

Autos of Latest Make and Finest Finish to Be Seen at Omaha Show



AUTO IN THE RURAL UPLIFT

Thousands of Machines in Use Among Nebraska Farmers.

SOME EXAMPLES OF ITS UTILITY

Many of the Users Are Real Farmers, While the Others Have Close Connection with the Sons of Soil.

Records in the office of the secretary of state of Nebraska show that owners of 4,800 automobiles have registered and taken out license. Returns by assessors of the various counties have amounted to one sixteenth of this number. Douglas county is credited with 236 and Lancaster county has 176. This leaves 1,328 of the assessors' total scattered through eighty-eight counties, and the number of machines unaccounted for by assessors in any way totals 2,776, or as many again as the assessors found, and 1,992 more. Somewhere, somewhere, a good many automobiles are getting away from the personal tax on their bubble huggies, apparently. The value of almost 2,800 automobiles must be quite heavy, even averaging the three regiments of plungers not on the enrollment rolls at a modest figure.

Distinguished visitors to any ordinary town or village in Nebraska quickly discover that some local booster can offer for their use a machine of late pattern, with all the luxurious fittings that are considered necessary to "my machine." Some of these are on the assessors' lists, but more are not.

Let a convention meet in any city of fairly respectable size in the state and an automobile trip for the delegates is an essential feature, summer or winter, unless the weather is execrable to a degree. Gasoline, steam, electric—all methods of propulsion will be represented in these entertainment processions.

Useful in Politics.

Campaigns reported at republican and democratic headquarters last fall. "They're coming to the meetings in automobiles."

It was no uncommon sight to see six or twenty of the horseless hurry-upes grouped about a cross-roads schoolhouse wherein a political meeting was being held. While not all of the machines belonged to farmers, a fair proportion did.

As a rule, the farmers who buy automobiles with a mechanical twist of mind, for whom mastery of any machine has a continuing fascination. Then there are others of a progressive disposition who figure out to their own satisfaction that a machine will be a time and money saver for them. Carrying of milk and cream to town is becoming more and more a task for automobiles, where the volume of business is growing and quick delivery is an object.

Traveling Salesmen Appreciate Them.

The trade of traveling men who make interior towns is a big source of revenue with alert livymen, for the traveling salesman demands the best methods of getting about, always. A great deal of running "cross country" is therefore done by machine today, where yesterday the "peddler" and a buckboard sufficed. And the competition is quite as keen regarding mileage of the rival machines as used to be the case with the prize road team. The result is there are two kinds of lively today: a number of the live towns of central and western Nebraska, and it is not always easy to get either a rig or an auto, even under this condition of things. New garages are going up all the time and at some of the best a man can have a choice of machines.

For the work of the traveling salesman, machines have a distinct advantage. They do not tire, and after a stretch of forty or fifty miles can be turned about for another drive of the same length without giving sign of fatigue. At night the headlights make the way clear, and in case of storm the covered tonneau is a snug berth.

Good Roads to Sight.

Good roads agitation has had the effect, very largely, of making possible turnpikes, and local machine owners are becoming intelligently persistent in their appeals to city councils and town boards to have had spots promptly attended to. Generally, the owners of autos are men of initiative and pushers for their several communities, and when they set their minds to accomplishing a particular thing they get results.

It is true, too, that many sections of Nebraska have very good natural roads. Where there are no roads worth mentioning, the unbroken prairie and is not badly, because in those sections fences are few and far between.

Talking of a two weeks' trip through Custer county, one campaign speaker said: "At about every town of 50 inhabitants or over, and some times at smaller places, there would be several auto owners offering their services to take us across country, some for the good of the cause, and some for pay. Trips that used to consume the better part of a day in other campaigns were made last fall in an hour or two. Another blessed quality of the machines was, you could get back to town after the school house meetings and get the benefit of a fair night's sleep."

Where a man had to make afternoons and night speeches, the machines were almost a necessity. President-elect Taft has ridden in automobiles owned by rural Nebraskans several times, and all the big guns of the two parties had choice of many machines at about every place they visited.

