

time in Ontario, with the coming out of frost and melting of snow, will do more harm to a poorly drained road than the whole of the rest of the year combined, and that is putting the case very honestly. We should drain the highways to carry off the Spring freshets and keep the sub-soil dry, so that the stone will not be driven into the soft soil below.

My experience is that counties and their engineers are anxious to do good work; they are anxious to co-operate with the Province; and whenever we offer suggestions they are happy to accept and follow them up; and I hope that with the experience we have had in the past, we shall each year see an improved type of highway construction throughout Ontario, in which drainage will be more carefully provided.

We have a standard type of roadway in Ontario. The width between the shoulders is 24 ft., the crown depending upon the width of stone, and varying from half-an-inch to an inch per foot between the shoulder and the top of the road. Below the shoulders, there should be 18 inches or two feet of drainage. The stone in the centre should depend upon the traffic over the road, ranging from 8 to 16 feet wide.

Some years ago there were prophets who foretold the time when the horseless carriage would arrive, and we dreamed of it as possible only in Paradise. But the automobile has come, and we have not yet found the Paradise. Within the next ten years the automobile, or the principle of it, applied to country transportation will be found to be one of the most useful implements, one of the best friends the farmers of this country have yet had. I realize fully the present inconvenience of of the situation, but with a view to the future, believe that County Councils should build thoroughly good Macadam and gravel roads.

Everybody wants good roads, but few want to pay for them. They do not want to pay for them with half the zeal with which they ask for them. It is extremely important in entering upon any scheme of construction to have an equitable system of distributing the cost. The people in the country will not object to pay a reasonable price for good roads if the cost is equitably placed upon those who should pay for them. My experience is that while the people at the commencement are often opposed to good roads, when they begin to see results, they say "That is the road we want, and we will pay what it should cost."

The increase in the price of property along highways which have been recently constructed, indicates the real service good roads are to a country. We talk about the service good roads do socially, commercially and otherwise; but getting to practical dollars and cents, we find that property along good roads is increased to the extent of \$500 to \$2,000 for each one hundred acre farm. Increase in the value of property is a pretty good indication of the service these roads are to the people of the country. Just think what that means. Every one hundred acre farm is increased in value to the extent of \$500 to \$2,000. With eight farms fronting on each mile of highway, it means an increase of from \$4,000 to \$16,000 per mile of road. With that increase property can pretty fairly be assessed for the cost of a great portion of the roads. When you take from that cost the proportion the Province is paying under the Highway Improvement Act, it looks like a pretty good proposal for any part of the country to construct good roads.

It is often said that the people who are receiving the greatest service from the road, and whose property is chiefly increased in value, should pay a larger amount. That is true, and to give fair play it seems that the

assessor should increase the assessment of the property along the improved highway.

The question of a frontage, or area tax, is also spoken of. I believe that to be fair also; especially in cases where the increased value of property adjoining those roads will be very great. For instance, in proposing the construction of a main highway between Toronto and Hamilton, the people along that highway have said "If you will construct it, we will pay an annual frontage tax of one and a half cents per foot for thirty years." That is strong proof that those people believe the increased value of their property to be such that they can pay a frontage tax to get the road. The people on that highway have consented to the plan, and it indicates that the principle, if extended and made applicable to certain other of the most important highways, could be serviceable and acceptable, and would help to create the fund necessary to construct good roads.

It is also argued, and very properly so, that the automobile should be specially taxed. I will not go into the question of the destruction of the roads from the use of automobiles. They unquestionably do considerable injury to the highways, especially heavy cars which travel at high speed over stone roads. But it is a notable fact that the automobile owners have consented to pay such a tax; which will no doubt be imposed.

It is said also that the consumer should pay, which is absolutely true. The people of the towns should help to pay for main roads. What are they doing in Ontario at the present time? The townships, we will say, pay two-thirds of the cost. They receive one-third from the Province. Now the population of the towns and their assessment throughout Ontario is practically equal to the population and assessment of the townships; therefore, I take it that the people of the towns and cities are paying one-half of that one-third, or one-sixth of the cost of the good roads constructed under the Highway Act at the present time. One-sixth, I think you will agree with me, is not sufficient. There should be an increase. Just what that should be I will not discuss now, but it will have to come eventually.

The Highway Improvement Act has been before the people of Ontario for some time. For over ten years, counties have been offered one-third of the cost of constructing main roads, and all of them have not yet jumped at the chance. I do not know just why they have not.

The Highway Act is extremely simple in its operation. The county is empowered to take over and maintain the main roads of the county, highways used by the people of that county, and serving the market requirements of the people of the county. They appoint their own Superintendent or Engineer to direct construction for the county council. At the end of the season they send us their statement of expenditure and we pay them one-third of it. Up to the present time we have not had any serious trouble with any county. Sometimes they say we are a little slow, but we get there just the same, and they always feel sure of their cheque. The County Council controls these main highways in the same way as a Township Council would manage their roads. By concentrating our efforts and energies on a special system of highways, we follow a principle that is absolutely essential in any similar form of organization. In any line of construction you must concentrate sufficient energy on a fixed object to accomplish that object; to complete it and then go on to the next.

Organization is the key-stone of the situation. If