

The Good Roads Activities of the Ontario Motor League

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carried on with this end in view kept public attention fixed on the need of such a highway and the great boon it would be to the two cities and the intervening district. This campaign was continued until the municipalities interested committed themselves to the building of the road and the Toronto-Hamilton Highway Commission was appointed by the Government to superintend the work.

The Ottawa-Prescott Highway scheme was taken up by the Ottawa Valley Motor Car Association, which is affiliated with the League, long before the municipalities or any other public bodies were prepared to endorse it, and it is largely due to the enthusiastic campaign carried on by that club that the construction of the road is now assured.

The League publishes a monthly magazine, the Canadian Motorist, which is devoted largely to the advancement of the good roads cause. Through this magazine and other mediums the League is endeavoring to impress upon the public the wisdom of building roads of the best type, roads which will stand up to the increased traffic attracted by improvements.

The Work of Road Improvement.

Some of the automobile clubs in the League engage directly in the work of road improvement. The work done may be simply the mending of a few bad spots in the road, or the use of split log drags in springtime, but this effort, if well directed, often achieves immediate results which could not be obtained without considerable delay from lethargic county or township organizations. Automobile clubs sometimes spend part of their funds in oiling the roads of their district. One

of the clubs arranged to maintain a five-mile stretch of main highway in good condition by subscriptions among the members and a contribution from the club. While the Toronto-Hamilton highway was in course of construction the motorists of Toronto and Hamilton, through the League, maintained six or seven miles of the detour road in good condition by having it dragged and graded at intervals. Several clubs have organized road improvement bees, the members turning out to clear stretches of road of loose stones which prove injurious to tires.

Many of the activities of automobile clubs have an indirect influence in highway improvement. The practice of all automobile clubs in discouraging speeding on the part of motorists generally may be considered an influence more potent even than use of the road, not to mention the aspect of public safety. A movement which will keep the speed of motor cars within reasonable limits must be admitted to be of the greatest value in the preparation of road surfaces, for engineers are agreed that the damage to road surfaces from automobile tires increases rather with the square of the speed than in direct ratio.

Road Information Bureaus.

The maintenance of road information bureaus supplied with accurate data during temporary road conditions through the advice of members and road scouts, is an important feature of the work of an automobile club. The best use can be made of highways only through the possession by the parties travelling on them of accurate information as to their present condition. The service of the information bureau is supplemented by special maps and road guides, giving descriptions and cyclistometer readings of the main travelled roads. In erect-

ing numerous direction signs and danger signs where required, automobile clubs supply another real need on the part of all who travel the highways. These signs are recognized and protected by law in Ontario. In this work of making available the actual road resources of the country the automobile clubs perform a valuable public service.

Though much has been accomplished the Ontario Motor League is by no means content with its achievements. Its ambition for good roads is unbounded. Its widening membership means an increasing interest, and it must not be forgotten that the Ontario Motor League is the representative body of all the motorists in the province who, owning 50,000 cars in 1916, contributed over \$600,000 to the provincial treasury in motor vehicle registration fees. This year the government will receive at least \$800,000 from the same source, and next year well over a million dollars. The Minister of Highways has declared that the revenue derived from motor vehicle fees is to be used to enable his department to carry on an aggressive policy of road improvement. Ample funds are now in sight for this purpose, and it is but reasonable to expect that when the war is over the government will devote a much larger amount of money to road improvement than the aggregate of motor vehicle fees.

A Transprovincial Highway.

With such an outlook the Ontario Motor League has entered upon a campaign for the construction of a transprovincial highway, stretching from Windsor to Montreal, to serve as the main trunk line of a provincial system of highways, with branches to Niagara Falls, Ottawa, and other important points. The League is pointing out that apart from the more apparent domestic benefits which would

accrue from the building of such a main road, its existence would attract so many United States motorists to Ontario on automobile tours that the revenue from tourist traffic alone would soon pay for the cost of constructing the road. In all the cities and leading towns along the route of the proposed transprovincial highway the Ontario Motor League has affiliated automobile clubs which will cooperate with the parent organization in this campaign, and from the sympathy and public appreciation which the project has so far received there seems little doubt but that the transprovincial highway will become a reality in the not far distant future.

Quebec's Aggressive and Effective Good Roads Policy

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Act, to provide for the further granting of loans, and especially for the maintenance of the roads already built, or to be built. Heretofore this has been the weak spot in this otherwise splendid policy, as no provision had been made for maintenance. Quebec is not the only community taken with good roads enthusiasm to forget that the making of a road is only the beginning of a good roads system. The maintenance is as important as the making, and Mr. Tessier's amendments propose to rectify this mistake and in future keep the roads up to the standard, thus the new Act gives the Minister more latitude, not only in the building of new roads, but in their maintenance. The experience, so far, of Quebec's good roads policy has been most favorable. It has created a proper appreciation of what good highways mean, and that should keep the movement going at a business like pace.

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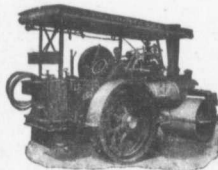
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