It was the same man who reported that the presence of automobiles owned by farmers at meetings in country school houses put a crimp in many a populist howl about the oppressed agriculturist. There were not a few demagogic speakers who were told about the country in this kind of conversation.

Real Estate Men as Boosters.

Perhaps the greatest boosters for machines in the country districts are the real estate dealers, and next come the large and growing class of men who, living in town, yet farm on a large scale. They have several sections under cultivation for crop, or under grass for range, or many scattered farms are operated under one management. In such cases, a machine is almost the standard mode of traveling today, and the isolated example is becoming the general habit.

In the case of the real estate dealers, a camera is not a necessity almost. Out in the sections where there is still any considerable body of cheap land to be sold, the dealers have "body snatchers" on the train. These advance agents fall into conversation with the men who look like possible land buyers, and if the opportunity offer at an intervening station they telegraph the office to have a man and machine at the depot. Oftentimes this proposition lands a customer, for it affords the prospective buyer a chance to cover a large amount of territory in a short time; and the land seller has a chance to take a bunch of visitors whirling over a big expanse of territory without many of the discomforts attaching to a drive behind a team of questionable caliber.

Demand is General.

So general has the demand become for automobiles in rural communities that every town making any pretensions to a business standing now boasts one or more agencies. Sample machines only are kept in the smaller towns, with a line of the principal supplies likely to be needed, and orders are taken. There are scores of cities of 1,000 to 20,000 inhabitants, however, where a stock is carried of two to six makes, and a full line of extras of every description can be found. These automobile depots are not only an accommodation to local patrons, but every day prove to be havens of refuge and succor to travelers through the state who meet with accidents. And as a rule someone connected with the automobile shop is thoroughly posted on the best roads, and can map out an itinerary that will take in scenic features worth seeing. There are heavy spots in Nebraska that auto users become familiar with, which are never seen by the travelers on trains, and only rarely by travelers by team. The man with a good machine who

knows how to manage it, can and does make quick dashes hither and yon off the beaten path, and gains many a pleasurable experience thereby.

A camera is not an infrequent part of the equipment of the automobile making a cross-country run, and memories of picturesque bits are thus preserved for personal pleasure and the delight of friends.

Social Life Increased.

Social intercourse is another feature of rural life that is immeasurably increased by the possession of a fast and commodious machine. The member of the family living in town, or the friend of the family, finds it convenient at almost any time to load his belongings into the machine and run out into the next township, or the next county, possibly into the next state, for an overnight or over-Sunday visit. In fruit blossoming time country runs are very popular, and again at fruit picking time.

Physicians in country communities usually have a clientele scattered "over all creation." Those with an established practice always find it necessary to keep one or two teams for answering calls; and

sometimes it was killing work for the horses. It is not strange, then, that autos have become popular with these doctors who can afford them. Being thoroughly familiar with every road and section line, the condition of bridges, and all the topographical features of their territory, it must be had weather indeed that will stop the country physician from taking out his machine. He can answer far more calls in a given time than was possible with horse and buggy.

Farm sales of personal property are generally the occasion of the assembling of a battalion of autos, and the same is true of the big auctions of pure-bred hogs and cattle that have now become an established feature of Nebraska stock farms.

Sheriffs Know Their Value.

As thief chasers autos have largely displaced even the much trotted bloodhound. It is the handmaiden of the telephone, and is in big demand for emergency calls because of the rapidity with which it moves. Sheriffs and other law officers depend almost exclusively on the machine when they get word of a burglary or other crime at

some interior hamlet, or of some crime at an isolated farm. Some of the professional thieves have tumbled to the merits of the auto as a "get-away" medium, but the clan of robbers can never make the machine generally useful for their purpose. It costs too much, and is too great an incumbrance as a permanent possession. The thief that can afford a machine is about ready to retire and go into some other business.

