



ular place. If the old trail becomes too much cut up and worn it is an easy matter to go a few feet on either side and establish a new one on the prairie. The result is that the years are passing by and few permanent roads are being established, excepting in the older settled portions.

In a recent address before the American Bankers' Association at Chicago, Mr. James J. Hill attracted the attention of the entire country by his warning that unless the agricultural population and its



This kind of road makes farming expensive

product increased in the United States, that they would soon find themselves facing the grave question of a deficient food supply. He pointed out the undeniable fact that the farmer is the main reliance; every other activity depends upon that. If the farm is neglected, if the food is not produced, somebody and everybody must go hungry.

There is no other one thing that will tend to conserve the life on the farm and to promote our agricultural industry as much as good roads. There is no other one thing that makes life so enjoyable and helps to build up the wealth and prosperity of a country. Western Canada did not begin to develop until the various railway lines began to cross and criss-cross the country. The soil lay for years just as productive as it is to-day, but nobody came to till it. What is true of the country in so far as railways are concerned, is true of every community in so far as good roads are concerned, for the country highway binds town and country together, tending ever to promote business enterprise and an easy avenue of meeting between buyer and seller.

The one great obstacle to the building of good roads in Western Canada is the fact that so much of the land is as yet unoccupied. It is quit enough to ask every farmer to build a road the length of his own farm, but if this were to be done in Western Canada there would be hundreds of miles of road that would not be built; but there is one thing we can do and that is to follow the example of Appius Claudius in at least a reasonable measure and build our roads for the future. Imagine yourself riding over the prairie, rough and stony and full of buffalo wallows and when you came within

a mile of the farmer's house you hit upon a nice piece of road that had been carefully graded and well kept. Would it not improve your estimation of that particular farmer? Would it not make a pleasant finish to your journey? and if we were to start out with this end in view, as the country becomes settled up, it will not be long before the links in this good road chain become connected and we will have a system of good roads that will be a credit to the country.

The keeping up of a road once it is graded is a very easy matter. The soil of Western Canada is particularly adapted to furnishing a hard, smooth surface. There are certain seasons of the year, however, when the gumbo becomes very sticky and the wheels cut the road up into deep ruts. As soon as it begins to get a little dry, if the farmer were to take his disc harrow and run over the road and then, say once a week, if he were to use a split log drag, which is a very inexpensive and at the same time efficient tool, it would only be a matter of a year or so until he could get a piece of road into such shape that when the water falls upon it that it would not lie there, but would run off, leaving the surface of the road smooth and hard.



A veritable "Lovers' Lane"

DeWard King, the inventor of the split log drag, has done more towards the building of a system of good roads than any other man who lived before his time or who is living at the present time. He evolved something that any farmer can make and once made will last practically a life time. It will not build a road, but when

once built it will keep it so and not only that, but it will improve its condition the longer it is used.

The question of good roads, as has often been stated before, is simply a matter of dollars and cents to the farmer. He is too apt to look upon it as something that the municipality should provide for, while at the same time he is the one that uses the road. Going to the country post office or store, we can hear the farmers discussing politics, the price of wheat, Halley's comet and a hundred and one other things, but it is a rare thing to listen to a discussion on good roads. Road building is a thing that the farmer seems to regard as beneath him and not of sufficient importance to warrant his attention, while every time he hauls a load of wheat to town he is perhaps losing a nice bit of profit through imperfect roads. His horses do not last as long, his harness wears out prematurely and his wagons last only about half as long as they should, to say nothing about the extra amount of time it takes to go to and from his principal market place.

I have scarcely ever seen the matter of good roads made a political issue, and I have often wondered why some political party did not take it up and promise

great things in road construction as a political handle with which to secure votes. It would be a most laudable thing on the part of any political party leader during his term of office to equip his particular province with hundreds of miles of well graded, well paved, passable roads.

Only a short time ago the writer

travelled was supposed to be a public thoroughfare, it was almost impossible for a single horse to pull two of us in an open buggy. I wondered at that time what the farmer would do who wished to come to town with a load over this same road. If it were a case of necessity, it would mean that he would have to use either two teams or else take half a load.

The automobile, in sections



The kind of road that makes farming profitable where it is used sufficiently, will probably do more to build up a system of good roads than any other one thing. The automobile does not necessarily have to have a good road to travel over, but it must have a good road if those who ride in the car are to derive any pleasure from the ride itself. The man who owns an automobile in the community is generally a live, up-to-date, wide awake individual and he will use his utmost influence to see that a system of good roads is perfected in his particular community. The various automobile associations wherever they are formed, will also take up the subject of good roads, all of which will tend to stir up a certain amount of latent energy in the minds of the farmers.

It is up to the merchants in every town to boost the cause of good roads. The merchants of Western Canada lose hundreds of dollars every year through a system of roads so poor that the farmers cannot get to town as often as they would like. Many a time a farmer has an idea that he would like to go to town to purchase something, but the bad road confronts him and he accordingly stays at home. This may not seem much when viewed from the standpoint of a single farmer, but when we take the farmers as a whole and the roads as a whole, it amounts to considerable within a year. Boost the cause of good roads wherever you go; never grumble at your road tax, but pay it out to the limit, for this particular item. It is bread cast upon the waters and will return a hundred fold.



Li'le Eph. says — Gee! Ah's sho' glad Ah ain't nebbber been in politics.