

ditches or gutters should be cut closer to the center.

Along village roads, after the best of the material along the sides has been removed, the margin outside the travelled way is left in a condition which seldom reflects credits on anybody, interested or otherwise. Gravel pits full of water, pollywogs and dirt, bare boulders, weeds, stumps, brush and rubbish have become such a common trimming that only the stranger notices the unsightliness of such decorations. Would it not be far preferable after the available suitable material has been removed from the margins to use only a right-of-way two rods or two and one-half rods wide and allow the property owners to use the rest. The majority of the property owners would remove the objectionable features and the whole community would reap the benefit. The rights of the public could be easily protected and preserved by preventing permanent encroachments. Of course special legislation would be required and it must be well thought out so that every precaution would be taken to prevent the title passing from the public to the private property owner. It may be that such a course would not be practicable at present, but as appearance is becoming more important in public work than it has been in the past the question is well worth more than a passing thought.

In those sections of the country where the unused portions of the highways rapidly grow up with weeds and underbrush the growth should be cut annually. This entails considerable trouble and expense without any compensating return. If the fence line were removed (under lease) nearer the roadway the ordinary operations of tillage would keep down the weeds and brush where the land is under cultivation.

In some parts of the country, pasture lands excepted, fencing is neither so necessary or common as it once was. In the absence of fences there seems to be no good reason why land worth cultivation should not be cropped to the ditch line, thus utilizing all the land not required for road purposes, while at the same time keeping down noxious weeds and objectionable brush.

The arguments in favor of reducing the width of the roadway of city and town streets to the actual needs of vehicular traffic are even more forcible, relative length of roadway considered, than those for narrowing country highways. With one or two exceptions, Nova Scotia towns have no permanent pavements. Few towns have macadam or similar improved roadways and are able to keep all their roadways in good condition. With the constantly increasing demand for a better roadway and for a form of macadam construction that will be dustless, it will become more and more difficult to secure sufficient funds to construct and maintain good street surfaces from curb to curb of the hundreds of miles of unnecessarily wide streets that now extend through our towns.

It is not the intention to argue in favor of a reduction of the width of town streets between street lines, but of the roadway only. The extra width between lines becomes an absolute necessity for the admission of fresh air and sunlight, general comfort and esthetic purposes, especially when high buildings are erected along the thoroughfare.

The narrow street of to-day may have to be widened in the future to meet growing traffic demands. A sixty or sixty-six feet width for business streets leaves no margin to work upon when heavy foot traffic requires sidewalks ten or twelve feet wide or more, and double track street railways and cars occupy at least sixteen feet of the roadway.

On the residential streets, however, where there is

no probability of a street railway being constructed in the future, where both foot and vehicular traffic are light and where blocks are not too long between intersecting streets, a great saving in maintenance charges and a great improvement in appearance may be made. On such streets a twenty-four feet roadway is ample and on hills even less may suffice. It is most important, economical and advantageous to make the roadway on a hill (especially a steep one) as narrow as traffic conditions will permit. The narrower the width the less danger there is of the roadway being washed out by rains. It can be well sprinkled in one trip of the street sprinkler, and that is absolutely necessary in hot weather to prevent horses from tearing or ravelling the surface. The area to be kept in repair is less, consequently the street appropriation will go farther.

On such streets usually a five or six feet sidewalk will accommodate pedestrians and the remaining space should be covered with grass. The sod after it gets a good start will not be washed out by rains and the damage done in such streets during storms will be lighter. A man with a scythe will keep in order miles of such parking (as it is called) while the same expenditure would not repair the damage sometimes caused by a single storm in one or two blocks of unnecessarily wide roadways. Not only is the cost maintenance less because there is less surface to wear out, but the first cost is less where the roadways are macadamized and where heavy general repairs are needed it pays to relocate the gutters and sidewalks.

This method of dividing and constructing streets makes it easier to work out a practicable cross section on streets running along a side hill. It is always desirable to have the roadway level instead of sidling and the difference in elevation between the upper and lower sidewalks may be all taken up in the parking on each side of the roadway leaving the latter so that vehicles do not tip sidewise in passing along.

Further improvement in appearance may be made by tree planting in the pathway.

The narrowing and parking of unnecessarily wide city and town streets has been receiving considerable attention from city and town engineers, but in towns where such officials are not employed the wide roadway is not unusual. The benefits to be obtained by the change suggested are quite generally recognized in engineering and esthetic circles and are slowly dawning upon the minds of the general public.

In contrast, however, little thought even has been given to the hundreds of miles of our brush, weed, boulders and rubbish covered and unnecessarily wide country roadsides. Although a large percentage of the land along these country highways is still of little value there are hundreds of miles of double highway strips taken out of valuable farm lands which are not only largely useless to-day but are actually breeding places for noxious weeds.

The time is rapidly coming, if it has not already arrived, when much of this roadside area ought to be devoted to useful purposes.

Ald. Hubley moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Doane for his valuable paper, which was seconded by Mayor Kelley.

Warden McMahon speaking to this motion, criticised the method of road making. The flat roads were ruining the Country. Trees in road limit should be kept cut. It is a wise precaution to have spare land for earth material.

Town Engineer McDowell, Truro, said that the Towns appeared to be narrowing their roads. He suggested the