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That the proper improvement of the public roads does not necessarily involve in all cases the building of expensive stone roads is well illustrated by the result of an experimental sand-clay road built at Dodge City, Kansas, in the fall of 1908, under the direction of the United States Office of Public Roads. A report made by a resident of Dodge City in April, 1909, contains the following paragraph:

"A colony of Germans, settled on the finest kind of wheat land, were going to leave on account of the inconvenience of travel in marketing their wheat, but now they have a road smooth enough for a race track. It has increased the value of their land at least 25 per cent. and they were well pleased to remain."

In reporting upon the road system of France, Consul Francis P. Loomis, in 1891, said,

"The road system of France has been of far greater value to the country as a means of raising the value of land and of putting the small peasant proprietors in easy communication with the markets than have the railroads."

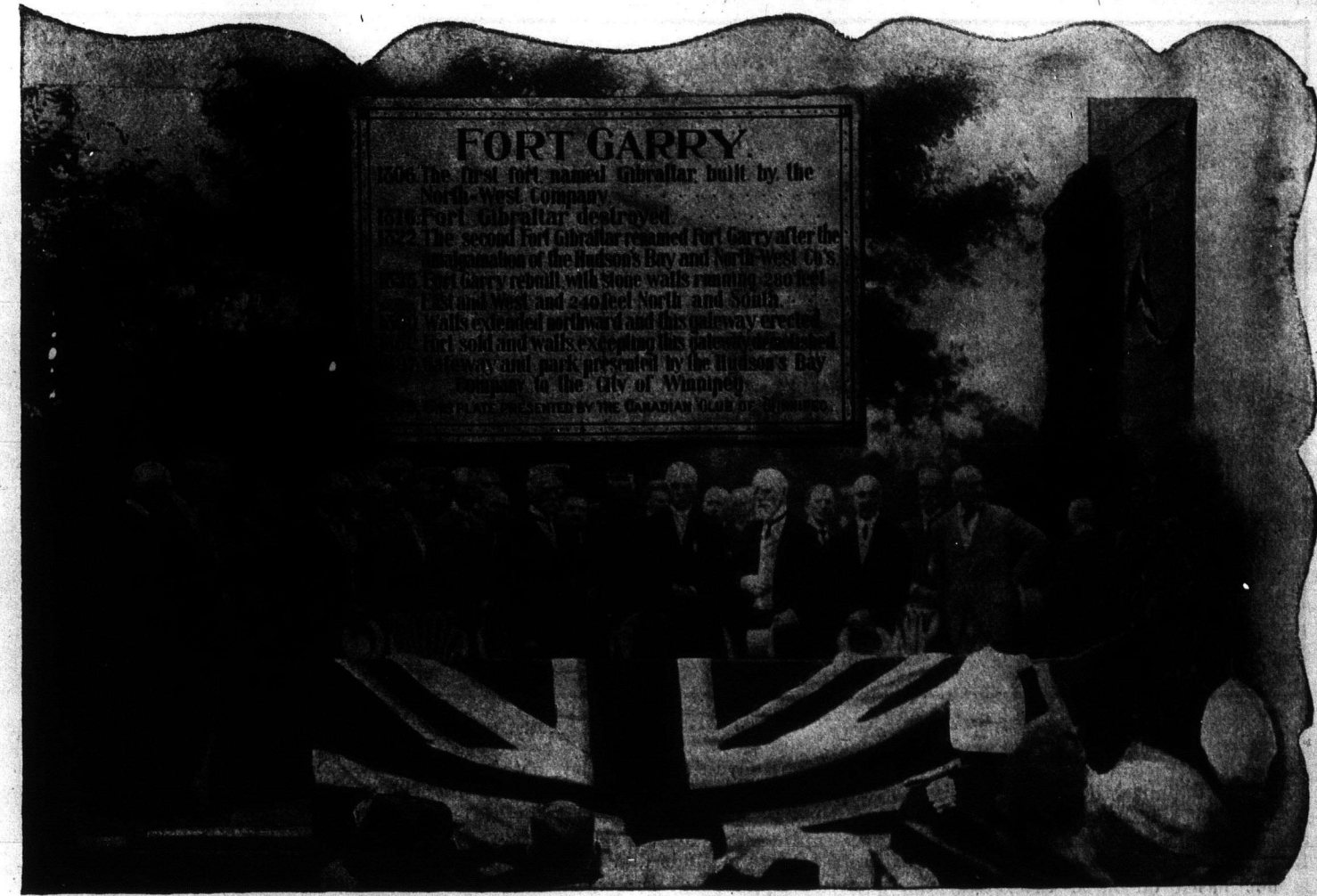
While it is impossible to assign an arbitrary per cent. or amount to represent the increase in land values by reason of road improvement, it is generally believed that the average increase per acre within the zone of influence of an improved road would be from two to nine dollars per acre. As there are about 850 million acres of farm lands improved and unimproved in the United States, the possibilities of aggregate increase in value are enormous.

