

prepared to say anything against statute labor. I think that it will probably be a long while before we in this Province will be prepared to do away with statute labor, because I know from my own familiarity with the agricultural community that in many districts it is a great deal easier for farmers to put in so many days labor upon the roads than it would be to pay a money tax, and the probability is that we get more labor performed by statute labor than we could by assessing a money tax in many districts. At the same time the day is approaching when, to a large extent, statute labor will be done away with and money assessment voluntarily adopted in the different counties. The introduction of road machines does away, to a large extent, with the necessity for statute labor, and I think the more progressive parishes and counties will gradually see the advantage of at least assessing a part of the tax in money instead of work. It has been suggested that it would be a good idea to allow the poll tax to be served in labor, and cash assessments for the balance. That would probably be going too far at the present time, at all events. But the object of this meeting is to call forth an expression of opinion from men from different parts of the Province, and hear their suggestions and receive their opinions as to the advantages of forming an Association and the best methods of disseminating knowledge. Almost every roadmaster in the Province has some practical knowledge, but back of all that there is the experience of men, engineers and others who have given thought and attention to this question for hundreds of years, and this experience has been gathered together and records kept of it, and if we can obtain information in this way, by the results of the work of the past, I think we should by all means do so. We have here to-day for distribution a pamphlet issued by the League of American Wheelmen of the United States. It conveys some very useful information and suggestions, which I think anyone who is interested in road making will find profit in reading. And it is in this way that this Association can do a great deal of good, in disseminating knowledge among the people generally as to the best methods of constructing roads. I think that one of the weak points in our system of road making is that not sufficient attention is paid to the matter of drainage. A certain attempt is made at surface drainage, but even that is not adequately provided for. Of course there are certain cases where the soil is naturally of a porous