

Are You Ready?

"We know statute labor is not the best method of improving the roads, but our people are not yet ready for the change." This is what some councillors say of the situation in their townships. Is that the case in yours? If it is, what are you doing to get the people ready for a change?

It is the duty of every councillor to be a leader in public thought. He occupies a position of influence in the public interest, not as a means, merely, of keeping himself in office. If public opinion has not yet advanced to that point where some action can be taken in this important matter, in your township, then it is time for you, personally, to bestir yourself, if you would merit the trust which the people have placed in your keeping.

A councillor should lead. He should not attach himself to the rear and allow himself to be dragged along by the people. He should not be a middle man, where he is safely carried along by the throng. If in the foremost rank, he should not be pushed forward by the weight of the people behind him. He should be a leader, well in advance, marching independently, with that confidence that creates confidence in those following.

The question should not be:—"are the people ready?" The real point is, "are you ready, and are you doing your duty?" Do not wait until you find out what the people think before forming an opinion of your own. Form your own opinion, base it on careful, unprejudiced study, be sure you are right, then exert your energies to carry public opinion with you. If public opinion in your township will not support some change in doing your road work, the probability is that you have not been ready. Don't blame the people. If they are not ready, it is because you have not been doing your best to get them ready.

When you are convinced that a change is advisable, get all the information that you possibly can upon the subject, frame a plan, which in your opinion, will be the most suitable to the requirements of your township, call the people together in public conference, explain the matter fully to them, talk it over with them. The rate-payers are always pleased to meet for the purpose of discussing methods that will promote their own interests, and add to the economy of municipal machinery.

Moreover, they admire a council or councillor, who is progressive and who is sufficiently interested in their welfare to spend his time and talents in thinking out reforms that will be of benefit to the municipality.

The town of Pembroke has purchased a new 15-ton steam roller, and is about to commence, on an extensive scale, the macadamizing of the streets of that town.

Cost of Traction.

An Indiana engineer recently estimated that the cost of one ton per mile by horse power over a dry, sandy road, was 64 cents; over wet sand, 32 cents; over ruts and mud, 39 cents; over broken stone and ruts, 26 cents; over an earth road that is dry and hard, 18 cents; over a broken stone road in good condition, 8 cents; over a compact gravel road, 8.8 cents; over stone paving, 5.33 cents; over asphalt, 2.7 cents. If wagon transportation could be carried on at a cost of 5 cents per mile per ton, the result would be a saving of many millions of dollars, and would put in motion many millions of tons of merchandise that cannot now be handled at a profit.

A. W. Campbell, Commissioner of Highways for Ontario, has been looking over the Temiskaming District, and has decided that about forty miles of roads should be built as soon as possible. So interested are the people in the matter that some of them walked 18 miles through the bush to attend Mr. Campbell's meeting. Two hundred men are now employed on these roads.

Many of the older methods of building roads in new districts have been abandoned, and modern methods for building a more substantial class of road have been laid down by the Public Works Department. Only leading roads are being built by the Government, and the work on these has been done according to a fixed standard. The allowances are being cleared the full width, the road is being laid down in a straight line as far as practicable, and the deviations are being made with due regard to easy grades and maintenance. Roads are being graded to a regular width of 24 feet. Ditches are being constructed on each side of the grade of sufficient size to fully drain the road to a depth of at least 2½ feet, and to form a proper outlet for the drainage of adjoining lands. Off take drains are being systematically built in every natural water-course and carried through adjoining lots until a proper outlet is reached.

Green stumps are being removed by the use of dynamite, and the introduction of this labor saving means of clearing roads through green forest is being enthusiastically praised by the settlers, who fully appreciate its superiority over the old system of grubbing. Corduroy is being abandoned, and swamp and wet places demanding such treatment are being made dry by thorough drainage. So completely are stumps removed and roots drawn by the use of dynamite, that grading machines are now being used to excellent advantage on these new roads. Wheel-scrapers and all modern machinery are now being employed. First-class roads are being made, and by the use of such modern devices, the cost has been reduced to a minimum.

Good Roads Needed in Athens.

There is an idea prevalent that only in America are to be found poor roads, and that all roads on the continent and in England are in first-class condition. A report from Athens, Greece, however, shows, at least, one place in which highways need improving. The roads that connect Athens with the Piræus, its seaport, and with the bathing places on the Phærum Bay, are narrow, badly graded and very poorly kept. In consequence, transportation between these places is most disagreeable. Efforts have been made, however, to remedy these evils, and a new boulevard is now being constructed, starting on Hadrian's Arch, on the Boulevard Amelia, in the city of Athens, and extending to the shore of Phalerum Bay, near the place where the ancient Athenians used to bathe.

The boulevard will be about three and two-fifths miles in length and ninety-eight and two-fifths feet in width. The intention is to divide it into a carriage drive, a bicycle path, and a promenade, to be separated from one another by rows of trees. A wealthy Athenian lady has furnished the money to finish the boulevard, and this is estimated to cost \$58,824.

The new boulevard will intersect a driveway on the seashore which now connects the old bathing place with that of the new, and with the Piræus, and it is hoped that soon this driveway will be widened into a broad avenue to pass the zoological gardens now building. It is also to connect with another driveway which passes along the face of the bluffs on the west shore of the bay, and along the ancient walls of the Piræus down to its harbor.

Stockholm may be said to be the paradise of telephones, both from the point of view of the companies and the public. Telephones in the Swedish capital are both good and cheap. The best known private company charges less than \$15 to put up the apparatus and less than \$5 per quarter afterwards for an unlimited service. In 1883 this company commenced with 60 employees and 1,160 subscribers; in 1901 the figures were respectively 688 and 29,801. These figures are eloquent, but to show what cheap telephones, combined with efficient management, have done in Sweden as compared with other cities, it is interesting to note that while London, with an approximate population of 4,000,000, has 20,000 telephones, Stockholm, with a population of 362,000, has 29,000 telephones in use.

An important vote took place recently at Lindsay on three money by-laws to raise \$36,000—\$20,000 for good roads, \$14,000 for a public school building and \$2,000 to purchase a site for the Carnegie library building. All three propositions were snowed under, a large adverse vote being cast against each by-law.