Editorial

THE TORONTO-OSHAWA ROAD.

The Toronto-Oshawa road scheme has awakened from its winter sleep and once more ventures into the open. It was last heard of in October, when a strong deputation from the municipalities interested asked the provincial government for a survey and an estimate of the cost. The proposal was approved of by the Premier and was promised an investigation.

The return feature of the home-and-home series came off on Tuesday last, June 1st, in the town of Whitby, where a gathering took place of all interested in the improvement of the Kingston Road between Toronto and Oshawa. At the meeting W. A. McLean, C.E., chief engineer of highways for Ontario, presented his report on the finished survey, the suggested improvements and a proposed apportionment of the cost. Hon. F. G. Macdiarmid, Minister of Public Works, was also in attendance, representing the Ontario Government. Details of the meeting will probably be available in time for insertion in the Construction News section of this issue.

The Kingston Road is one of the oldest roads in Ontario. It has been put in good order from the city limits of Toronto to the crossing of the Grand Trunk Railway, about three miles west of Highland Creek. If the improvement is continued as far east as Oshawa it will prove an excellent beginning for the Toronto-Montreal highway, a proposal which should not remain a proposal many years longer.

RUBBER ROADS AGAIN.

While it is fully understood that rubber-paved roads are not practicable at present, and although little has been said of them of late, due perhaps to the universal division of attention to the European crisis, the London Daily Telegraph is credited with the remark that they are almost certain of ultimate adoption. It is admitted, however, that a great deal of missionary work will first be necessary. The article points out that the chief problem is not what a rubber road would cost to build, but what would be the cost of up-keep; how long would it last under varying conditions of climate and traffic? It is for the purpose of obtaining information on this latter point that the Rubber Growers' Association has made a free grant of 1,000 tons of plantation rubber and has offered an additional 1,000 tons at the nominal price of 25 cents a pound during the next five years. The rubber will be used in the first instance on difficult roads in order definitely to ascertain its merits.

An experimental rubber roadway has been laid, and in use some time now, in the Old Kent Road, London. It is made of wood blocks, with a surface cushion of rubber, held tightly in position by dovetailing. The blocks are readily movable-an advantage in these days of frequent excavations for pipes, conduits, etc. They interlock perfectly and give an absolutely watertight joint. This protects the foundation from the injurious effects of moisture.

The section in the Old Kent Road, after carrying for 295 days some of the heaviest traffic in London, amounting to ninety tons per square foot per hour for twentyfour hours, was not perceptibly worn, whereas an adjacent pavement of modern and approved type lost 1/2 inch in thickness in the same time under the same load.

The fact that thinner foundations can be used with rubber roads may be set against the extra cost of the rubber blocks. Even then, should the cost not be equal, the life of the rubber road may be expected to be so much longer as to more than compensate for the extra cost, apart from the great advantages of silence and the prevention of skidding and side-slip of vehicles-for it has been proved, contrary to all expectations, that the sections of rubber road referred to are most effective "non-skids."

No doubt further experiments with rubber for roadsurfacing will be watched with deep interest. As soon as its now apparent merits have been proved conclusively, we should be within a reasonable distance, if not of the universal rubber highway, at least of the rubber road for special traffic conditions.

NIAGARA POWER.

There is a somewhat complex situation along the Niagara River. Much energy has been devoted to procuring hydro-electric legislation applicable to the Niagara River. The purpose of this legislation is to bring about a condition of affairs under which the surplus of Canadian power will be taken by export to the United States so that a vested claim, if not a vested right, may be acquired to the continued export of such power even after it is required on the Canadian side. There have been discussions by public men and public bodies which make it clear that there is a considerable shortage of power in the State of New York, that there is an insistent demand for further development and that the authorities of the State of New York do not regard it as a reasonable exercise of Canadian sovereign power to prohibit the export of such power after it has been used upon the American side and industries have been built up which depend upon Canadian power for their existence. As observed by Hon. Clifford Sifton, chairman of the Commission of Conservation, the case is one which requires the utmost caution and foresight upon the part of those who are charged with the care of our interests, such foresight being required as well to preserve the material interests of Canada as to avoid the possibility of international complications in the future.

DOMINION GOVERNMENT SURVEY WORK.

The Topographical Surveys Branch, Department of the Interior, has sent into the field this year about seventy surveyors, in addition to a few other parties still to be made up. Of them, 12 will be engaged exclusively in stadia work, chiefly in the prairie provinces, in portions of country where bodies of water which were at one time

635