

Sioux County Journal.
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 OFFICIAL COUNTY PAPER.
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 Editor.
 J. Simmons.
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Tires Versus Road Taxes.
 Elliott in Good Roads.

There are differences enough between a horse and a wagon so that even an observer ought never to mistake one for the other. One of the most obvious differences is that a wagon is capable of its best work only when thoroughly tired, which can hardly be said of the horse, and it has also been noted that the horse gets more tired, as a wagon isn't.

While resting my bones in the Michigan grass last summer, I had a pleasant opportunity of listening to, and taking the talk of a well informed, practical, and consequently well-to-do farmer. I noticed that the wooden wheels of his wagon had very broad tires. By the way, I couldn't help noticing that well wood seems to answer for the wheels of farm wagons. I asked a great many questions about the broad tires, and this is what I found out:

It seems that the Michigan law makers had their windows open so that the light has begun to shine on them. The value of broad wheel tires being apparent and not wishing to put the farmer to compulsory expense, they have passed a law, the drift of which is that a man who will use on his wagon tires of a certain width shall have a rebate in road tax of one-half. And this is what it works. In buying a new wagon the difference in cost is slight, as the tires may be much thinner, and added strength in the wooden rim is a stronger wheel.

To take from a wagon already in use narrow rims and tires and replace with wider ones, costs between \$12 and \$20, and in the case of the farmer which I refer to, the direct saving in tax at once was better than twenty per cent, on the cost of making the wagon. To a man who was loaning his money at six or seven per cent, the broad tires looked like a good investment, even if there was no other advantage. But the other advantages were much greater. He showed me in the cornfield thirty bushels had a good load with narrow tires, and now haul fifty bushels with ease. When it came to haul half to the market the load could be wide tires, be increased from twenty to fifty per cent. This much from the farmer's standpoint. How about the commonwealth? It has been proved that, in localities where a considerable portion of the inhabitants use broad tires, the decreased tax on the road in better condition than holds tax did when the narrow tires ruled and it is believed by men who are in a position to know that when tires are universally used, the days of all kinds, from the city paved to the poorest dirt road may be a better condition than at present the fourth the present cost.

The greatest improvement for the future is what the present generation most likely to realize on, and I thoroughly believe in all the work now being done on the roads. No road will ever be built that will narrow tires under heavy loads, improve the road first is begin the wrong end of it. Legislation toward the forced general adoption of wheel trends proportioned to the load to be carried is the thing that should be pushed. Such a law made would greatly improve present roads, as fast as roads were made would tend to keep them so. If we would put down a new parlor and wouldn't let the boys come and walk on it with ho'-nailed shoes, would you? If you did the carpenters would begin to run and you would have to appeal to the law for aid.

Just one valid objection to that is, that such a wagon would over a road which is mostly of the old kind of tires, but wheels are what they should be no cuts (at least not in the face of the farmer may be shortened so that he can get the regular price. I have heard teamsters say that they are glad to use broad tires if every wagon was compelled to do so.

Make the key to the situation. Make it this direction illegal, at least show the wagon owner directly profitable to him to use the law. Did you ever notice how a man becomes a lawbreaker when he can make money with money now expended for roads, if it were not for the expense inflicted by narrow tires, you wouldn't believe it possible to ever get enough to keep the roads in shape until the tire question is settled by law, and any such law would take effect two or even three years, the passage could not be so speedy.

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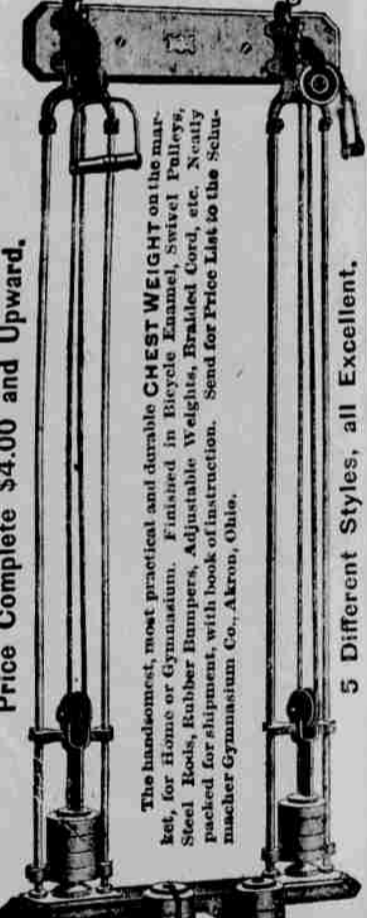
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