

MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT

GOOD ROADS CONVENTION.

Upon the invitation of the York county council, upwards of fifty persons from various parts of Ontario, mostly members of some municipal body, gathered in the court house, Toronto, on Monday, December 11th, for the purpose of discussing the good roads problem.

The particular feature under discussion, and one in which the York County delegates have particular interest, is the assumption by counties of the construction and maintainance of certain main travelled roads in the country, the funds to be raised by general taxation or by debentures.

Mr. W. C. Lundy, chairman of the special committee of the county council,

who had the matter in hand, was elected to the chair, while county clerk Ramsden was chosen secretary. Mr. Lundy, in his opening address, after thanking the delegates for the honor conferred upon him, briefly stated the history of the road question in York county, from the toll gate days to the present, when the municipalities charged with their maintainance have failed to keep them up. At the June session of the council it had been proposed to take over some of the roads again. A committee was appointed to collect information, but so much had been received that it was felt advisable to hold a convention to discuss it.

Mr. A. F. Wood was called upon to address the assembly upon the system of road making adopted by the county of Hastings. The address of Mr. Wood largely supported the idea of county maintainance of leading roads. At least, after trial of the toll roads, plank roads, roads kept up, in sections of five miles each, and many other systems, it had been found that the only uniform and satisfactory way of keeping up the roads was the adoption

of a recognized system. A system for which he was largely responsible was one of first appointing a gravel road committee of seven men, chosen from those parts of the county paying the greatest amount of taxation. This was supplemented by the appointment of a superintendent of roads and the appointment of foremen with squads of workmen, who are paid monthly. It is the duty of the superintendent to report to the gravel road committee at least once a month. This committee orders work to be done by recommendation to council. The council pays all accounts. Mr. Wood estimated that it cost the council \$2,000 per mile to make a good road, and \$16,000 was spent annually over the 500 miles in the county. The speaker was quite aware of the fact that good roads cost money; but good roads stimulated local enterprise, and the benefit to farmers was felt in the fact that they could draw 75 bushels on a load, where with poor roads only 50 could be drawn.

In answer to a question, Mr. Woods thought gravel better than broken stone, where procurable, because, in wet weather,

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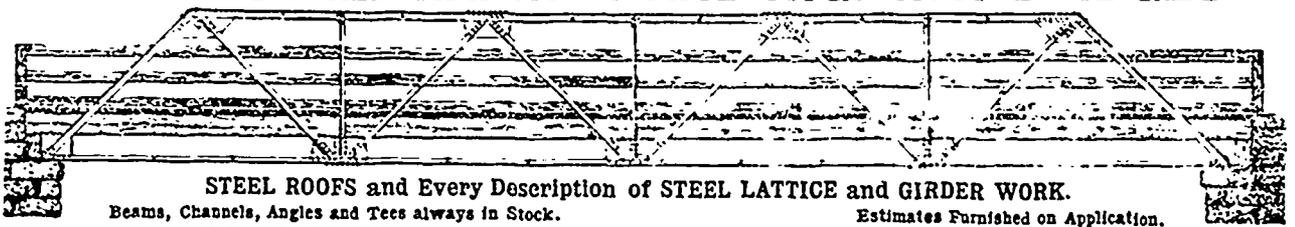
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