

CANADIAN ROAD LAWS.

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Good roads have become a necessity in Canada, the rapid development of our agricultural districts demands good roads for the output of the farms. The work of our mineral districts necessitates good roads from the mines to the railway station or to the steamboat wharves. The day of the horse drawn freighter is almost gone and the demand now is for roads that will withstand the traffic of vehicles propelled by motor power.

The demand for good roads in Canada is more than necessary, it is imperative.

There are approximately 26,650 miles of steam and electric railroads in Canada to-day. No one knows exactly how many miles of highways there are, but most careful calculation one can make will place it at 1,010,000 miles.

Before taking up the question of building of good roads we would present a resume of the road laws of the various provinces of Canada.

It is necessary that the highway engineer, who has to give one-half of his time to administration work, should know the leading features of road system laws as it is, that he should know the main points in road building.

Good roads may be built under many systems of organizations and control and different systems under different conditions may give equally good results, however, the engineer must be informed on the various systems, so that he may select the best for the condition in which he is working.

The engineer is not a legislator, but he is frequently consulted when legislation is framed, therefore a study of Canadian legislation dealing with Canadian roads is naturally of interest to highways engineers.

Canadian Highway Act.—The most recent and most important legislation dealing with highways in Canada is bill 77, introduced in the House of Commons, Ottawa, by the Hon. Frank Cochrane, Minister of Public Works, in January of this year.

It is entitled: An act to encourage and assist the improvement of Highways, and although it has not yet become law, still it is of such importance that we give the full text of the bill.

Bill 77.—Whereas the highways of Canada constitute an important part of the facilities which are necessary for any efficient national scheme of transportation and inter-communication; and, whereas, with the increasing progress and development of the country it is desirable and expedient to improve and extend the existing highway facilities, and for that purpose to give assistance to the various provinces, of Canada: Therefore, his Majesty, by and with the consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as The Canada Highways Improvement Act.

2. In this Act the word "Minister" means the Minister of Railways and Canals.

3. The Governor-in-Council may, in any year, and upon such terms and subject to such conditions as are prescribed by Order-in-Council, grant to any province in aid of the improvement of existing highways or the construction of new highways in such province, or for both such purposes, a subsidy not exceeding such sum as may in such year be voted by Parliament for that purpose.

4. Any highway for which aid is granted to a province shall be improved or constructed, as the case may be, according to descriptions, conditions, and specifications approved by the Governor-in-Council on the report of the Minister, and specified in each case in an agreement between the Minister and the Government of the province, which agreement the Minister, with the approval of the Governor-in-Council, is hereby empowered to make.

5. Each highway to be constructed or improved shall be defined and described in such agreement, and provision may be made therein for the future maintenance of such highway in good condition according to a specified standard, and to the satisfaction of the Governor-in-Council.

6. The Minister, with the approval of the Governor-in-Council, and upon such terms and conditions as are prescribed by Order-in-Council, may undertake the construction of any new highway or the improvement of any existing highway in any province, and may expend in such improvement or construction the whole or any part of the sums voted by Parliament, for such subsidy to that province. Provided, however, that the Minister shall first obtain the necessary authority from the Legislature of such province and the consent of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

This measure is the first step by the Dominion Government to give aid for the building of the King's highway. Since Confederation the Dominion Government has granted eighty million dollars to build and improve our railways and eighty-eight million two hundred thousand dollars (exclusive of G.T.P.) to construct our canals, but not one cent for highways. With a Canadian Act granting aid to highways, new interest will be taken in the subject and a new impetus given to road-building.

Provincial Road Laws.—Each province has its own road law and, as might be expected, the laws vary with the provinces, as the conditions peculiar to those districts warrant.

Prince Edward Island.—Prince Edward Island, with the exception of the city of Charlottetown, and the town of Summerside, has no municipal government of any kind; however, the highways of the province have been placed entirely under the Department of Public Works. For the purposes of administration, the province is divided, by the department, into thirty-eight road divisions, each containing about 100 miles of road. These divisions are under road inspectors, who have a certain amount of machinery under their control to be used on this section. The general soil of Prince Edward Island is of a soft, loamy character, and about 90 per cent. of the roads are earth roads. During 1910 there was spent on the highways about \$32,000, or a little over \$8.00 a mile.

The Public Road Act of this province, as amended in 1910, contains a clause which provides for tax of \$1.00 per head per annum upon all persons between the age of twenty-one and sixty except clergymen and overseers, and a tax of 25 cents per head per annum upon all horses over three years of age, except those used by clergymen and overseers.

During this year a Good Road Association has been formed, and it is expected that the following educational campaign work of constructing permanent highways throughout the provinces will shortly be undertaken.

Nova Scotia.—In the province of Nova Scotia the roads are under the control of the municipalities who have direct control of the statute labor.