

Men who are interested in securing money grants are encouraged to neglect their own road-work. It follows that those who do their road-work faithfully must also, by means of money grants, pay for the work done for the men who will not perform their statute labor.

Some men give a full day's work, others pay one dollar or the township rate of commutation. Other men give only a part of a day's work, and in some townships methods are so lax that they can escape without giving either labor or money.

A difference of a dollar in assessment, or of an acre in the extent of a farm, may make a difference of a day in the amount of statute labor required.

A good pathmaster will create ill-feeling between himself and some of his shiftless neighbors if he demands even a reasonable performance of their statute labor. Rather than do this, most pathmasters permit their men to work as they see fit, or come equipped with any class of tools, wagons or teams.

The System is Wasteful.

A great amount of statute labor is wholly wasted—the time spent by a hundred or so pathmasters attending the clerk's office to qualify for office, calling out those on their road list, and acting as bosses; the time lost by those who come to work too late or stop too early; the time lost in doing work as an annual holiday, in carelessly planning the work, in hauling sand and loam instead of gravel, in working at wrong seasons of the year, in having too few teams or too few shovellers, etc.

Better Management is Needed.

Nearly all the foregoing objections to statute labor centre around the fact that road-making is a matter requiring, on the part of those who have had it in charge, experience, study, and a certain class of ability. It is a very common idea that any one can manage a farm, that no previous training is required. The same impression exists to even a greater degree regarding road-making, and is responsible for an alarming amount of waste as well as for bad roads. This is exemplified by the fact that some roads are graded forty feet wide, some thirty, some twenty, some less. Some think a road should be rounded up in the centre to a dangerous height, others think a road should be flat, and see nothing wrong if the road is hollow in the centre. Some think a certain road should be drained, others that it should be mounded up with gravel, and so on through all details of improving the one road—yet all cannot be right. Pathmasters do not remain in office long enough to become expert, and even if they did, they would be much handicapped in using statute labor to the best advantage, owing to the difficulty in getting men when they are needed, in getting them to do the work well, or as they are directed, and so on throughout all the details of the work. Statute labor does not provide an experienced head to manage the work, and is therefore fundamentally deficient.

THE INTERNATIONAL GOOD ROADS CONVENTION

Possibly the largest "Good Roads Convention" ever held on the continent of America was the one held at St. Louis, Mo., during the week of the 16th to the 21st of May. Thirty-seven States were represented, some States sending as many as two hundred delegates. The total enrollment was about three thousand. Accredited delegates were present from Cuba, Mexico, Porto Rico, the Philippines, Sweden, England, Canada, and South American Republics.

Every phase of the road problem was considered and discussed in a most capable and comprehensive way. The official programme was prepared some months in advance, and the subjects placed in the hands of men whose experi-

ence had made them most efficient to deal with each question, the result being that the discussion in connection with every branch of the work was lead by an expert, or one who had made a special study of that particular thought. The papers were carefully and concisely prepared, and nothing but the genuine substance of the question was dealt with. Careless and popular talk, as far as possible, was eliminated from the proceedings. This resulted in a most enthusiastic attention to the business of the conference, and notwithstanding that the meetings were held daily throughout the week, each session was remarkably well attended.

That men could be drawn from all over America in such large numbers to discuss the question of "Road Improvement" signifies that genuineness of the interest which is becoming so general in the problem, and further indicates how rapidly the people are coming to realize the vast importance of the question.

Some of those who took part in the programme and the subjects discussed were as follows:

"Good Roads Necessary to Agricultural Development"—HON. JAS. WILSON, U. S. Sec. of Agriculture.

"Commercial Advantages of Good Roads"—HON. HENRY H. WERNSE, President Merchants Exchange, St. Louis.

"Good Roads a Social and Commercial Asset"—HON. CYRUS P. WALBRIDGE, President Business Men's League.

"Relation of Good Roads to Manufacturing Industries"—HON. L. D. KINGSLAND, President Manufacturers' Association, St. Louis.

"Promoting Highway Improvement"—HON. W. H. MOORE, President National Good Roads Association.

"Outlook for Better Roads in the Southern States"—HON. A. S. MANN, Vice-President National Good Roads Association, Jacksonville, Fla.

"Educational and Experimental Work in Road-making of the United States Government"—HON. MARTIN DODGE, Director, Office Public Road Inquiries.

"National and State Agitation for Permanent Highways"—HON. R. W. RICHARDSON, Secretary National Good Roads Association.

"The Science of Road Building"—MR. A. W. CAMPBELL, Highways Commissioner, Ontario.

"Road Improvement in the Mississippi Valley"—PROF. IRA O. BAKER, University of Illinois.

"The Highways of Mexico"—HON. SANTIAGO MENDEZ, C. E. Representative of Mexican Government.

"National Aid for Leading Roads"—HON. A. C. LATIMER, U. S. Senator.

"Road Building in Cuba"—HON. MANUEL DIONISIO DIAZ, Department of Public Works, Cuba.

"Roads and Rural Delivery"—MR. FRANK E. NEVINS, U. S. Mail Service.

"Good Roads, a State and National Issue"—HON. W. D. VANDIVER, Member of Congress, Missouri.

"Government Military and Postal Roads"—GEN. NELSON A. MILES.

"Federal and State Co-operation"—HON. W. P. BROWNLOW, Member of U. S. Congress.

"State Aid for Road Building"—HON. T. G. HARPER, President Iowa Good Roads Association.

"Proper Road Construction"—HON. LEWIS M. HAUPT, C. E.

"Road Improvement in the South"—HON. WM RICHARDS, Member of Congress.

"Improved Roads in Industrial Development"—HON. J. C. CLAIR, Industrial Commissioner, Illinois Central Railroad.

"The Use of Tar in Road-making"—HON. FREDERIC B. BAKER, New York.