

Ontario's Road Reformer.

Another Province has organized for road reform and better roads. Representative citizens from all over the Province of British Columbia assembled on the 27th of October last, at Kamloops, and formed the British Columbia Good Roads Association. Quebec, New Brunswick, and now British Columbia, have already followed the example set by Ontario in 1894, and it is significant to note that the object of the newest association, as outlined in the constitution, is closely modelled after that of Ontario. It is inspiring to see that Ontario sets the example for Canada in all these reforms, and while, in a few of the States of the American Union, an effort is being made to raise money in large sums for this purpose, yet in a great majority of the States now organizing for reform, the policy of Ontario, viz., organization, agitation, education and legislation, and operation is being adopted.

When Mr. Andrew Pattullo, M. P. P., first conceived the wisdom and necessity for organizing for this purpose in Ontario, he was met with considerable discouragement by many men prominent in municipal and national advancement. Notwithstanding this, his own experience in other matters of reform, and his close and intimate knowledge of all public questions, and especially those affecting not only the individual but the nation, had led him to study the problems so closely and carefully as to assure himself of the wisdom of such a movement, and undaunted by prejudice and opposition, he succeeded in attracting, through his speeches and writings, the attention of a sufficient number of progressive men throughout the country as to be able to organize and provide the machinery for bringing about what must be conceded a most desirable and economical municipal reform. The wonderful work performed by him for the advancement of the dairying interest, while president of that association, together with such a successful launching of the movement for better roads, is more success than can be expected by the average statesman. Not satisfied with this, he has taken up an active crusade against municipal bonus granting, and his speeches on this question in the Ontario Legislature have attracted widespread attention. The result of his efforts in this regard have been much appreciated, and no doubt will tend to remedy the grievous system which has burdened so many villages, towns and cities with excessive taxation.

A great deal of Mr. Pattullo's success has arisen from the fact that he is not an extremist, but a man who believes in

reform by evolution rather than by revolution. At the Good Roads Congress in Port Huron, so strikingly noticeable was this feature of his carefully directed remarks, that representatives from different parts of the United States, where improvements of this description have been sought by revolutionary measures, and where legislation is often hastily obtained, at several congresses since held, have repeated and acted upon his advice. The remarkable feature is, that in no country in the civilized world, so young as Ontario, has greater progress been made along these lines, and in the question of



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road reform many of the older countries, that have been building for centuries, and thoughtlessly following old and incompetent methods, have received inspiration from Ontario's example.

A journalist and parliamentary leader, Mr. Pattullo is a busy man, but whether at home or abroad, for he has travelled extensively, he has been a student of public affairs, and his close observation, quick comprehension and originality make it easy for him to accomplish more than falls to the lot of even the few whose ambition leads them into public life. Unlike most

public men who content themselves with vague suggestions, Mr. Pattullo designs skilfully and carefully, following every detail, letting nothing divert his attention until these plans are put into successful operation.

In addition to his prominence in municipal matters, may be mentioned his term as president of the Canadian Press Association. His entrance to Parliament followed the retirement of Sir Oliver Mowat, whom he succeeded as representative for North Oxford. Of him a contemporary has said, "One of the best writers on the Canadian press, he is also a graceful and convincing platform speaker, and a man who is disposed to do his own thinking."

A department of THE MUNICIPAL WORLD has been devoted to the road question for several years, and we can, perhaps, appreciate more than can most others, Mr. Pattullo's efforts in this regard.

The Municipal Drainage Act.

Mr. Alex. Bell, clerk of the township of Dereham, has favored us with a copy of a paper on this subject, read by him at the recent meeting of the Oxford Municipal Clerks' Association. The paper contains an exhaustive resume of the provisions of the above Act, and the following comments and suggestion:

"Before entering upon a discussion of the drainage law as we understand it, I will venture a remark to the effect that all the laws we have ever had, or have at the present time, permit an invasion upon private or vested rights. While we boast of liberty of action and protection of property, our fond boasting is occasionally rudely shocked by the provisions of our drainage laws. Yet I am not prepared to say that our laws are unjust.

Certainly the best interests of our country require in many cases, other means than the individual consent of all concerned, or the work of advancement and improvement of wet lands would be very slow.

The plan embodied in our present drainage laws is certainly the best that we have ever had, and undoubtedly the best that we will

have for some time. While amendments are loudly called for from some quarters, I fail to see where amendments could be made, except in some minor points, that would give us a better law, for the purpose of meeting all cases in which the provisions of a drainage act are required."

"Appeals to court of revision should be in writing, setting forth clearly and distinctly the grounds of complaint. In case an appeal should be carried to a county judge, a written appeal is necessary. If the grounds of complaint are not