

(c) ROADWAYS

It is only in recent years with the development of the motor car that roads have attained their full importance for the long-distance transportation of passengers and freight. The days of turnpikes and statute labour virtually came to an end towards the end of the nineteenth century, and, particularly in Ontario, the Good Roads Association made studies which led to reforms. The Highways Improvement Act (1901) in that province organized the financing and construction of new roads. By further legislation in 1915 provision was made for a provincial Highway Department, which, in 1917, was entrusted with the construction and maintenance of provincial highways.

The growing efficiency of mechanized road transport led to constant improvement of roads, as well as to the greater use of road transport, for both passengers and freight, over distances up to medium haul. The increased use of motor vehicles can be illustrated from the multiplication of the numbers of such vehicles in Canada from 2,130 in 1907, to 1,250,000 in 1930. Similarly the total mileage of roads in 1930 had increased to 400,000, of which 80,000 miles was gravel surface or better.

As already mentioned, control of roads was vested in the provinces by the Act of 1867; but in 1919, by the Canada Highways Act, and by subsequent renewals, the Dominion Government undertook to subsidize to the extent of twenty million dollars the construction and improvement of certain highways of national importance. The work itself was undertaken in all cases by the various provinces.

One noticeable effect of the improvement in roads and the great increase in the use of mechanized motor transport was the resulting competition with railway transport. This aspect of the development of transportation can only be described as one of the most significant of modern transportation problems. More extended and detailed reference to road transport will be found in Appendix II.

APPENDIX II

MOTOR VEHICLES OPERATING ON HIGHWAYS

1. It is stated in the preamble to the Order in Council authorizing the appointment of the Royal Commission on Railways and Transportation that the diminished revenues of the two great railway systems have been brought about in part by the competition of other modes of transportation, particularly motor vehicles operating on highways, and the instruction to the Commission is to inquire into the whole problem of transportation in Canada *particularly in relation to railways*.

2. In the submissions filed before us and in the very able presentations which were made by representatives of the automobile industry and the related transport interests, questions of regulation and of taxation were dealt with very thoroughly and in great detail. Many matters so raised are primarily to be settled between the motor transport interests and the provincial authorities which build, maintain and control highways, and the adjustment and final solution thereof are not of direct concern to the railways. Whether motor car owners as a class are paying in licence fees and gasoline taxes a proper share of the costs of highway construction and maintenance and whether sufficient safeguards on motor vehicle operations on highways in the interest of the public and of the operators themselves exist in the various provinces, are essentially matters for consideration by the highway authorities of each province. Even if these matters were within the ambit of our instructions, the time at our disposal and the urgency of the immediate problem before us would prevent us from making the necessary inquiries and studies. We confine our remarks and recommendations closely to the one important consideration before us, viz., the effect present and future, so far as we can forecast it, of the competition of the motor bus and truck on railway revenues and the measures which should be taken by the railways themselves, and by the proper provincial authorities, where this competition has had, or is likely to have, the effect of curtailing railway operations to the injury of the public welfare.

I. THE PASSENGER AUTOMOBILE AND THE MOTOR COACH

3. In the nine-year period of railway history registrations of automobiles have shown very great increases. Registration is a provincial matter, and while there are some differences in the systems used in the various provinces, in general it may be said that all motor vehicles are registered by an official of a department of provincial government and that a permit or licence to operate is issued on payment of fees based on some characteristic of the vehicle such as weight, wheel base or horse-power. It is therefore possible to obtain accurate figures as to the number of vehicles in use in each province and so for Canada as a whole.

4. The following table shows registrations of all motor vehicles in Canada, and will indicate the rate of growth:—

Year	Canada
1923	585,050
1926	836,794
1929	1,199,594
1930	1,239,888
1931	1,206,836