

“A Successful Tractor”

Reprinted from the Correspondence Columns of



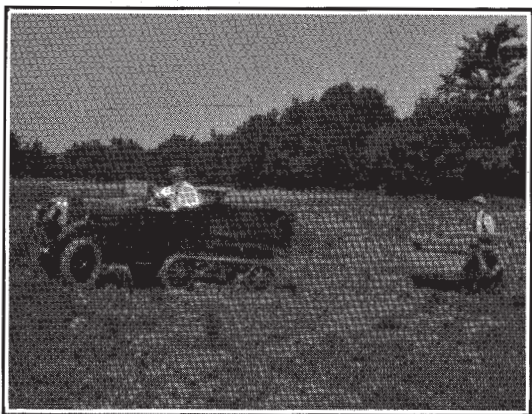
Thursday, March 8th, 1928

SIR,

The problems arising from wet soil, expensive and inadequate labour, neglected arable land, cartage of manure, timber cutting and removal of odd piles of rubbish, must appear on most estates and cause considerable waste of labour, time and money.

To deal with these problems, I purchased a Kégresse tractor early in 1925, and as I am completely disinterested in the Citroën Company, a brief description of the work it has done will possibly be of interest to others.

No technical description is necessary here, except to say that by means of an endless band instead of a rear driving wheel a machine has been evolved capable of proceeding under its own power



PULLING A THREE-TON RING ROLLER OVER FRESH PLOUGH

across any country under any conditions of weather. The tractor drives like an ordinary car, and has been taken up several gradients of one in three across big waterlogged ditches and over wet fields, with such ease that only a personal demonstration can convince the sceptical. One great advantage is that the machine exerts its full tractive power at very slow speeds and can rarely be "stalled."

With such a brief general description the work done by the machine may be described in more detail. Its immediate convenience was demonstrated by the necessity of lopping overhanging hedgerows and branches prior to ploughing. With a wagon in tow, the tractor ran along the hedgerow and the overgrowth was cut by axe, saw or slasher, and dropped direct into the tractor body or wagon, and carted away across country. Two men produced an enormous pile of branches in two hours which would

ordinarily have taken four men and a horse and cart almost a full day.

The bugbear of the estate, a field of six acres ploughed in 1918 and since allowed to grow thistles and weeds was next tackled. This had been ploughed by horses in eight days with little result, as the plough kept on fouling up with rubbish. A nine-tined Martin cultivator was attached with the tines 9in. deep, and the tractor pulling easily on second gear at about 4 m.p.h. cross-cut the area in nine hours, ironstone existing in the field being torn up sometimes in 2ft. slabs.

A 3-ton ring roller was then put on behind, and the area crushed down by rolling in four hours. A chain harrow was attached in the same afternoon, and enormous quantities of rubbish were removed in the same time. The field was left for ten hot days, and then was again pulled to pieces by the tined cultivator, this time in seven hours, and chain harrowed once more in four hours. It was finally ploughed and landed up in five days with horses and grew an excellent crop of wheat.

An analysis of this operation shows that six acres were torn to bits and all rubbish killed in 28 working hours, and this effected a saving of three days in the final ploughing. The total consumption of petrol was 14 gallons, and the work was of the roughest description as can be seen from the photographs, and would have necessitated teams of three horses and considerable risk of sprained tendons.

The haymaking was then started, the meadows being cut with horses, but all the hay was picked up and carted by the tractor. Tow bars were fitted to two wagons, and it was found that the tractor could back on to a wagon, hitch up and get away in under one minute, *i.e.*, before the horses could be backed and the shafts lifted and hitched up. In the field the tractor, moving on low gear, ran along the ted of hay at below walking speed, the movement being so steady that it



THE KÉGRESSE TRACTOR WORKING A TWO-FURROW PLOUGH 9IN. DEEP

did not affect the men loading on the top, and on straight work the driver left his driving seat and helped to load. When the load was completed, the tractor drew off to the rick at 7 to 9 m.p.h. on second gear. It was found possible to run out an empty wagon, load and bring it alongside the rick again, faster than two men could unload the other wagon on to the elevator.

In previous years, four extra men were employed, but this was found unnecessary owing to the above arrangements.

The harvesting was done entirely by the tractor, a Massey Harris binder, requiring three horses, ran at 6 to 8 m.p.h. with the tractor on second gear, even up severe slopes, and this speed was only necessary at the urgent request of the man on the binder! Twelve acres were easily dealt with in nine hours, and working with a change of drivers it would be possible to cut sixteen acres. The corn was picked up later in a similar manner to the hay.

The tractor was then used with a Massey Harris two-furrow self-lift plough. No difficulty was experienced in ploughing two acres in six hours on second gear, the shares going down 9in. as can be seen from the photograph.

The rushes on a wet low-lying field were carted during wet weather, and the tractor easily pulled fully loaded wagons of these through wet places and across a nasty ditch, where the wagon wheels sank over a foot.

The mole plough was worked at a depth of 9in. to 10in. at walking speed, four acres being dealt with in two hours.

The problem of moving poultry was solved by a pig-net over the box body, 50 birds being carried at a time from the door of one house to the door of the other.

In fruit picking the machine can easily be manipulated amongst the trees, and the box body forms a ready receptacle for the fruit, the pickers standing on the sides and getting most of the fruit without ladders.

The drive is rolled with an ordinary 2-ton roller, weighted with gate posts and lumps of iron to about 3½ tons.

When fencing is in hand the tractor is loaded with posts and rails which are tipped off as required, the tractor moving along at 8 m.p.h.

On the road, the machine can average 10 m.p.h. with a load of 15 cwt. and towing a trailer of about 2 tons.

It is invaluable when heavy weeding, manure cartage and transport of pot plants are in hand.

Two horses have been dispensed with since its purchase.

It has assisted in hauling several motor cars and lorries out of the local ditches, and during the last snow and silver thaw it was the only vehicle moving, and was invaluable for carrying out hay to the weather-bound animals.

In conclusion I consider the machine supplies a long-felt want, inasmuch as it will do almost anything on the estate quicker, more easily and with less man power, than is possible by any other means.

The machine has been running for three years, and is still in almost perfect condition. Over this period repairs have cost approximately £70, and a considerable portion of this was necessitated by the extraordinarily rough work I made it do the first six months to "try it out." It is difficult to calculate the saving effected, as this has been chiefly in time; for example, four acres of man-gold were destroyed by fly, and the tractor pulled up the ground again and harrowed it, and the field was re-sown the same day. On a conservative estimate I should say that it has paid for itself in two years.

If any reader requires further details or a practical demonstration I shall be happy to do anything to assist, as I am convinced that in these days of costly labour something must be done to keep down costs in estate work. Moreover, the brief spells of fine weather must be utilised to the utmost.

The machine, supplied by Messrs. Citroën Kégrasse, Ltd., through Messrs. Gordon England, Ltd., cost £425, and has given practically no trouble. The parent firm are, I find, most obliging with advice and supply of spares when necessary.

E. C. ABBOTT-YOUNG.

North Breach Manor, Ewhurst, Surrey.



DRAWING A 9-TINED MARTIN CULTIVATOR

For full particulars write to

CITROËN KÉGRESSE LTD.

**Citroën Building, Brook Green,
HAMMERSMITH, LONDON, W.6**