

If we were able to take advantage of this labour, upon payment of a proper fee which might go to the families of the men incarcerated in these institutions, the labor problem would be less difficult. I may say that in some of the Southern States this practise is now being carried on with very considerable benefit to the roads as well as to the men who are employed.

Early Laws.

There were some early laws in this province which we have lost sight of and in finding them and looking back upon them I think we might perhaps even in this year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and twenty get some light and benefit. As a matter of fact, a hundred year ago or more, we had a law upon the statute book of Nova Scotia which prevented a man from carrying more than a certain load with a tire less than eight inches in width under a heavy penalty. Loads of plaster could not be carried in the County of Hants except on tires at least eight inches in width. I think perhaps we could go back to that with some degree of benefit to the highways of this province at the present day. I find also about the same time there was a law upon the statute book which prevented a man from toting timber along the road, that is carrying timber on a pair of wheels and letting the logs drag along the road. It seems we must have retrograded a little bit in that matter because we not only find immense loads being taken in the early spring over the roads on extremely narrow tires, but we find people putting drags upon the wheels of their conveyances and tearing the hill sides down, with impunity, paying no attention whatever to the condition of the road itself and no attention to any law we may have to prevent such practises and it seems to me that we might look back to at least a hundred years ago for some inspiration as to what should be done at the present moment.

Then we find also that in those early days they had a very much larger amount of statute labour than we have had since. I find that a boy of sixteen years of age was obliged to contribute two days work on the roads and in those days he would have to contribute the work itself. Now, if we had such a law today that two days labour of a boy of sixteen years of age would probably be equal to a six-dollar annual contribution to the upkeep of the roads of the province. We find that a boy of twenty-one years of age who worked on the farm with his father was obliged to contribute three days labour to the maintenance of the road which would be equal today to a tax upon that man of nine dollars towards road construction in this