Of the counties having twenty machines or over, aside from Douglas and Lancaster, the following lead the list as returned by assessors: Adams has 36, with Hastings down for over two-thirds of the number. Clay has seventy-one, and "Old Trusty" Johnson is threatening to start a factory of his own, to make a machine on new lines that will give every man a chance to own one. Dawson county, out in the North Platte valley, has listed sixty machines on the assessor's roll, being four more than returned by Dodge county, with Fremont in its borders. Buffalo county, adjoining Dawson on the east, has forty-seven automobiles, and Saunders, with the leading town

of Wahoo, lists only forty-three. Kearney and Phelps, alongside of Adams on the west, have thirty-five machines each. Hall county is credited with only forty, although Grand Island is in the county; and Hamilton, next east, with Aurora, shows up with thirty-five. Furnas and Red Willow, down at the Kansas line, have thirty-two and thirty-one, respectively, and Franklin, in the same tier, has twenty-two. Harlan, Governor Shallenberger's home county, has none, so far as the assessor's showing goes. Sheridan shows up with thirteen, the sample of Custer with eighteen, and Fort Butler, out at the Wyoming line, shows seventeen. Hitchcock turns in fourteen, while its neighbors, Chase, Dundy and Hayes together, report nine in all. Lincoln, with North Platte, has thirteen, and the "big range" Cherry, has only one accounted for. In Scott's Bluff there are eight machines, and even Sioux has one, while Cheyenne seems to have none, although Sidney, Bridgeport and Bayard are in that vast area.

Close home, Saline has eighteen and Barry ten. Colfax has sixteen and Butler fifteen. Cuming has six and Stanton two. Burr has sixteen and Thurston three. Dakota also has three, and Dixon sixteen. Antelope reports nine, Cass twelve, Park fifteen, Pawnee eight, Merrick has five and Nance has ten. Deuel, Garfield, Gosper and Kimball have one each.

The counties not listing any machines, aside from Harlan and Cheyenne are: Banner, Blaine, Cedar, Grant, Hooker, Keya Paha, Logan, Loup, McPherson, Rock, Sherman, Thomas and Wheeler. Those having any real business in those sections can find a machine here and there, however.

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To put on a high rate of speed suddenly on a slippery pavement or a sandy road so that the wheels fly around while the car is barely moving, is not conducive to long lived tires. The man who runs his machine in the ruts along a country road, so that the sides of the tires scrape against the side of the ruts, and the man who pumps the sides of his tires against the curbing of the pavements—an exceedingly common fault—also will find that his tires die a sudden death.

Careful Driving Means Life for Tires

Many more or less experienced owners of autos declare that tires are the root of all evil. As an excuse tire troubles will serve almost every time. In the reports of the auto races the inexperienced man consistently put down "tire trouble" every time anything happens the racer without bothering about looking up the real facts of the case. If Henry, the efficient chauffeur, fails to reach the country club in time to take the "boss" home, he gives "tire trouble" in place of joy rides as the cause. And if Billy, who likes Nancy, takes her for a ride in his brand new auto and they fall to come home at 9 o'clock per quarter of mother, "tire trouble" prevails a sufficient and unquestioned excuse.

But is reality the poor driver is made answer for many things for which they are not responsible. Of course every owner of "bubble wagons" may have trouble with tires at some time or other and some owners have constant trouble, but these "tire troubles" are due to the inexperience or negligence of the owners or to the fact that many drivers of cars expect impossible things of tires. A new tire which is of the right size and quality for the car upon which it is fitted should run about 10,000 miles before any serious trouble occurs. This distance, of course, can be obtained only when no direct injury occurs. But the full 10,000 miles having been run over one may expect then that tire troubles will develop with more or less rapidity.

It is apparent to any owner of a car who has many friends also enlisted in the ranks of automobilists that some drivers can preserve tires much longer than others. Given the same tires on the same car and supposing that the cars are doing the same type of work, still one man will take his car much farther than another. So true is this that a real estate man in an Indian town who has a number of cars on the road nearly all the time says that he pays one of his chauffeurs a much larger salary than any of the others simply because he more than saves the difference in salary in tire repairs.

The cars of this real estate man are of the same general type, the price being almost the same for all, and the tires are of the same quality. The work done by one car does not differ from that of any of the others, so that the truth of his statement can be proven easily.

