Plans for the Great Farm Power Show of 1916

The debating societies that used to discuss such questions as which is the mother of the chick, the hen that laid the egg or the one that hatched it might take up the problem whether old earth has changed more than the methods of the cultivation of her soil.

It was a long step from the forked stick to such rude implements as the modern savage now employs. From the power of 100 years ago to the up-to-date tractor of Nebraska was another.

Since the beginning of the use of tractors in farm work Fremont has been one of the cities where there have been demonstrations to show "Missourians" and others the superiority of the new method. This year the demonstration will be from August 7 to 11. Seven others in the middle west or south are announced between July 17 and September 8.

There were successful demonstrations in Fremont in 1913, and again in 1914 and 1915 under the auspices of The Twentieth Century Farmer. In none of the various other demonstrations has there been the interest or the attendance at Fremont. One reason for this is the geographical location of the city. No town is closer to the center of the great wheat and corn belt, and perhaps nowhere could be found men with the zest of the heads of the Commercial club of that city in carrying through the many necessary details in connection with The Twentieth Century Farmer's big enterprise.

The necessity of a tractor on a big farm is too apparent to require further argument. Farm help is becoming yearly scarcer, and more uncertain. As the soil becomes partially exhausted near the top deeper plowing becomes essential. And, above all, perhaps, is the element of time. Like the early morning and late afternoon rushes on the street cars in our cities, work on the land cannot wait, if the greatest profit is to be obtained. The time elapsing between plowing and planting must be shorter. So, too, must there be greater expedition at the time of harvest. There has been too much waste in the past. The use of the tractor will save much of such misspent energy in the future. The tractor is not eating its head off in weather when farm work is not possible. There is a saving not only in men, but in horses and mules.

The countries that lead in agriculture are the ones that must carry the white man's burden. And in the fierce competition of the present day the latest, most-improved machinery must be employed. There are portions of the world where old men, children, and, still more frequently, women are yoked sometimes together—sometimes to animals, in the work of cultivating the soil, as well as at the time of harvest. But they are not in the competitive class.

The tractor will do the work of many horses and mules at much less expense. It never takes fright and runs away. With proper lubrication a machine will last for years. It is steady, reliable and powerful, and, according to demand, pulls from one or two to twenty plows. It will work when the broiling hot sun of July or August makes toil by animals almost impossible. And that is the time when much of the land ought to be torn up for the fall-sown grain. The machine should be a boon to the southerner, where summer lasts nine months of the year, and much of the negro labor is so absolutely shiftless and unreliable.

Under the old regime the plowing of a section of land was only the beginning. It all had to be harrowed, and frequently a heavy storm necessitated long intervals between jobs. Sometimes the ground should have been plowed again, it was so hard. With the tractor the disc or harrow may be hitched to the plow as a trailer—sometimes also a roller, thus bringing much closer the time for putting in the seed.

In silo filling the tractor is ready for service again. It may be used in this work as in the others, co-operatively, a number of farmers owning the cutter and with the use of the tractor accomplishing the work with greater facility and speed.

Time and labor are saved, too, at threshing time. Instead of hiring a traveling crew, the farmer puts his tractor into service. As is well known, the threshing machine with its steam engine, has in the past journeyed about over the wheat belt, stopping a week or more, as was necessary, on one farm. In the new order of things there is co-operation again among the farmers, the tractor being owned at home, and only the threshing machine needs to be carried about the country. Not only are fewer men and teams used now to haul the grain to the elevators, but time is saved by the decreased number of trips necessary in going over the land. The tractor hauls a number of loaded wagons at one time to the nearest market place.

In baling hay, too, power is required. The tractor and hay press are taken together to the field, and after the timothy, clover or alfalfa has been raked into windrows, the tractor is of immense assistance in getting it into the required shape for market. With this added service there is opportunity to save much of the straw that has hitherto been wasted. This is now utilized by the baler and tractor, working in co-operation. Some of the material is left on the field to be spread and burned for a fertilizer, but a large portion can be baled and taken to the barns to be used for winter bedding. In the fall the tractor can be used for preparing the ground for the fall-sown grain, after the corn is all husked and the time has come again for putting in the seed.

Grain can be ground, too, in winter time by the tractor. Alfalfa can be turned into meal by the big machine. It can be used, too, in pumping water for the house and stock, and perhaps 100 other ways the new "toy" can be made to pay for its keep. Not the least of these possibly, is its utilization in road making, when spring time comes again. Better highways are becoming yearly more and more of a necessity, and the same economy of time and energy seen on the grain field can be obtained by the use at spare moments or hours, of this labor-saving device upon the roads.

The time was, at first, when the tractor could be used only on the biggest farms. It was a clumsy, awkward machine to manage. But improvements in the engine, the cutting down in the size, as well as in the cost, have made the tractor available and more and more a necessity upon farms of 150 to 300 acres. Like the variations in the use of the automobile for pleasure there have come more practical and less expensive motors for the farm.

When the tractor is used in farming operations, however, certain changes must be made in many features of the work. It will be found advantageous to have fields longer and narrower than formerly. It is not so easy to turn a tractor on a corner as when a mule is the motive power. To use land profitably, therefore, many farmers grow crops of hay about their plowed crops. It is also true that the tractor will not climb a hill as well as it can descend one, though the argument that they can not be used on rolling land is baseless. There is a limit to the amount of a tractor's power, and sometimes some of the plows have to be taken off when the machine is sent up too steep a hill. It is true, too, that though the tractor can not be scared and does not have to be watered or fed, it can not be whipped into greater effort.

The use of more machinery in agriculture will keep more boys on the farm that might have gone away to the cities to become failures, incompetents or criminals, from their inaptitude for their changed surroundings. It may, too, occasionally keep budding genius from blossom, and some men that might have been lawyers, poets, politicians and editors will be only happy husbandmen.

The writer worked on a farm in his boyhood. He remembers only too well the motive power in plowing a small stony patch of New Hampshire land full of roots. While one boy or man drove "Jack and Speck," the other held the plow. There were tremendous shocks when the plow point hit a stone, making the sparks fly on a dark day. There were strenuous lifts at the ends of furrows or at corners, where the plow had to be carried at arm's length, perhaps for several feet. To many who had such experiences the farming of the present day would seem almost like fun. There were rests in the work, yes, when "Speck" began to pant, because being faster than his mate, he bore the brunt of the burden. It seemed, too, as if this ox learned to pant unnecessarily, because of the short respite he realized he would get.

Such was old time farming. Then came the riding plow and later the gang plow. Now comes the tractor, and who can tell what the inventor of the future will devise to give us something better?

TWENTIETH CENTURY FARMER WORKING FORCE AT THE TRACTION SHOW.

Fremont Prosperity At the Postoffice

Optimism is in the air in Fremont. Business is generally good. But there is substantial basis for this feeling. Nowhere is any better proof found of prosperity than in the postoffice, where N. W. Smails officiates in a pretty, stone, well-appointed building. The assistant postmaster is F. W. Fuhlredt and the superintendent, L. A. Thompson.

Ten carriers look out for the city's mail; nine clerks and four rural carriers. Two janitors are employed. Only last month an additional clerk was allowed by Uncle Sam, the first addition for five years

The postoffice receipts for 1915 were $55,947.23; for 1914 the figures were only $47,057.73. money orders issued for 1915 amounted to $108,570.66; for 1914 the corresponding figures were $100,065.50; money orders paid in 1915 amounted to $85,744.59;