

FARMERS RALLY TO GOOD ROADS CAUSE

Men of Farm Are Fast Adopting Motor Power for Work and Pleasure.

ADVANTAGES OF AUTO SEEN

Land Owners of Rural Districts Are Rapidly Forging to Front as Motorists and Boosters for Better Highways.

BY L. H. ROSE.
Curious has been the evolution of the farmer's attitude toward the motor car. In the beginning of its career he fought against it, sneered at the city folk who burned gasoline, grew angry when his team was frightened by an automobile, declared that death rode with every driver.

Then one day, as his sweaty horses plodded homeward from town, the occupants of his surrey heard a "bonk, bonk" behind, and with a whizz and a cloud of dust past went the family of his neighbor, making the distance in one-fourth his own time and with comfort and joy rather than with dust and weariness.

The rise of the motor car, coming at the time of the marvelous advance in farm values and the high-price level for products, made it particularly attractive to the farmer. Had the automobile come ten years earlier, not one farmer would have owned one in its first decade of popularity where a dozen now do. They could not have afforded it. So, too, it is the Western farmer who has been the best buyer, for in the West has been the great rise in land values and the fortunes in crop production.

Crop Pays for Auto.
When wheat was a dollar a bushel the producer who sold \$300 worth of a 150-acre field was not to be blamed if he spent half the sum in a motor, especially when during the same year the value of the land probably increased \$1000. This was the genesis of the farmer's attraction for the motor car, not to mention the actual use that came from its possession.

Another thing: When the high cost of living prevented the expansion of the townsman's expenditures and he refrained from investing in so obvious a luxury, it was the very time when the farmer was receiving top prices for his products and was able to gratify his desires. In consequence, the sales of the past year have been greater in the interior and in the little country towns than in the cities. The greatest distributing point in America last year outside New York was Kansas City, and the cars went largely to the little Middle West towns, where the buyers were largely farmers.

Hence it is that there are counties, with less than 10,000 population, far out toward the foothills of the Rockies, with 400 to 600 cars. At a fair meeting in a Southern Kansas town last Fall 800 cars were counted. From Northern Texas to South Dakota, at the chauntous of the cars are five-acre fields, and circus day makes the roads one steady stream of motors. Little wonder that the man with a team becomes unhappy and buys a car if there is any possibility of doing so.

Medium-Priced Car Sought.
"I stood it two years," said one farmer who this Spring bought his first car. "If my neighbors were not all riding in automobiles, I would not care for one. When I went to town it took me all day; it took them three hours. When I went to church or to a public sale it was the same. It got on my nerves and here I am."
He was driving a car that cost \$1000, which is the average price the farmer pays. He does not go in for the big six-cylinder or the expensive makes. He bought at first the two-cylinder, cheap cars; when the four-cylinders came in at a moderate price they were his favorite. Occasionally, as in the case of a Nebraska stockman who a few days ago took to his prairie farm a seven-passenger, \$1500 car, he plunges—but it is rare.

Farmer Wants Roomy Car.
However, he wants a roomy car, for in the tonneau often are heaped a few sacks of vegetables, bags of grain or cases of eggs. He goes from town with a load of boxes, bundles and packages. The roadster, providing no place for these, does not appeal to him.
In the country correspondence columns of the weekly papers you see such items as this:
"Mr. and Mrs. Adam Stauffer and family went to Fairbury Sunday in their auto."
"John Harkness took a party of young folks to the show at Ponca Saturday night in his auto."
To the country correspondent the motor car is always an "auto." The items tell of trips of 20 to 30 miles across country, giving to the fortunate parties a wider view than they were able to secure in a dozen years by team.

It brings them also new responsibilities. When they went in a farm wagon, the old clothes were good enough. When they rode in a surrey, they dressed better. Now that they motor they are garbed for the occasion, and as they ride through the city streets it is difficult to distinguish the farmer's family from the one from the aristocratic avenue. This self-respect is one of the things that has come to the farm with the motor car.

Maintenance Cost Cheap.
The city man little realizes how cheaply the farmer cares for his car. One end of the barn serves for a garage. Oil and gasoline are bought in quantities at wholesale. The average farmer, experienced in the use of machinery and of gasoline engines, cares for the machine itself. His visits to the repair shop are comparatively few and then for minor assistance. The poorest customers of the town garages are the farmer owners, but the best are the townspeople who have neither time nor inclination to care for and clean their machines.

The farmer is going through another evolution with the motor truck and tractor. When he saw them in the city he was certain that they would not be feasible on the farm where no pavements made a smooth roadway. Now hundreds of farm tractors are in use and the automobile manufacturers look at that branch of their business as offering the greatest possibilities for the future. Here, too, the prairie states are leading. The level roads and fields offer opportunities for utilization of the tractor that hilly states of the East do not give.
The farm tractor is both a machine and a draught engine. It can take five wagon loads of grain to market as rapidly as a team can take one. It can pull across a field a half dozen plows followed by harrows, and if desired

seeders, as rapidly as a team can take one plow; it can drag the roads of a whole township while a team is caring for half a road district. Attached to the cornsheller or feed grinder, it can do the work of a gasoline engine. To all these uses it is put and in each does it do its work well.

