the city, the roads are also fair, but after that their standard deteriorates, and the usefulness of the truck diminishes. With the gradual improvement of the rural roads, however, the interurban business will increase with leaps and bounds.

The Toronto firms all report good prospects for 1913, following a most successful year in 1912. Bad roads both within the city confines and without have been a serious handicap to the growth of the truck industry in the Ontario capital. More and more money, however, is being spent on roads in and near Toronto, and the worst period undoubtedly has passed. Montreal business is good, considering the fact that the aggregate automobile trade in that city is always less than in Toronto. The number of hills in the former place is proving a boon to the motor truck sales. Horses soon wear out on these steep inclines, but the gasoline car in its present high state of efficiency can climb the hills and is therefore making a favourable name for itself. From other Canadian centres, like Vancouver, Calgary and cities in the Maritime Provinces come reports of expanding business.

AS a manufacturing project, the building of commercial cars is far behind the pleasure vehicle class. Most of the trucks and delivery waggons used in this country are imported from the United States. A few are assembled on this side of the line, and a handful of makes are manufactured in Canada. Strange to say, most of the Canadian-made cars are built in comparatively small places and not in the populous centres. The truth is that, although the business is really going ahead fast now, for several years Canadian merchants and contractors were strangely conservative and hesitated about making what they considered a risky

experiment. This ultra-conservatism is dying out, and it is predicted on all sides that before long the manufacture of commercial vehicles in Canada will become an important industry.

The automobile shows are reflecting the growing popularity of the motor truck. Both the Montreal exhibitions last month had special displays of the latest models, and sales and enquiries were numerous. At this month's big shows in Ottawa and Toronto, similar conditions are likely to prevail.



There Are All Sorts of Delivery Vans, But in Canada They Have Not Yet Displaced the Horse Delivery Waggons. This is a New Type of 1,500 Pound Delivery Waggon.

In regard to the United States, a few figures will show the extent of the industry there. It is estimated that there are 300 manufacturers of trucks, 411 different types of gasoline vehicles alone, not counting the electrics, and a total of 45,000 trucks and delivery waggons.

In Canada it is noticeable that the same people are buying cars as in the States. It looks as if our business men have been carefully studying conditions across the border, and have been profiting by other men's experiences. The firms using commercial vehicles the most seem to be departmental stores, flour mills, breweries, express companies,

coal companies, laundries, contractors and retail stores. One department store in Toronto has 25 cars, and is making elaborate experiments as to their efficiency. The motors are usually employed for suburban trips and for particularly heavy loads. That is one of the encouraging features about the commercial motor vehicles; they are good for fast, light driving and for comparatively slow, heavy driving. A gentlemen's valet service finds a 1,000-pound capacity car an aid to their business; a contractor uses to advantage a seven-ton truck. The outside limits, high and low, are even further apart than this. The smallest car on the market has a capacity of about 400 pounds; the biggest can carry a load of even ten tons.

This year's models show few changes of any importance in mechanical features. Minor details are always being improved, but no startling innovations have been in evidence. In body design, however, greater development is shown. More graceful lines in high-class delivery waggons, new devices for quick unloading in heavy models, and more equipment on general carrying vehicles, are some of the points noticed. There has also been an improvement in the specialty lines, such as fire engine trucks, ambulance and patrol waggons.

When the question is closely analyzed, it can be seen that one of the chief advantages in using motor trucks is that it induces the owner to establish a much closer system of inspection than with horse-drawn vehicles. To find out whether the new system is a paying proposition, and to make it so, he checks up the number of hours a day the truck is used, the loads it carries, and the expense of operating—all with interested and painstaking accuracy. This very mental attitude of alertness is one of the best by-products of the commercial vehicle. In many lines of business it is well capable of proof that a truck does carry more in a shorter time and at a lower comparative cost than two horses and waggons or even more. Let merchants remember this other important fact brought out here—even if the apparent cost will not be lessened, the added system of effective supervision that for some reason or other follows in the wake of a truck will make the change a profitable one.

MOTOR trucks inevitably will become more and more frequent in Canada. Our ever-expanding business will force the most up-to-date methods. In addition to the natural development, a few definite factors would bring on a regular rush for the commercial car. These factors, as suggested above, are better roads. It is rumoured that a Toronto company is just waiting for the building of the proposed permanent highway between Toronto and Hamilton to put on a fast motor truck service. For every such company, there would be ten or fifteen private concerns that would use trucks of their own on the route. The improvement of the road between Toronto and Montreal will have a similar effect, and also the building of the Ottawa-Prescott road, and the various other road projects under way in every province from the Pacific to the Atlantic.

One of the claims made for the motor truck is that it is "quicken the pulse of the country." Some people think that the country's pulse to-day is already quite quick enough, and that we should aim rather at a little slackening than to increase our mad speed. Such thinkers, however, are far outnumbered by the type of business man who glorifies in activity and in a furious pace.



The Express Companies in Canada Have Only Just Begun to Use Gasoline Waggons. This is One of the Latest Models in Light Express Trucks.