

The Gasoline Traction Engine

By Roy W. Barker.

The gasoline traction engine is a live subject for the pen, and one that is drawing its share of attention from the public mind of to-day. Although it has come to stay, its possibilities and the purposes for which it will be used in the next few years can hardly be taken in by the average mind.

Of course it has its enemies and wise doubters as usual, who cannot see any future for the gasoline traction. In this age of progressiveness we will soon see nearly all hauling done with the gasoline traction engine. When one gets aboard ship for the old country to-day, he gets his daily papers on board from day to day caught by the electric receiver. With the advent of free alcohol we have in the gasoline traction engine one of the greatest and cheapest motive powers on earth. However, if we go back a little to old-time prices of gasoline and kerosene, it still comes cheaper than steam and is just as reliable, perhaps more so.

I am going to speak of the type known as oil-cooled kerosene or alcohol traction engines. From what conclusions I have drawn on this subject, I could not buy any other, as there is nothing to freeze about them. I am not going to ridicule its competitors, the traction steam engines, because we all know what they have done in relieving the poor horse of his burden in the past. They most certainly have been a grand success. Everything has its day, so let us again consider the gas traction engine and see why they are the coming engine of to-day. First, because they cut the expense of operation down one half, and are so simple in construction that any intelligent person can operate them very successfully any place. Seeing is believing. I saw a gas traction engine at Fargo, North Dakota; the operator said he could pull any old thing. The yardmaster said: "Pull up that string of loaded cars." He did it much to the surprise of everyone. Again near Gardner, I saw a man with the same make of engine pulling two triple gang plows at an expense for oil of six dollars for twenty acres of plowed land; now he was plowing for one-half the usual cost.

The farmer of to-day does his business with his check book, the rural mail and the telephone. Isolation is no longer the bugbear of his existence; he rides while doing his work, reads his daily papers at the close of day, or gossips over the telephone with his neighbors.

Another great advantage is that we are becoming independent of the hired man, and in these days when it is almost impossible to secure good and competent help this is a feature that must be con-

sidered. The gasoline traction engine is under our control at all times. It does not ask for holidays, short hours, a raise of wages, or an easier job when it is wanted to plow the ground, thresh the grain, or grind the feed. It is there, and waiting, and ever willing, with a few minutes' work to proceed to business; needs little attention, and when it stops, expense stops. I have seen the old steam engine waiting on the road for hours with a crew of twenty or twenty-five men waiting for steam, before they could move on to the next place of threshing. The time has come when farmers must economize on farm labor. The gasoline engine enables one man to do the work of three or four. In a general way there are two styles of gasoline engine—good ones and bad ones. A poor, cheap engine is dear at any price, and especially so to the farmer who is not an expert engineer or mechanic. The gasoline traction engine can be run by any one who can use

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