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THE NEGLECT OF OUR ROADS.

At a meeting of the American Association of Highway Officials a number of resolutions were passed all urging the building and proper maintenance of highways as a necessary war measure; the association maintaining that the highways must be regarded as part of the country's transportation system, particularly for freight (if less than car load lots) and for short haul freight. We in Canada, with the exception of one province, have taken an entirely different view and looked upon our highways and streets as a luxury to be dispensed with during the war. The consequence has been that for the last three years practically all highway and street improvements have been stopped—even maintenance has been neglected—with lamentable results. While it is true to say that every dollar is required for the one purpose of winning the war, it is also true to say that our highways, roads and streets are just as much an economic necessity to us as those of the south of the line are to the people of the United States, and the least the Canadian authorities can do is to see that they are kept in proper repair. For the last three years less money has been spent on our public thoroughfares than in any one year for the decade preceeding the outbreak of war. While it was necessary to curtail some of the ambitious road improvement schemes that were ready to be carried out during the spring and summer of 1915 it was quite another thing to go to the other extreme of not only giving up altogether the improvement schemes, but actually neglecting to maintain those roads and streets already built. We believe that the provincial and local authorities would be well advised in voting certain sums of money to put their public thoroughfares in proper repair, and even in certain localities to go in for modified schemes of improvement during the coming season. Had a more aggressive prosecution of road building taken place before the war came upon us, and a better maintain-

ance since, much of our present difficulty of transportation would have been met, with great benefit to the citizens in the lessened cost of foodstuffs and fuel.

VACANT LOT CULTIVATION.

The Port Arthur Garden Club, which was organized last year by the City Council, is to be congratulated on the splendid success of its first season's efforts. According to a report of the President of the local Board of Trade the products of the gardens amounted in value to \$26,527; surely a record in vacant lot cultivation worth aiming for in every municipality. During last year Canada saw the possibilities of vacant lot cultivation. Many thousands of lots throughout the urban centres were turned into vegetable gardens, and hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of produce taken from them. But this does not nearly represent what can be done in vacant lot cultivation if taken up seriously and systematically. Within the boundaries of every urban municipality in Canada are thousands of vacant lots waiting for cultivation this coming season, and given the opportunity and proper encouragement there is no reason to doubt but what every cultivable lot will be a means of food production. But there must be a real co-operation between the local garden lot societies and the council—the council must bear the expense of ploughing and, if necessary, find the seed, if not free, at a low price. The citizens must be educated to do their part in actual cultivation. They must be made to see that every hour given to attending their lots is so much more food produced for the boys at the front.

One of the results of last year's cultivation of vacant lots was the lowering of prices for garden produce. If this garden cultivation is increased twenty fold, or even ten fold, a much better guarantee will be given, not only in the keeping down of prices of vegetables, but of all perishable foods.