

In Our Re-Construction Programme

Every Farmer who has never left the Farm as well as the Returning Soldiers must be instructed in the Operation of Farm Tractors

By CARL WILLIAMS

THE man who rides railroad trains and watches the fields slip by often has a pretty poor opinion of tractor power on the farm. There are too many tractors in fence corners, rusting away their days of usefulness.

Hop off the train and talk to many of these tractor owners and you get the same impression. They have wrestled with the cantankerous iron beast to the limit of their patience. Sometimes it refused to budge in spite of earnest effort. Finally the combination of lost time, lost crop and lost temper prevailed to side-track the tractor and to create a permanent enemy of power farming.

Depending on the person to whom you talk, you will get one of two reasons for these tractor failures. The farm owner is pretty likely to say, "The dern thing's no good." The tractor manufacturer will say, "The farmer didn't know how to run it."

To take up the second proposition first, here is the way one tractor maker puts it:

"I think it is quite safe to say that at least 75 per cent of our troubles come from lack of intelligent understanding on the part of the farmer. We inclose instruction books with our machines and try to give him all the information possible. He pays little or no attention to these instructions. About the only way he learns is by grief."

Add to this man's statement that of another manufacturer:

"We, as manufacturers, fully realize that a tractor which is out of commission is not only a very poor advertisement to the manufacturer but always incurs a great loss to the owner. We are trying, by means of service bulletins and explicit operating instructions, to give our owners sufficient information so that they will successfully operate their tractors. It is a crime the number of owners that absolutely ignore these instructions. In fact, I do not believe they ever read them, and therefore do not give their tractors care."

"Their duty as loyal Canadian citizens, and in justice to themselves is to get every ounce of good out of that machine that is in it, and that can be done only by mightily carefully observing the maker's instructions in the chang-

ing of their oil, the tightening of their parts, and the general care of the tractor.

"The owners' attention should be brought very forcibly to the fact that he is not buying, in mechanical power, anything that is going to warn him if it is mistreated. If a horse is overworked he shows it; he becomes sick, or he does not eat, or something else, and the owner at once calls a

clined to think there is at least a lot of truth in it, because I have seen it work out that way in the man to the dozen who knows what's under the hood of his automobile.

It is true that the auto is more fool-proof than the tractor; but it is also probably true that half the cars in the nation would be cut out of service most of the time if it were not for the fact that there

real attempt is being made by the tractor makers to do both of these things. But neither plan has been more than started.

The business of the tractor maker has been to make and sell tractors. What happened after the sale was up to the farmer. If there were mistakes made in building the tractor, it was the farmer who frequently paid, as well as the manufacturer.

All too often the cheap selling price was the maker's first consideration. When that was fixed tractor quality and dependability were pared down to fit the price. In 1916 about 80 per cent of all the complaints from farmers who bought one certain popular-priced tractor came from magneto trouble. Reason: Cheap magneto, uncovered, placed in the easiest spot to install, which happened to be right in the center of dust disturbance when the machine was being used. Ten per cent more of the trouble with this same tractor came from the use of an unsatisfactory oiling system, installed because it was cheap.

But trouble is by no means confined to the popular-priced machines. One of the best tractors on the market to-day had a splash oiling system operated by the fly-wheel. Nineteen of those tractors were sold in Oklahoma in a certain period and in every one of them the two front crank-case bearings burned out, due to the failure of the fly-wheel to properly supply them with oil. That trouble has been remedied and will not likely occur again with this make of tractor; but the farmer paid for the maker's failure to know that a certain kind of oiling system would not work properly.

Still another case with another first class tractor. Every machine put out developed trouble in a particular spot. Repair men found the trouble to be caused universally by a governor screw which had worked loose, and they remedied it universally in fifteen minutes by filing a flat side on the governor screw and inserting a key to hold the screw in place. But why wasn't that done at the factory?

I said that the business of the tractor maker has been to make and sell tractors. All too often the sales organization has been the big end of the factory and all

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"PREPARING FOR A GRAND AWAKENING."

Back to the Farm and the Kiddies whom he has done his best with entire success to save from the maw of the Hun!

veterinarian to try to save the horse. If a tractor does not work satisfactorily a man will try and cripple along with it without trying to discover what the cause of the trouble is until the tractor is completely broken down. Many times serious breakdowns of the tractor are due to the operation of the tractor when a minor trouble exists which, if fixed immediately, would prevent the serious breakdown."

All this is a serious charge against the farmer who buys a tractor. Is it true?—I am in-

is a garage on every street corner where automobile brains and labor can be sought for a price.

No; it isn't the farmer who's especially at fault. It's human nature; and, in view of that fact, I am rather inclined to check the whole problem back to the tractor manufacturers, where it started.

There are two things which the manufacturer can do. One is to make his machine fool-proof. The other is to spend more money on teachers of tractor operation and care. It is gratifying to see that, this year more than ever before a