

them. We propose to expend about \$12,000 a year on these roads. We have nearly all the heavy bridges built in the county now. They will cost very little during the next ten or fifteen years. We propose to set aside \$3,000 a year for the maintenance of these roads. Then we propose to set apart the sum of \$9,000 to be expended annually in remodelling and resurfacing these roads. We believe that without increasing the taxes of the people we can put more than 170 miles of county roads in first-class shape, and draw our proportion from the government treasurer to improve these roads. I believe that, by following along the same lines, a great many of the counties can do work of a similar kind. We propose purchasing modern, up-to-date machinery. I was just a little surprised at some of the remarks of some of the speakers as they talked about the tendency of the people to flock to the cities because of the bad roads in the country. Perhaps there are fewer people in the country than there were years ago. But it is because there is not so much need for manual labor on the farm. The people are not leaving the country because of the bad roads. I think if we use good judgment in our expenditure and seek proper information, we shall make great improvement in the next five years, and that without raising taxation."

County councillor, John Edwards, of Leeds and Grenville, said:

"Last year we discussed this matter in common council. We had fifteen municipalities represented there by the reeves, and at that conference we received suggestions of great value to us. We designated the roads through the county to the amount of 312 miles, costing us \$190,000. Debentures were issued for \$150,000. We have every confidence in the township councils that they will pass this by-law. I know several who have been favorable to this scheme. Of this \$150,000 we appropriated a portion for the purchase of toll roads. With regard to the matter of constructing the road, and as to whether it should be done by the county or by private control, we believe we get better value for our money by letting it out to private individuals. We know that the roads to-day are not so good as they were twenty years ago. We have also heard with regard to our cheese industry. The boxes have been badly broken. I think this is due to the fact that we have bad roads."

Rural Telephones.

Farm telephones are multiplying, says the *Farm, Field and Fireside*. They save many a long, hard drive in the cold at this season. One farmer arranges to go to the post-office, store, or railway station for the neighborhood; and so a half day's work or more is saved to many, for men and animals. It is economy in time, in wear and tear of carriage, in the exposure

and use of horses, and in ways too numerous to catalogue.

But one of the chief uses of the farm telephone is in its social benefits. It brings the people in touch. What one knows of importance can be known by all. If there is a Farmer's Institute, a lecture, a meeting, a party, or social event of any kind, the fact is easily communicated. This gives a real, live, friendly, social touch. You are no longer an isolated family, left out in the cold—you belong to a community. You are not withering away or rusting out in a rural or pioneer home, but you are in healthful contact with those who sympathize with you, and are ready to lend a helping hand if you need it. You may not need it, but the knowledge that you can have it, and that you are a living part of a modern, civilized christian community is a source of comfort and of equanimity which has its own value.

Dollars and cents do not make up the whole of life. Why do farmers flock to the cities? One reason is that they feel the need of the social contact and the various privileges which come from community life. If farmers' wives and daughters will be made happier, and if the killing isolation can be overcome and families be brought more into organic connection with the great, live world, it will be worth more when a life's history is written than anything that can be computed in money.

By the introduction of cheap telephones farmers, more than any other class of workers, will be benefitted. When the mails are delivered in farm homes, as they now are in all city homes, and when benefits of publicly-owned electric roads and telephones are secured, farm life will be a good deal more cheerful than now.

In New Jersey.

In New Jersey the state government contributes one-third the cost of constructing good roads, the remaining portion of the cost being contributed by the municipalities and the parties specially benefitted.

So many counties are taking a part in road building that the difficulty is to secure funds to meet the portion contributed by the state. Since New Jersey entered upon the policy of improving its highways the value of its taxable property has increased by \$27,000,000, an increase which is attributed largely to the construction of good roads. The commissioner reports that there are several localities where the improvement of the roads has been instrumental in attracting from one to four millions of wealth during the last few years. There is no doubt that the proximity of New Jersey to some of the largest cities of the United States has made the outlay on good roads especially advantageous, but there is also no question that, in this province, good roads would furnish an abundant return upon the outlay.

Ditches and Guard Rails Along Highways.

The following opinions recently given by Mr. Donald Guthrie, K. C., to the council of the county of Wellington, will be of much interest to municipalities generally:

FIRST QUESTION.—At what depth may open ditches be maintained along county roads without erecting guard rails?

In answer to this question Mr. Guthrie says that, in his opinion, there is, by law, no particular or specified depth to which ditches may be maintained along county roads without erecting rails. The law is that guard rails must be maintained wherever necessary to protect travellers upon the roads from accidents, that is, travellers who use ordinary care; accidents which are the result of the travellers' own carelessness the county would not be responsible for.

In other words, it is the duty of the corporation to provide guard rails or fences wherever these are necessary to make roads and bridges safe for public travel. If the roads are kept in such a reasonable state of repair that those requiring to use them may, using ordinary care, pass to and fro upon them in safety, the requirement of the law is satisfied, otherwise not.

SECOND QUESTION.—Is the county required to maintain ditches along county roads deep enough to carry off the water from underground tile drains? If not, then how deep may farmers and others living on county roads make and maintain open ditches for the purpose of carrying off water from such tile drains?

In answer to this question Mr. Guthrie says that his opinion is, that unless under an award made in pursuance of the Ditches and Water Courses' Act, or the laws relating to municipal drainage, the county is not bound to maintain open ditches along county roads deep enough to carry off the water from the underground tile drains upon the neighboring farms. If the second part of the question implies that farmers living on farms adjacent to county roads have the right of their own motion, or as they see fit to make and maintain open ditches upon the county roads for the purpose referred to, then no person without the authority of the county, or without the authority of a lawful award under the Ditches and Water Courses' Act, or Municipal Drainage Act has any right whatever to make or maintain open ditches upon the county roads. If any person, without lawful authority, interferes with a county road by making excavations therein or thereon, and such excavations render the road in any degree dangerous to the travelling public, the person who so makes the excavations is, in Mr. Guthrie's opinion, liable to be prosecuted under the criminal law, for having committed a public nuisance.

The electors of the town of Amherstburg have assented to a by-law granting aid to the extent of \$10,000 to the Sandwich, Windsor & Amherstburg Electric Railway Co.