

million tons. The Government shows the average haul of a ton was 9 miles. This difference of 15 cents a ton per mile represents an additional cost of \$1.35 a ton for an average haul of 9 miles. Estimating that two-thirds of the agricultural products of last year were hauled away from the farms, there would have been a saving to the American farmers of \$225,000,000 if our roads had been up to the standard of European roads, not including their back haul of supplies from the stations to the farms. They would also have saved large sums in the cost of replacing and repairing harness, wagons, etc., and in the investment and care of extra draught stock.

The only way to get good roads is to fight for them. Your organization can do its work most effectively by keeping before the people in as many ways as possible the importance of making money by making better roads. It is not a sentimental proposition, but purely a business one * * *

Are Behind the Times.

The members of your association know these plain and simple things I have stated. But the way to get good roads is to make all the people know them and keep them constantly in mind. The transportation system which carries our food and clothing from maker to user is part railroad and part country road. One part is as necessary as the other. Your organization in its support of the betterment of our public highways should talk in millions instead of thousands. The advocates of better roads are behind the times and will have to spend money by the millions to catch up, and the people who are to enjoy and benefit by these improvements should be educated to understand what good roads mean to them and what they will cost.

The agricultural people of the country are beginning to realize their own situation. They are commencing seriously to study economic questions. They are beginning to figure their time as worth money. When your association places the facts before the owners of the six million farms, who represent, according to government estimates, including their families, nearly one-third of our population, and gets them to realize what good roads mean to them, we will then have good roads. They will vote for men as public servants who will encourage and vote to help along the work of getting good roads. The duty of the National Good Roads Association is of greater importance to-day to the future growth of the country than it has ever been before.

It is to good roads that this country must look largely for its future growth and development.

Too Much Hammering.

The railroad business of the country has been attacked from so many different standpoints that we are not going to have for many years such an era of railroad construction as we have enjoyed heretofore. The improvement which can come nearest taking the place of railroads in the development of the country lying back from existing railroads is good public highways. Illustrations of this you can now see in many sections of the country and will see many more evidences of it as different communities begin to realize how hard it is for railroad builders to find new money to build new railroads into new countries.

One instance I have in mind which illustrates the situation: In the county in which San Antonio, Texas, is located, there have not been any new railroads constructed for several years. The splendid old German town of Fredericksburg has had a purse of \$100,000 hung up for a long time to give to the first railroad that would build into its thriving and rich country, but no takers, although several have tried it and found it impossible to finance even a short road between San Antonio and Fredericksburg. The people of that town are now turning their attention to the next best thing,

which is to build a highway over which their products and their commerce can be hauled most economically and their automobiles convey passengers more promptly. This is only one of the many instances throughout the country, as we still have many towns more than fifty miles from a railroad * * *

Something Worth While.

If we build 100,000 miles of public highways annually for ten years, and give to this country 1,000,000 miles of good public roads at an average cost of \$3,000 per value, none can foretell. We will be engaging in a national development, the advantages of which in economies, commerce, comforts and enhanced values, none can foretell. We will be accomplishing something worth while. This work if carried on by counties and townships as at present will be very slow. It should be encouraged under a broad comprehensive plan outlined by the Federal Government, co-operating with the States. The Agricultural Department of the Government is in sympathy with all things that tend to improve our public road system * * *

What Must Be Done.

If you will strengthen your association through a strong concrete organization of working forces in each state, and will interest the Congressmen and State authorities by getting them to realize that one of the most effective ways to promote the growth of the country and expand its agricultural development is through the encouragement of better roads, in the course of a few years we will have a system of public highways second to none in the world. Every dollar saved through this economy goes directly to the pockets of the producers. On the basis of the Government's estimate of the present excess cost of 15 cents a ton for hauling in this country, as compared with European countries, improved roads would have meant to the farmers on last year's crop an additional \$225,000,000, which would have increased their \$8,750,000,000 crop to \$10,000,000,000. When we take into consideration that this additional saving would have gone to the agricultural people, who are both the greatest producers of wealth and the greatest purchasing power of this nation, it means more than the public men of this country who are studying economic questions have considered. What your association should work for is better roads, and finding ways and means of getting them.

Canadians were well represented at the Congress. On the second day of the Congress W. A. McLean, Provincial Commissioner of Highways, Toronto, suggested that it would be better to spend millions in good roads than on canals and railways. He believed that within a short time the farmers would realize that the automobile was their greatest blessing, and that better roads would follow. He said the auto provided the cheapest mode of hauling produce.

W. J. Trethewey, Toronto Board of Trade, believed York County would in three years have the best system of roads in America. He said the automobile would prove the farmers' greatest help, all produce being carried in auto trucks soon.

J. F. Beam, Welland, said the Government aid to good roads was not sufficient at present. He advocated building good roads running north, south, east and west throughout the Province, which would be crossed by roads built under the regular country conditions.

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