Watching the work of a man who has saved money for his employer in the saving of his bills, one sees the reason for the longer life of some of the tires. For one thing, a chauffeur never should start out with a partially inflated tire. For another thing, the owner should not overload the car.

The overloading of the car may be done by the manufacturer or, who, being penny wise, thinks to save on the price of the car by saving on the cost of the tires. Some tires this saving takes the form of putting

tires of a poor grade on a heavy touring car. At other times the manufacturer puts on a tire of a size far smaller than the weight of the machine calls for. But the common mistake for the car owner is to put an extra seat or two on a runabout equipped with tires meant to sustain only the weight of the runabout body or to put a heavy limousine on a touring car body.

The especially common form of overloading, consisting of piling in many more people or a much greater weight than the car ought to carry probably does not do as much harm as a change in the body of the car, for the reason that the overloading is not continued throughout a long period of time.

Underinflation as a cause of the troubles ought to be apparent to any auto owner. The underinflated tire flattens when it touches the ground and fills out again as it leaves it. This causes the tire to heat and break down the material in it. If one will take a wire and bend it back and forth a number of times the wire will break, in fact, it will break in a surprisingly short time.

The auto tire, of course, is not of the same material as a wire and will give with less damage to the material in it, but constant bending of the fabric will shorten the life of the tire.

This bending of the tire also causes it to grow warmer than it otherwise would. If the tire is one with layers of fabric, so that the walls are thick, the heat thus ac-

quiescent is greater. The bending also causes the different layers of fabric to break loose from each other. Although such a thick tire with many layers ought to have a long life, underinflation soon will cut them off in their prime and they will "rim cut" and blow out quickly.

Sometimes one must look to the rim as the cause of the short lived tire. If having a blowout and having no other tires on hand, one attempts to run home on the rim one may pay for it later in tire bills. A dent in the rim causes the tire to wear more quickly at that point, and a flattened road or sharpened rim will do great damage.

If one finds that the tires on one wheel are wearing out more quickly than those on any of the other wheels—and many auto drivers can tell of such cases—one should look to the rim to try to find whether or not the wheels are out of line or running true.

The action of the brakes on the rear wheel and the greater number of revolutions due to the fact that the power is applied to these wheels and to the fact that they slip often may cause more trouble in the rear tires than in the front ones. This, of course, can not be remedied entirely.

Although a careful driver will examine his car to see that the tires are not underinflated and will provide against overloading, and will remedy any defect in the rims, there are other things to be con-

sidered if one wishes the tires to last long. The dashing driver who starts with a jump, throws on the high gear within a short distance, and, when stopping, drives almost to the desired point, then slams on the brakes, will find that his tires will not last as long as his more careful friend.

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Autos and Aeronautics

Aeronautics has become a distinct line of activity for the signal corps of the United States army, and in the study of the problems of air navigation the automobile has been found to be a necessity. Not that any one considers or attempts a flight through the air with a motor car, but they do over the surface of the ground follow the course of the airships. This is partly for the purpose of giving aid in case of accidents, and partly for the purpose of giving an opportunity for observation of the work-

ings of the airships to observers as well as navigators.

At Fort Myer, where the national government conducts its tests, the signal corps is provided with a Franklin touring car of twenty-eight-horsepower. This is kept in condition use, although the aeronautic experiments are not as numerous as experiments now as they were before Orville Wright and his soldier companion had their fall at Fort Myer, which resulted in the death of the latter and the serious injury of the more famous aeronaut. The belief among army officers and among members of the signal corps especially, however, is that travel through the air will grow in favor and that without any great delay. They believe it is necessary for army scouting, although as yet they have been able with the automobile to make movements more quickly than with the airships.

HORSE POWER IS A MISNOMER

Has Really Nothing to Do with the Gas Buggy's Efficiency.

CYLINDERS DETERMINE POINT

How Cars Are Rated for Service in Practice in Europe and What American Makers Are Doing.