In the crop-moving season, the railroads which traverse the great agricultural sections are taxed far beyond their equipment. For many months, while the country roads are impassable, much of this equipment is idle, and thus the railroads suffer a double loss. This cannot fail to affect dividends of stockholders and salaries of employees. With an adequate improvement of the common roads, the development of agricultural resources would be so great as to increase in a marked degree the annual tonnage of the railroads, while the means of access to the railroad stations would be so uniform throughout the year that the delivery of freight would be reasonably constant instead of spasmodic. It is not to be wondered, therefore, that the industrial departments of great railroad systems are co-operating to the fullest extent with all the other factors in bringing about the era of road building.

These figures constitute conclusive evidence of the immensity of traffic on the common roads. They do more; they give food for reflection as to where the cumulative losses in wear and tear of wagons, harness, and teams, due to poor roads will land us on the debit side. Nobody can even approximately



The Schools Cadets' Bands, Winnipeg.



LORD STRATHCONA ADDRESSING THE CITIZENS.—This cut gives view of Lieut. Governor McMillan and others on the platform prior to Lord Strathcona unveiling the Tablet at Fort Garry Gateway park, August 1909.

estimate this drain, but everybody must know it is in terms of millions.

The loss in dollars is serious enough for grave concern; but, when the additional charge is made that bad roads are a menace to our institutions, our health, and our educational development it constitutes an indictment of such gravity as to demand paramount consideration.

The rapid trend of population from country to city has been frequently commented upon as grave cause for concern. In 1790, only 3.4 per cent. of our population dwelt in cities; in 1850, 12.5 per cent.; while, in 1900, the percentage was 31.1. This explains why hundreds of millions of fertile acres remain untilled, while the unsanitary and unwholesome city tenements are crowded with human beings whose standard of living must result in their mental, moral, and physical decay. Man is a social animal and prefers misery and want rather than isolation, and the tenement dwellers will not go to the country, if by so doing they isolate themselves from their fellow men.

That the common road vitally affects this phase of American life must be apparent to even the casual observer. An examination of the statistics of population in counties possessing first-class roads will reveal the fact that in almost every case the population has increased, while the sections of country which have lost in population are conspicuous for impassable roads. In corroboration of this statement, a comparison of the reports of the Office of Public Roads with the reports of the United States Census for 1900 reveals the significant fact that, in 25 counties selected at random, possessing an average of only 1.5 per cent. improved roads in 1904, the decrease in population averaged 3,112 for each county for the ten-year period between 1890 and 1900. Contrasted with this showing, the records in 25 counties which possessed an average of 40 per cent. improved roads revealed an increase averaging 31,095 to the county.

Whether good roads cause good schools or vice versa, it is true that they exist together and that one of the most important reasons for good roads is their effect on school attendance in the country. If the country schools are to have a maximum efficiency in training and instruction, the children must be afforded facilities for reaching the schools with dry feet at all seasons of the year. Then the graded school can

replace the little, one-room, one-teacher schools so prevalent in many sections of country. The possibilities of a region of improved roads are made apparent by the many examples of school wagons regularly gathering up the pupils and hauling them to and from school. When the roads are placed in such condition as to make this practice general, a tremendous impetus will have been given to education in the United States.

In the five states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Ohio and Indiana, in which 34.92 per cent. of the roads are improved, 77 of each 100 pupils enrolled regularly attend the public schools. In the five states of Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Georgia, and South Dakota having only 1.5 per cent. of improved roads, only 59 out of each 100 pupils enrolled regularly attend the public schools. Less directly attributable to, but equally noticeable in its common occurrence with, bad roads is the prevalence of illiteracy. Data obtained from the twelfth census of the United States and from investigations of the Office of Public Roads show that in four states with a population of over seven million people and having conspicuously bad roads, there were in 1900 about three hundred and seventy-five thousand white illiterates born of native parents; whereas in four states conspicuous for their good roads and having a population of more than six million, there were only twenty thousand illiterates. It would certainly seem that good transportation facilities are concomitant with good education. This is realized by prominent educators, and a rather general movement is under way among the engineering schools and colleges to devote more attention to the study of highway engineering, while in several of the states the question of teaching elementary road building in the public schools is being seriously agitated. In a few more years, the educators of the land may be making common cause with the farmers, the railroad companies, the automobilists, and the enlightened elements of our population generally, in the movement for better roads.

It is not generally realized that our 2,155,000 miles of road constitute a great source of disease. By means of dust, disease germs enter the human system. This is particularly true of tuberculosis germs. Roads of the future in great centres of population will be practically dustless, and the bituminous and other binders which will be used

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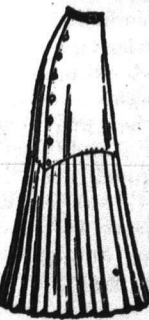
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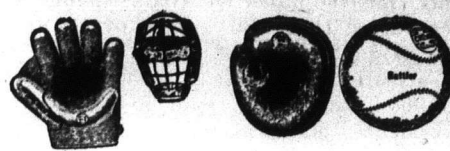
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