Tractors Are Economical.
Suppose it does cost \$2500; if it accomplishes more than the same amount invested in teams, with less expense, it is profitable to the farmer. So he has become convinced, and while there is little indication of the immediate passing of the farm horse, the next few years—if the farmer's prosperity continues—will see as rapid strides for the farm tractor as the past-half decade has witnessed in the growth of the motor car industry.

The farmer's family is not dependent on the father for use of the car. Farmers' sons and daughters are taught early to be venturers. They have managed the farm machinery, much of which is far more difficult to handle than is the motor car. Soon after a car goes to the farm does the daughter take lessons, and it is a common sight on the streets of the interior towns to see cars driven by girls who have come in from the farms, or to see the farmer's children taken to the country school by motor. Their handling of the machines would be a credit to the professional chauffeurs, for they have to encounter conditions of roads of which the city driver knows little. It is one thing to drive on pavements and quite another to take to the hills and valleys, with all the contingencies of broken culverts and nervous country horses to complicate the experience.

Farmers Good Roads Boosters.
With the coming of the motor car has been aroused a good roads enthusiasm heretofore unknown in the country districts. Here, too, was an evolution. At first the plea of the town motorist for better roads was taken as a selfish demand, made to give opportunity for swift speeding. The farmer was disgruntled and sneered.

When he began buying he joined the good roads company. Now he takes his tractor and drags the roads. He tells the local editor of the fine drives in his township and growing rapidly in knowledge of road making in which there is the country over great need of education. Across Southwest Kansas and Eastern Colorado he is helping make the "New Santa Fe Trail," an automobile road, extending 600 miles through the valley of the Arkansas River. In Arizona is being spent over \$1,000,000 building 1000 miles of perfect road, connecting all principal towns and cities, and Oklahoma plans an extensive system of state boulevards. In a few years the entire West will be treading with fine country roads—all because the farmer has become a motorist.

The close relation between good roads and motor cars is evidenced by the ratio of cars to population in states that have excellent highways. According to recent statistics, Missouri with few good roads has 15,600 motor cars, one to 211 inhabitants; Kansas with much better roads has 12,500 cars, one to 137 inhabitants; New York has more cars than any state, but only one to 130 inhabitants; California, a state of good roads, has 40,000 cars, one to every 43 persons. In Iowa one man in 95 owns a car, while in Nebraska the ratio is one to 78. Illinois with its sandy roads has one to 158; Minnesota has one to 114. The total number of registered cars in the United States is 730,000, or one for every 118 persons.

With his ability to secure both pleasure and usefulness from his car to a greater extent than does the town owner, the farmer will continue to be a buyer of cars—his purchasing power being modified only by the measure of our agricultural prosperity.

PORTLAND DRIVERS CAREFUL

Reckless Driving Rarely Seen in This City, Says L. H. Rose.

Those who do not own automobiles have gained the wrong impression that reckless automobile driving is responsible for street accidents and arrests for violation of the city traffic laws. "To my mind," says L. H. Rose, Northwest manager of the Studebaker Corporation for Portland, "Portland is a model city in the observance of traffic laws. It is almost impossible in a day's journey about the business part of town to see any violation of our traffic laws. Infrequently we see a machine going on the wrong side of the street or not stopping when approaching a streetcar which is unloading or taking on passengers, but in nine cases out of ten these two examples are due more to the driver being new to the business than anything else. One cannot expect a novice to know all of the little points of the law at first."



IN buying an automobile, the thing to consider first, if you want results, is the motor.

Manufacturers and drivers have decided that the six cylinder motor gives best results; everybody wants best results; you'll get yours in our six cylinder, 48 horsepower Mitchell car at \$1750.

You get beauty of finish and design; power; reliability; flexibility; the comfort of 36-inch wheels and 125-inch wheel base; long life, and Mitchell service—which means constant attention to your needs.

You get the fruits of 77 years of making vehicles and studying organization; owners of Mitchell cars now, or 77 years from now, will profit by it, and by the high standard of quality which the Mitchell name guarantees.

