

ASSEMBLING MOTOR CARS IN AUSTRALIA

THE AUSTRALIAN SIX

History of the Enterprise.

It has been talked of many times, and in the past there have been a few cases of cars being assembled in Sydney from American parts, but the *Motor in Australia* is now in the happy position to announce that The Industry has been started, and will go on steadily day by day, week by week, year by year. It is no flash in the pan trial of a much talked of ideal. It is a definite business venture, and the creation of a new industry in our Continent—an industry that will most certainly grow to an enormous extent.

The pioneer is Mr. F. H. Gordon, who has been connected with motors ever since their appearance in this country. No man is better known in the Australian motor world to-day, and when this new enterprise blossoms out he will be rightly famous. He it was who unpacked and handled the first Ford and placed it on the Australian market. He has handled nearly every class of car, and has held many exclusive agencies for this territory, which, thanks to his pioneering efforts, are now well established. Among these are such well-known makes as the Wolseley, Stellite, B.S.A., Metalurgique, Mercedes, S.C.A.T., Ford and Mitchell.

For many years Mr. Gordon has recognised that in the fullness of time the manufacture of automobiles from units made by specialists would be the great motor industry in Australia. He was more convinced of it than ever when he discovered that in both England and France cars were being constructed from parts imported from America. In 1917 Mr. Gordon took a trip to the U.S.A. to look into this matter, and discovered that with energy and perseverance arrangements could be made to secure the necessary parts. But the United States had just joined in the struggle, and owing to the war demands on the materials used in the construction of these units, the project had to be, for the time being, abandoned.

During this trip Mr. Gordon met Mr. Louis Chevrolet, who was manufacturing a light six-cylinder car. Mr. Chevrolet, as everyone knows, is one of America's foremost motor engineers, and is also one of the most renowned of American racing drivers.

Mr. Chevrolet is the only man in the world who has been able to seriously compete with Ford in the production of a cheap car: the "Chevrolet." In this country this car may not sell in such numbers as to compete with the "Ford," but in America it is regarded as its only serious rival, and the General Motor Company purchased the business from Mr. Chevrolet at an enormous figure.

Mr. Gordon was much impressed with the Light Six that Chevrolet was then making, and at great expense prevailed upon the great racing engineer to give him all details of this car and letters to all the makers of the units used in its construction. He visited all the

factories and made arrangements for a supply of all the units whenever the Government requirements would allow of shipments.

In 1918 Mr. Gordon was again in the States, and re-visited the factories. He was there when the armistice was signed, and immediately made arrangements for the shipment of a quantity of each of the units, and these parts are nearly at their destination at time of writing. Immediately they arrive, construction will commence. All arrangements are complete, and the moment the units are unpacked, the chassis will begin to take form.

The Basis of Sound Reasoning.

There is nothing revolutionary in this: The great majority of American car-makers build their machines from units made by firms who specialise in the production of one part of the automobile. The practice is on the increase in America, too, for various reasons, the most important of which is that the specialist makes a better article because he specialises on that particular part, and as it is his living, he gives his unit a more drastic test than does the manufacturer of the complete car. It is necessary for him to do so because he is selling to *car-makers*, and if he lost one of his customers through faulty construction, or because his unit was not the best produced, it would be a most serious matter to him, as any one car manufacturer might be taking some thousands of his units annually. Also, he knows that the car manufacturers' engineers will give his units a much more drastic test than they will those produced in their own workshops.

The complete car manufacturer, on the other hand, is not so careful. He sells to the public, and they have not the knowledge to detect faults and mistakes in manufacture. He may lose a few customers through faulty workmanship, neglect of detail, or lack of thorough testing, but a few customers more or less are not the serious matter to him that one car-building customer is to the unit manufacturer. Unit manufacturers and specialists have to be always up-to-date, thorough, and efficient, as they have to put their parts before motor car manufacturers and engineers before they can get them adopted by the factory. So, to-day, ninety per cent. of American cars are built entirely from specialists' units, and the other ten per cent. are using some specialists' parts, and are gradually coming into line with the majority.

The Importance of the Enterprise to Australian Dealers.

Mr. Gordon is most desirous of impressing upon all motor traders the importance and advantages of handling this car in their territory. When he, and later on others, manufacture in quantity here, it will seriously affect the sale of cars that are manufactured in foreign countries. The Australian manufacturer will do away with, and save the customer, the foreign manufac-

Assembling in Australia.

American cars assembled in Australia, is the watchword of Mr. Fred Gordon, of Messrs. F. H. Gordon Ltd. (Sydney). So far his firm has been busy with Packhards,

Mitchells, Stellites, and Wolseleys; and having spelt success, it is now off on a new tack. England and France suggested it, for when "over there," two years ago, Mr. Gordon discovered that parts imported from America were being assembled, and the fact fetched him, and the result will be an Australian car—made in America. Mr. Gordon has put his faith in Louis Chevrolet. The Australian car will, Mr. Gordon says, come out much cheaper, and will be assembled from a Rentener engine, Westinghouse ignition, Zenith carburetter, Borg and Beck clutch, Grant Lees transmission, Salisbury rear and front axles, and Gemmer steering gear. With equally notable etceteras, she ought to do well.