"Horse power is a greatly abused word," declared a "fan" at the Kimball garage last night as he was discussing the merits of the different cars coming in the show. "When you say this car has forty horse power that doesn't mean it can pull as much as forty horses. Horses have nothing to do with it. To get right down to the technical, horse power is lifting 33,000 pounds one foot in a minute, or, if you want to reverse it, raising one pound 33,000 feet in one minute. It doesn't make much difference which way you use it, only the equines are not taken into consideration at all."

"I don't know just how they came to adopt the word 'horse power' as applied to the power of gasoline or steam engines and I have vainly sought to find some one who does know. But the word is there all right and answers its purpose, only that it confuses people who do not understand the exact meaning of the phrase."

"Abroad they are not placing so much emphasis upon horse power as they used to. Now when you read a description of a foreign machine you seldom see the power quoted—you get the size of the cylinders in the way of horse and stroke and then you figure it out yourself."

"There is considerable difference in the way of figuring horse power in this country and abroad. On the other side of the Atlantic and especially in France they rate an engine much lower than it really is for the reason that over there they are rated according to horse power. Consequently a motor that would be twenty-horse power in this country is about twelve on the other side."

"We Americans are just beginning to appreciate ratings. The mechanical branch of the Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers is responsible for this. There were so many disagreements that finally these engineers got together and adopted a formula for the purpose of estimating horse power. This was adopted by the members of the association and gradually the idea is being taken up by other American manufacturers. In this the stroke does not enter into the calculation in the least. It is found that while this formula was made up by averaging all the leading American motors, there is a tendency on the part of the formula to overrate a small motor and underrate one of high power."

"In engineering verbiage this formula reads $2\pi \times N \times D^2$ representing the cylinder diameter and N the number of cylinders. The constant 25 is the computed average from the American four-cylinder motors."

"Opinion is changing regarding the horse power of the modern motor car. Formerly the idea was to get as big and as powerful an engine as was possible. That was when everyone had the speed mania. But now the motoring public is becoming wise and cars are powered according to their use. For instance, when one wants to make a long tour over bad roads and steep hills then you want the power—say about thirty-five or forty, maybe forty-five. In the city, where most of the traveling is done, such high power is no longer desired. Owners realize the folly of maintaining huge touring cars for town use when it simply is a case of drive downtown and back again."

"Consequently the town car is coming in—generally a small vehicle of about twenty-five-horse power, often of the landaulet type. Some have small four-cylinder bodies and then again the little runabout comes in mighty handy for making time through the traffic where a big car is generally slow because of its unwieldiness."

"In France they say they are favoring small powered cars of two cylinders and often one, principally for city use, however. Several of these little 'one lungers,' as the single cylinders are called, are being fitted with sinuous bodies and are used for touring purposes. In this country, though, we still stick to the four and six and think there is nothing like them."

Along the Kansas line.

The Kansas line counties are more strongly immoderated with the auto bug than elsewhere, with twenty-five, or York, with twenty-four, or Platte, with twenty-three. They even beat Ohio and its boasted Nebraska City, reporting only twenty-eight. Phelps county, Holdrege included, lists thirty-five bux wagons, while Madison county records the same number as Platte, twenty-three. Washington has twenty-one on the tax roll. Fillmore twenty, and Nemaha twenty. Pawnee, Sheridan shows up with thirteen, the sample of Custer with eighteen, and Fort Butler, out at the Wyoming line, shows seventeen. Hitchcock turns in fourteen, while its neighbors, Chase, Dundy and Hayes together, report nine in all. Lincoln, with North Platte, has thirteen, and the "big range" Cherry, has only one accounted for. In Scott's Bluff there are eight machines, and even Sioux has one, while Cheyenne seems to have none, although Sidney, Bridgeport and Bayard are in that vast area.

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The Insanity Plea.

"Er," said the young woman, with what seemed to be indignation.

The young man looked embarrassed.

"Yes, I did kiss you," he admitted, "but I was impulsively insane."

"That means that a man would be a lunatic to kiss me?"

"Well, any man of discretion would be just crazy to kiss you."

This seemed to ease the strain, and no jury being present to muddle affairs, a satisfied verdict was reached—Philadelphia Ledger.