Mitchell cars are built for the man who can't afford to make a mistake.
The Mitchell 60 H.-P., 6 cyl., 7 passengers, \$2250
The Mitchell 48 H.-P., 6 cyl., 5 passengers, \$1750
The Mitchell 30 H.-P., 4 cylinder, 2 passenger Runabout, without top, \$950



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"That idea has been current so many years I suppose it has come to be a sort of fetish," says Clement Studebaker, Jr., vice-president of the Studebaker Corporation of America. "As a matter of fact, American automobile factories can boast with perfect justice of a higher grade of European labor than the European factories themselves."
"The growth of the American automobile industry has proven a boon to the European mechanic. It has enabled him to emigrate with a certainty of work at once at more than double his old wages. As a result, the pick of the foreign labor is now in America."
"Of course, this element really is of minor importance in our factories. America has developed its own style of automobile making, and a far superior style it is. American methods of machine manufacture are far more accurate than the most painstaking sort of hand work. The machine cannot make a mistake. Each of its movements is limited to a definite range; each operation is a perfect repetition of the one that has taken place in the corresponding cycle before."
"But there remain a few departments of even an American factory where hand labor is still employed. In the building of tools and experimental parts, and in the delicate operations of fitting motor bearings, there exists a demand for the most skilled hand labor in the world. In these departments of our Detroit plants, mechanics of European birth are greatly in the majority."
"There are now in our employ scores of men who have worked in the shops of the European manufacturers. Germans from the Benz, Italians from the Fiat, Belgians from the Minerva, Frenchmen from the Rarracq and Britons from the Rolls-Royce and British Daimler, work side by side with Swedes, Austrians, Scotch, and other races of men who have learned to accomplish by patience a mechanical art that even the versatile American machinery has not wholly usurped."

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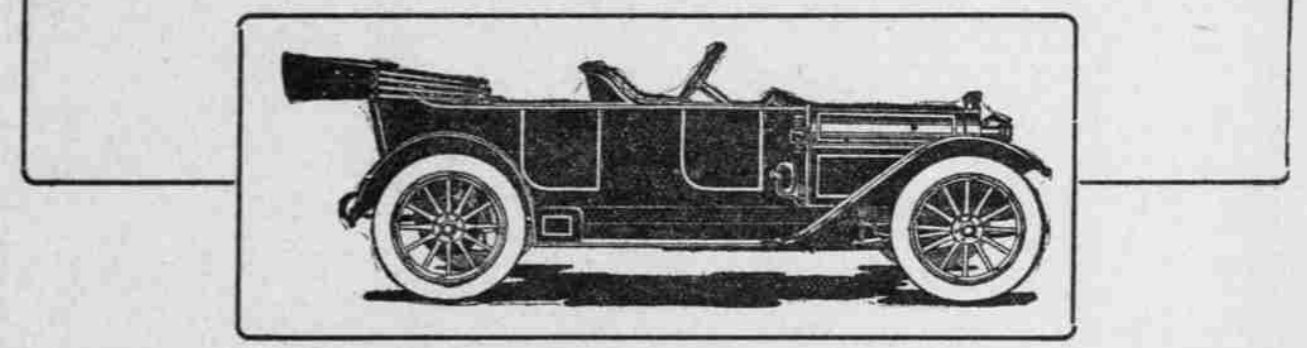
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Model K 40 H. P. \$1750

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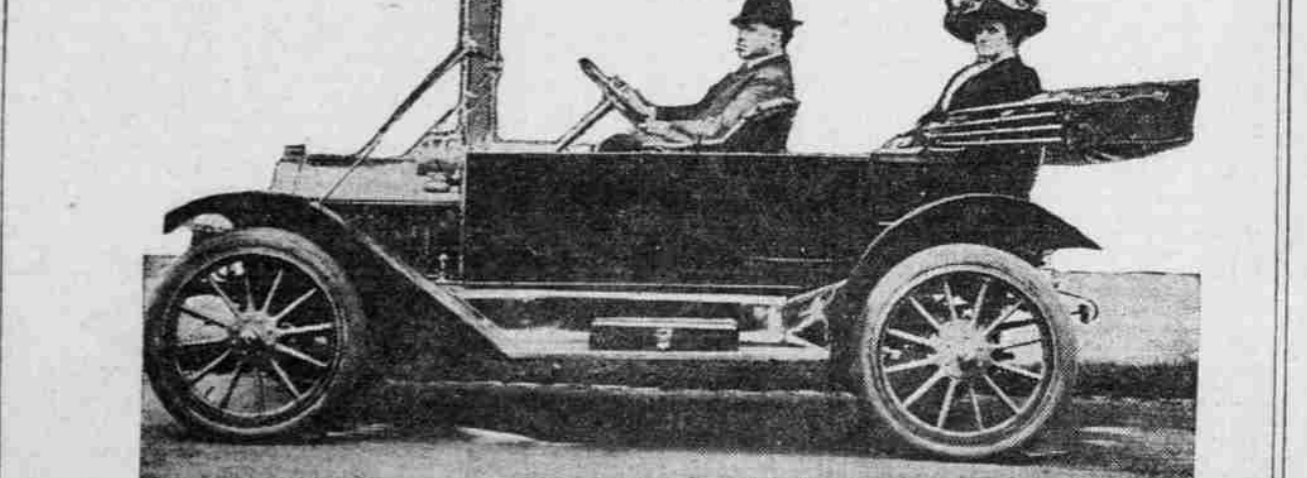
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New Nationals Arrive.
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the double distributor Bosch magnetos, self-starters and many other important features not included in previous models.
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