

## Good Roads and Goods Roads Associations

A decade ago the highways and roads in the Dominion were misnomers. There were none worthy of the name. Neither were there any good road associations in existence ten years ago. Today Canada has excellent road systems in each of her provinces. She has a national and four or five provincial good road associations; the roads the result of the associations, at least to a large extent. Socially good roads have proved a boon to the citizens of Canada. They have opened up the beauties and health giving qualities of the country to the city dweller and reduced the isolation of country life to the price of a Ford. Previous to the good roads boom those living in the country counted their neighbors in a two miles circle; today they count their neighbors in a circle of twenty and thirty and even forty miles. This larger social intercourse, which has been the means of bringing about a broader conception of "our duty to our neighbor" has been made possible by improved roadways. If the good road movement had done nothing more than this it was worth while.

But there is the economic value of good roads, and possibly it was this side that first appealed to our legislators in spending the large sums of money they have, and are doing in improving the highways of the Dominion. The farmer, that most conservative of mortals in the spending of public money, was almost the first to see the value of good roads

in the merchandising of his products and he became one of their strongest advocates. Results have justified his advocacy. Wherever there is a good road system the products of the farm reach the market in better condition and at a cost of at least fifty per cent less than what it did in the old days. This cost is saved in time and lessened wear and tear of horses and vehicles. Wherever there are good roads farm values have increased considerably, and trade in general is helped by tourist traffic to such an extent that in one province it is computed that the new roads built have been repaid by the profits made in catering to the large number of tourists from the United States that are yearly attracted by the excellent highway system.

Canada today can boast of more good road mileage per capita than any other country in the world with the exception of England and France. Even the United States, considering the difference in population is not so well advanced, which is saying much when it is realized that within recent years our neighbors to the south have been doing wonderful work in road building. Such a record is encouraging, but there is much to be done and the good work must go on. As a matter of fact the good road movement is only just beginning to take a real hold on the imagination of the people. It is for the leaders to carry on until every hamlet in the land has its good road system.

## The National Highway Scheme

The National Highway scheme, which was first advocated in the columns of this Journal in 1916, is making headway. The Canadian Good Roads Congress discussed a resolution, which was referred to the executive committee, urging upon the Dominion and Provincial governments to take co-operative action in the matter. When we first advocated a national highway from the Atlantic to the Pacific as a monument of Canada's part in the great war and as a memorial to our fallen soldiers, the executive of the Canadian Good Roads Association did not see eye to eye with us, believing as they did at the time that the scheme was too ambitious. Perhaps it was, and some of the speakers at the recent congress still maintain that the activities of the association should be confined to the building of roads in the various provinces. Such a policy, if adopted would show singular shortsightedness and insularity on the part of the Dominion wide, good roads organization, particularly when it is taken into consideration that practically every province has its own association doing splendid work in the building of provincial roads. It would seem that the time is opportune for the Dominion association to work for the linking up of the provincial systems by a national coast-to-coast highway.

The material value of such a national highway needs no advocacy here. As a public investment well built highways and roads repay for themselves over and over again in the increased business brought to the fortunate municipalities so linked up. And the better the road the better the returns. What the exact monetary returns would be for a

continuous highway of 3,500 miles, from Halifax, N.S., to Nanaimo, B. C., is impossible to say, but this we do say with confidence that it would be not only one of the best but one of the safest investments this country ever made.

But there is something bigger than the mere monetary returns to be considered in such a gigantic scheme as a transcontinental highway. There is a feeling abroad that we should know our own country better. Outside those who travel for purely business purposes the average Canadian knows little about Canada personally. The vast distance scares him, but let him once realize that there is a highway on which he can travel to any point in this huge country, his fears are gone. Such a highway will do more than anything else in bringing home to the citizens of this Dominion that they have a country of which they can be really proud.

We congratulate Alderman Glaves, of Woodstock, on the stand he has taken in renting his 25 houses to citizens with six or more children. The slogan "no children" has become too common a term with landlords with tenements to rent. It is bad enough to have to pay excessive rents without such a rotten condition being attached to the lease. Such discrimination should in every municipality be made an offence against the community, and the offender fined. Every child is an asset to the community, and every encouragement should be given to its rearing. It is certainly not conducive to the family life of the nation that such discrimination as "no children" should be pasted on every "to let" sign.