

efficiently as honest and sincere commissioners could be expected to carry it out, and with all possible speed, and yet in order to reasonably construct it, and part of it is not quite complete, it took three years from the time it was started to construct thirty-six miles of paved highway.

Our problem is not one which should discourage us. It looks to be a tremendous thing when we think of the extensive mileage that we have through Canada, some 250,000 miles of highways in the Dominion of Canada to-day. We should not let that problem discourage us. It is a slow process. The roads must be constructed by manual effort and can only be financed by an annual measure, so that when we start to construct a system of highways we don't have to have the entire sum in our pockets. We appropriate our money year by year for this purpose, and considering the time it will take and the means we have at our disposal, I am of the opinion that the people of this country are amply able to pay for and to construct a system of highways in every way adequate to our requirements, without any serious financial struggle.

### Not a Shortage of Money

With us to-day, in order to carry out a good and adequate plan of construction for this year, we are not held up because the province has not the money, nor the county. I have yet to see the county that has not the means available to carry on a satisfactory scheme of construction this year, and certainly the province is not holding up because we have not the means. It is because, as you know, the men are not available. They are, perhaps, in a few localities, but throughout Ontario and Canada as a whole, the work is simply delayed because we know it is not expedient to undertake any great system of construction and so enter into competition with the labor market that is at the present time strained in order to take care of the essential, the most essential matters that we have in hand.

I have said that we should all pay for the roads. We must all pay for the roads. One serious situation that we have discovered in Ontario, and I think it pertains throughout Canada, is that in the past the farmers, the rural sections, have been expected to construct highways solely at their own expense.

Now we find that the townships are fairly well assessing themselves (not so much as they can, not as much as they will do) for ordinary township road purposes, but they have not had the means of setting apart, until the province took hold of this matter, a special system of highways on which to concentrate effort.

### Suburban Road Systems

In order to separate the main arteries, the more important market highways, into a class which would receive immediate attention, the province established a scheme of county roads upon which the people of the townships, through the medium of their county councils, should concentrate their efforts. But we were still met with the serious condition of which I have spoken, that only the people within the county organization were called upon to pay for this work. And although these highways go right up to the entrance to the cities, although cities in every other country are helping to maintain and pay for such main arteries, through our scheme of municipal organization the cities were escaping entirely.

In Ontario we have established a plan of having suburban road systems. This creates somewhat of an offshoot from the city council and the county council, on which each are equally represented. A certain mileage of roads is

selected adjacent to each of the cities, and on these the city and the county unite their efforts in what I would call the metropolitan area surrounding each city, and just as the province aids the county or gives its contribution to the county, so it is extended to the suburban area, with the result that within the suburban areas the province estimates that it will contribute twice as much to the roads within those areas as to the ordinary county roads. The cities will join equally with the counties which makes the associated townships. That is, we have established a plan by which the cities can co-operate in constructing the more heavily travelled of the country roads, and it is an axiom of road construction that roads must be constructed and maintained and consequently paid for practically in proportion to the amount of traffic over them.

It has been said that the province should give more than the fees from automobiles. I have no doubt whatever that the province, so soon as it finds that the available funds from automobiles are absorbed through the channels that have been established, will find other means of supplementing that expenditure sufficiently to meet the needs of our annual plan or scheme of construction. Ontario has accomplished a good deal in road construction. I have talked with quite a few from the United States and elsewhere who have been on our highways. I have been over quite a few highways in the United States. I have seen highways much more expensively built than any we have here, but I have taken as much comfort out of our own particular type of highway as I have out of some of the more expensive types, for the reason, after all, that maintenance is the only permanent part of any highway and some of those expensive highways are not properly maintained and certainly are some of the most uncomfortable highways one can drive over.

### A Few Main Arteries Urgently Needed

Cheaply constructed highways, where traffic is not heavy, will serve every purpose if they are maintained. As traffic increases, the highways should be constructed in proportion, and maintained in proportion, and consequently the area of payment must be extended, and so we extend it to the county and the province joins in. A considerable proportion of the counties have for some time been constructing their market roads with excellent results.

What Ontario needs more than anything else is a few main arteries in order to develop what we have. You know that you can get from Hamilton in reasonable comfort over quite a series of old county roads. Close to Hamilton these roads are worse and in poorer shape than they are some miles out. Why? Because they are not a strong enough type to support the heavier traffic concentrating itself close to the larger centre of population, entering the city of Hamilton or going out from the city of Hamilton. As you leave the hub the traffic diffuses itself and in a remarkably short area it is astonishing how you will pass from the section in which expensively constructed highways are required, to the area where comparatively cheap roads will serve the traffic equally well.

But, as I have said, what we need are certain main arteries, and we are planning for them. What I have said as to the diffusion of traffic hardly applies to those main arteries, because the traffic there is from city to city and town to town and is fairly well concentrated between important terminal points. The province has created an organization for a provincial system of highways. We have started that organization, have taken over a section from Toronto to Port Hope, and it will be extended as fast as it seems expedient. When such a system of con-