

backing up to his plows and putting in new break pins.

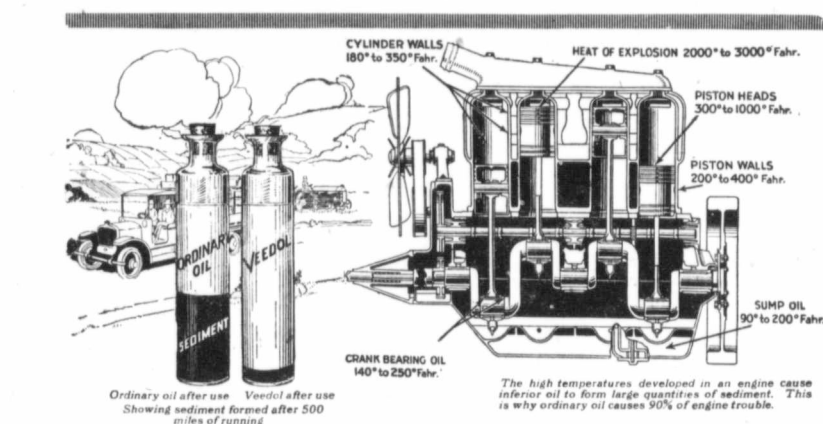
Quite aside from the matter of plowing there is the important problem of general farm machine operation also to be considered. Grain binders, corn binders, mowers and the like all come within the scope of the tractor's activities. But they are not designed for speed—nor can they be made adaptable to high-speed operation and still remain within the purchasing reach of the ordinary farmer. The cost of farm machinery at the present time is almost prohibitive in the cases of thousands of farmers—and if speed refinements should be added, such as finer machining of parts, expensive bearings and speed lubrication—such machines as binders and mowers would soar in price beyond the reach of all but the "gentleman farmer" who farms not for profit or for a living, but merely as an avocation or hobby. The industrial farmer would be completely shut out.

And finally, there is the tractor to be considered. How long will it stand up under the excessive strain of high speed operation? The tractor, it must be remembered, is a heavy-duty machine and as such is required to work at its full rated capacity at practically all times. By increasing the speed of the tractor the manufacturer increases the chances for overloading. The purchaser naturally expects to see the tractor pull as much as the horses it displaces—he does not take into consideration the matter of speed mathematics—so he is liable to make his six-miles-an-hour tractor pull two plows when it should logically be pulling but one. And overloading is one of the shortest and quickest routes to the junk heap and shattered reputations for the tractor and its manufacturer.

However, there are, of course, certain phases of tractor activity where a little speed is both desirable and commendable—long-distance hauling, for instance. On the road the tractor is not working under the severe strain imposed by rough field operation nor is there much danger of six or eight-miles-an-hour speeds proving destructive to the farm wagon. Such farm operations as disking and harrowing could also stand a certain amount of acceleration.

The farmer is beginning to place a fixed value on his time the same as any business man—and he doesn't want to waste more of it than he can help. It is, therefore, up to the manufacturer to save as much of the farmer's time as possible—and to make it a saving that will not prove a false economy.

The apparent solution of the tractor-speed problem undoubtedly lies in building tractors with a flexible speed range—say from



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two to six miles an hour. The tractor must be adaptable. It must be designed for varied farm operation and at the same time must be built to stand up under the most trying conditions. Flexible speeds with a liberal range, however, will entail patient, systematic education of purchasers by the manufacturers and selling agents, for just as surely as the average farmer finds "speed" at his disposal he is going to abuse it unless unforgettably impressed with the fact that he will be committing mechanical suicide by employing high speeds where low speeds should be used. The purchaser should be given an intensive course in "speed mathematics" with appropriate demonstrations.

Right at present this matter of producing tractor "speedsters" is risky business and the manufacturers would probably do well to wear asbestos-lined gloves while

they are fondling these industrial fire brands. There may be some singed whiskers in evidence within the course of the next few years.

### Things Still Left

"You say this world seems drained of all its sweets!

"O, Robert, I don't know what you call sweet. Honey, roses, and violets are yet in the earth. The sun and moon yet reign in Heaven, and the lesser lights keep up their pretty twinklings. Meats and drinks, sweet sights and sweet smells, a country walk, spring and autumn, have all a sweetness by turns.

"Good humor and good nature, friends at home that love you and friends abroad that miss you—you possess all these, and more innumerable, and these are all sweet things."—Charles Lamb to a Friend.

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References: Any Bank or Mercantile Agency