THIRD INTERNATIONAL ROAD CONGRESS, LONDON.

On the 23rd of June, at the invitation of the British Government, and under the patronage of His Majesty King George V., in Central Wesleyan Hall, Westminster, was convened the Third International Road Congress for the deliberation and discussion of matters relating to the world-wide movement for road reform.

That the movement is world-wide is shown by the fact that some 39 countries were officially represented and in all about 3,000 delegates attended. Canada was ably represented by Mr. W. A. McLean, engineer of highways for Ontario; H. S. Carpenter, superintendent of highways for Saskatchewan; W. G. Tretheway, of the York County Highway Commission, and others.*

That the meetings were destined to be eminently successful was evinced by the large number of men, of high rank in public affairs in their respective countries, who had assembled to give their experience in matters so vital to the interests of the community—the improvement of highways.

The opening meeting was presided over by the Right Hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer D. Lloyd-George, who expressed his deep interest in and the sympathy of the government with the objects of the congress. For some years past there has been in Europe a distinct movement in road reform. This movement found expression in the formation in Paris in 1908 of the Permanent International Association of Road Congresses. At that meeting some 400 men, eminent in professional, scientific and administrative work, chiefly from France, Germany and Great Britain, assembled to discuss matters relating to the movement. This was followed by the Brussels Congress in 1910, at which about 1,000 delegates attended, and the impetus, largely given by the association, is shown in the extraordinary attendance at this, the third congress.

Since the second congress concluded its labors in Brussels the movement in favor of road reform has made immense strides, and the past three years have been a period of constant activity and improvement. The problem of treating roads with bituminous materials has been advanced from the experimental to the practical stage, and has now attained an assured position. Experience has proved that roads can be built of bituminous material which are not only practically dustless but are also capable of carrying the heaviest ordinary traffic.

The manner in which the programme was arranged and carried out in every detail reflects great credit upon the Organizing Committee and the chairman, Sir George S. Gibb. In dealing with a matter of such wide scope, very thorough and systematic arrangement becomes essential and the plan adopted in this instance was as follows:

The papers that were to be submitted were sent in some months previous to the meeting. These were placed in the hands of sub-sectional committees for criticism. The sub-committee reported on the salient features and added recommendations or resolutions. Thus, every paper came before the congress in a predigested form and the resolutions only were discussed. A glance at the following list of subjects of the programme will give some idea of the scope and import of the deliberations of the congress, and when it is considered that many papers were submitted in each case, an estimate can be made of the volume of pre-convention work performed by the committee.

The programme comprised the following:

1. Planning of Streets and Roads.
2. Types of Surfacing to be Adopted on Bridges, Viaducts, Etc.
3. Construction of Macadamized Roads Bound With Tarry, Bituminous or Asphaltic Materials.
4. Wood Paving.
5. Lighting of Public Highways and Vehicles.
6. Observations Noted Since 1908 as to the Various Causes of Wear and of Deterioration of Roadways.
7. Regulations for Fast and Slow Traffic on Roads.
8. Authorities in Charge of the Construction and Maintenance of Roads, Functions of Central Authorities and Local Authorities.
9. Finance of the Construction and Upkeep of Roads.

The exhibition connected with the congress was most interesting and instructive, especially the exhibit of the Road Board, in which many types of construction were shown by portions that had been taken from actual roads, a full description being given in each case. There was also an excellent display of materials, machinery and appliances.

The arrangements for road excursions were fully satisfactory. The writer had the opportunity of going over the Berkshire roads in company with the chief surveyor, and we found them in excellent condition, combining in a high degree all the essential qualities of a good road. The district is almost entirely agricultural, and the roads are subjected both to heavy traffic and that of fast-moving motor-driven vehicles, and meet all the requirements admirably well. There appears to be no reason why we, in the older parts of Canada at least, should not have roads that would meet our conditions as well as these do the conditions that obtain in England. One was most favorably impressed with the manner in which all points were discussed and the manifestly good spirit which prevailed throughout the entire congress. Men of high attainments and character unselfishly gave the best of their services in the promotion of one object, that of making the world a little better for having lived in it.

The impetus given to the movement will be difficult to measure, but one can feel assured that those from Canada will return fired with new zeal for the promotion of that upon which so much of our future depends—highway improvement.

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London, June 28th, 1913.

*[The University of Toronto was represented by the writer of this article and by Professors J. McGowan and P. Gillespie.—Ed.]

Some practical rules laid down by the American Foundrymen's Association for obtaining castings resistant to corrosion are as follows: (1) Use white iron if possible. (White irons are especially useful where any acidity is to be encountered.) (2) If not practicable to use white-iron castings, chill those surfaces which are to be in contact with corrosive conditions. (3) If grey iron must be used, get dense, close-grained castings through the use of steel scrap or otherwise. (4) Avoid oxidized metal; use pigirons of good quality, together with good cupola practice. If possible, use deoxidizing agents; for example, titanium or vanadium. (5) Keep the sulphur as low as possible.