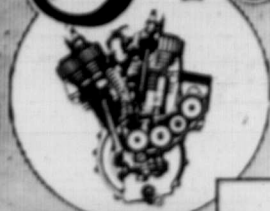


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A brilliant outpouring of engi-
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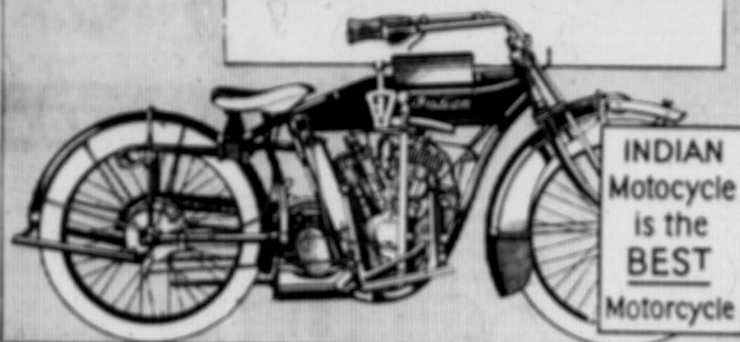
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The Mail Bag

AN OPEN FORUM

This page is maintained to allow free discussion of all questions vital to western farmers. Up to the limit of space letters will be published giving both sides of all such questions. It is not possible to publish all letters received, but an effort will be made to select those most fairly representing different views. Short letters will be given preference. All letters must be accompanied by name and address of writer, the not necessarily for publication. Unusual letters will be returned if accompanied by postage.

HELP FOR FARMERS

The following letter has been re-
ceived from the Minister of Agriculture
for Manitoba regarding help for spring
work:

Editor, Guide:—At the present mo-
ment one of the most acute problems
before the farmers of Manitoba is the
securing of a sufficient supply of farm
laborers to meet the demand of the
season just opening. Believing that
the most promising, and almost the
only, outside source of supply at pres-
ent is in the United States, the Mani-
toba Department of Agriculture and
Immigration is seeking, thru its St.
Paul agency, and thru an active adver-
tising campaign in various parts of the
United States, to stimulate a northward
movement of just as many farmers' sons
and experienced farm laborers as pos-
sible.

In this connection I wish to appeal to
all those citizens of Manitoba, who,
having come from the United States or
otherwise having formed an acquaint-
ance south of the international bound-
ary line, can help us to get into touch
with experienced farm helpers there
who might be induced to come to Mani-
toba this season. I have no doubt that
many of our people could supply the
names of such persons; and in all cases
where this is done, my department will
see that an appeal is made to them, and
if possible they will be induced to come
to this province. I would ask all such
correspondents to kindly address their
letters to the Immigration Branch, De-
partment of Agriculture and Immigra-
tion, Winnipeg. Sincerely yours,

V. WINKLER,

Minister of Agriculture and
Immigration.

EXPERIENCE WITH TRACTORS

A great deal may be said both for
and against the use of mechanical trac-
tor power on the farm. Like any other
matter of importance connected with
the farming business a great deal of
very careful consideration should be
given to the matter before an indefinite
investment is made. Undoubtedly there
is a place in farm management for the
tractor, but experience will show in
each individual case just in what di-
rection the outlay on the power to do
the farm work can be most economically
made. There follow two letters from
readers which contain their personal
experience with tractors. Each one
advocates in preference the keeping of
brood mares to do the work. In these
individual cases horses are more satis-
factory. No doubt other conditions
could be described which would warrant
the purchase of a tractor. The whole
question is one which each farmer must
carefully decide for himself after hav-
ing obtained as much as possible of
the personal experience of those who
have already used both forms of trac-
tive power.

"A note of warning to intending small
tractor buyers ought to be given, and
I think it opportune at this time as it
would appear by the numerous adver-
tisements in all papers and farm mag-
azines that another farm tractor craze
is coming on. I may say, already here.
I refer to the various small farm trac-
tors now advertised so vigorously.
Farmers should know that a tractor
only consists of dead metal which de-
preciates in value and wears right from
the time of purchase and will last less
years than the average farmer has any
idea of. These small tractors for small
farmers, for I venture to say that no
large farmer would consider them, will
cause their prospective owners much
worry and in many cases the loss of
their homes, as did the larger tractor
craze of 1911-12 and 1913, which caused
so many farmers disappointment and
loss of their farms and also forced some
of the machine companies into bank-
ruptcy, should be taken as a lesson.

A farmer of a quarter or a half-
section cannot get along without horses

even if he has a tractor and a team
of four or five horses would be needed
anyway. As for threshing: it would
only be a waste of time to monkey with
such a small outfit. So where is the
need of a small tractor? In fact I
know by my own experience that the
larger tractors, say 45 or 60 B.H.P. are
the most economical in the long run.
My advice is, stay with the horses, it
will play a hundredfold better and you
cannot get along without them anyway.
A small or average farmer cannot do
better, if he is in need of more power,
than to purchase some heavy draft
mares instead of a small tractor. He
would then never be sorry."

FELIX OHBERG,

Amisk, Alta.

Use Brood Mares

"The experience I have had with a
farm traction engine has been far from
satisfactory. It may be said and cases
may be cited of men who have made a
success with engines, but I know of
many instances where engines have
proved a dead weight to the owner.
And again, where a man may have made
an apparent success, it should be con-
sidered what he might have achieved
if he had placed the amount of money
and energy into other channels. Sup-
posing an energetic young man would
invest the same amount of money in
young brood mares which would do all
the work on his farm the year round
and be as good at the end of the year
as when they began, allowing of course
for any natural loss besides the in-
creases in the way of the foals they
would produce. In the course of ten
years his horses would amount to a
small fortune, while his engine would
be ready for the scrap pile. I have
tested this thing out. I have brood
mares on my farm that have done more
work for me by far in proportion than
the engine. They have raised me a nice
bunch of colts each year, and are as
good today as ever, excepting of course
as age comes on the mare.

Then again take the cost of upkeep
of these machines. If you have a little
break the whole thing is out of busi-
ness, while if one horse is disabled
another can be put in his place and
your work moves right along. It often
seems as if the repairs for the machines
have been fixed, so that the owner of
a machine has virtually to buy a ma-
chine and a half before his engine
goes to the scrap pile. Again, fuel is a
big expense, which has to be paid for in
cash on delivery, while on the farm
any farmer can raise plenty of good
feed for his horses with but little out-
lay of actual cash."

M. J. C., Sask.

SIKHS AS FARM LABORERS

Editor, Guide:—At the fifteenth an-
nual convention of the Saskatchewan
Grain Growers, as reported in the Globe
(Toronto), a motion was passed "That
the executive take up the immigration
question, with the view to helping de-
sirable settlers on the land."

The Canada India Committee would
like to suggest that a party of Sikhs be
settled, under the auspices of the
Grain Growers' Association. The Sikhs
coming from the north of India are used
to a cold winter, and are a nation of
farmers. All of their employers speak
of them in the highest terms as most
efficient workers and quiet and peaceable
people. The objections taken to the
Hindus in general do not apply to the
Sikhs. They are neither polygamous
nor idolaters, and they do not practice
child marriage. We have on our com-
mittee a Sikh, Dr. Sunder Singh, who
could give the Grain Growers any infor-
mation they might require as to his
people, and who is authorized by them
to speak for them. The Canada India
Committee has been organized to pro-
mote a feeling of reconciliation between
Canada and India; to spread a knowl-
edge of India among Canadians; and to

Continued on Page 24