

# Provincial Highways

THE Councillor and ratepayer are vitally interested in understanding the relation of the Provincial Highway to the general plan of Ontario's road organization.

THE Provincial Highway System was authorized by an Act of 1917, and provides that the Department of Public Highways may take over, maintain and construct leading roads throughout the Province.

## The Main Artery of the System.

THE trunk line—the main artery—of such a system would be the highway from Windsor to the Quebec boundary, with branches from Prescott to Ottawa and from Hamilton to the Niagara River. This route alone, about 600 miles in length, has within twelve miles from it, half the population of the Province, and over half the assessment. A road which will link up so much potential traffic cannot be ignored.

## The Basis of the Market Roads.

THIS road is not merely a route for through traffic. Section by section it forms a series of most important market roads for local farm traffic. Residents on or adjacent to these roads are entitled to its proper maintenance for their market traffic. These roads must be so built as to carry all the heavy traffic which is flowing over them (or which will flow over them when improved to a reasonable standard), or else the farming community along them is unfairly penalized for residing on them. Local residents either cannot maintain the road, or do so only at an unfair cost.

## Traffic Governs Cost.

THE CHIEF UNIT OF COST IN ROAD MAINTENANCE IS TRAFFIC, NOT MILES. Expenditure is necessary in proportion to the number of vehicles using a road. Traffic along certain of the main routes which may properly be included in a Provincial system has reached proportions which would place an impossible burden on the local municipality; and the only fair remedy is a Provincial system, largely supported by the revenue drawn from automobile owners.

BECAUSE they are assumed as Provincial Highways, new roads are not created. The roads already exist, the bridges and culverts on them must be built. Through township and county organizations large (and in some cases excessively large) expenditures were being made on them.

## What Happened in Lincoln County.

BEFORE being assumed as a Provincial Highway, the Lincoln County Council was spending \$1,000 per mile annually on the Queenston Stone Road—and the road was deteriorating. Representatives of the Township of Pickering protested their entire inability to maintain their section of the Kingston Road, because of the excessive traffic. An unfair burden is merely removed from local municipalities and is properly assumed by the Province. The Provincial Highway System is a matter of justice to the municipalities through which these roads pass.

AN immediate and huge Provincial expenditure on a continuous pavement of cement concrete, similar to the Toronto and Hamilton Highway, is not proposed, as many appear to believe. The amount of traffic from point to point will vary; materials available, character of subsoil, and variety of conditions will affect the type of construction and cost. In some sections it is anticipated that existing gravel roads may be

developed and maintained for some years, or until the growth of traffic renders rebuilding cheaper.

## Better Maintenance Keystone of Policy.

BETTER maintenance rather than heavy construction is proposed by the Provincial Highway Department. Many miles of the proposed Provincial Highways have been old gravel or macadam roads, the maintenance of which has been neglected. Many miles were inferior because they have not been properly drained. A thorough system of maintenance and development is first proposed so as to utilize the roadbed that now exists. Durable surface construction will follow as the needs of traffic demand, and as maintenance costs make it cheaper to rebuild.

IT is unfair to assume that all or even a majority of those who travel by motor car on these roads, in this populous part of Ontario, are doing so for pleasure only.

## Motors a Necessity.

THE motor vehicle has become a recognized necessity of everyday life. It cannot be described as a luxury any more than the telephone, telegraph, steam railway, and similar advantages of the age in which we live. It enters into the practical affairs of the farmer, merchant, doctor, business men, men of the skilled trades, manufacturers, and has given the common highway a greatly increased transportation value.

AN appeal to prejudice rather than to reason is made by those who condemn Provincial Highways as "speedways for millionaires and pleasure-seekers." No doubt some of both will drive over these roads. They also travel on railway trains—but the commercial value of the steam railway is not diminished by the fact.

## Farmers Own One-third of All Motor Cars in Ontario.

IN 1918, one-third of the passenger motor cars in the Province were owned by farmers. Over 82 per cent. of all passenger cars were small machines of 25 horse power or less—the cars of men of moderate means who have serious use for them. It cannot be doubted that, in addition to considerable motor truck traffic, the travel between Hamilton and Toronto, between Brantford and Hamilton, London and Woodstock, is largely of a business nature.

## Good Roads Assist Agricultural Production.

PROVINCIAL Highways have been criticized because they will parallel the railways, and will compete with the Grand Trunk, which may soon become nationalized. The profitable traffic of the railways is the long-distance haul. Provincial Highways will compete only with the short haul, the "way-freight" traffic. Even this is affected to a limited extent only, for good roads mean greater agricultural productive development, and thus they create their own traffic.

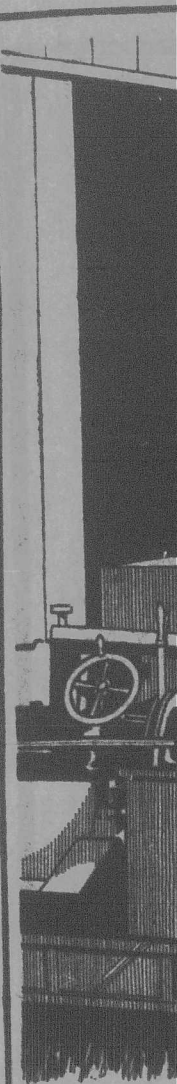
## Farm Traffic Not Excluded.

IT has been feared by some that certain farm traffic would be excluded from the Provincial Highways, and that the Minister of Highways has arbitrary powers in that regard. It is manifestly absurd that any farm traffic could be excluded from public highways, as it is primarily for farm purposes that good roads are being aided and encouraged by the Department. The powers of the Minister are merely to "regulate" traffic, cannot conflict with the rights of the public under existing statutes, and are only such as to meet conditions of emergency.

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