

ROAD CONGRESS AT MONTREAL.

THE First Canadian International Good Roads Congress was held in Montreal last week. It was marked by the attendance of a goodly number of men whose prominence in road matters in Canada and the United States is well known, their presence serving as an indication of their optimistic feeling and their eagerness to be of assistance on this particular occasion. The Good Roads Show was well patronized and the entire arrangement was such as to provide every delegate with an opportunity of taking full advantage of the entire proceedings of the convention.

The opening session on Monday afternoon was largely devoted to inaugural addresses. Mr. U. H. Dandurand, chairman, in his opening remarks, bore out the good and substantial aims upon which the Congress has been founded. Sir Francois Langelier, Lieut-Governor of Quebec, and Sir Lomer Gouin, Premier of Quebec, attended this opening session and took part in the ceremonial speeches. The former outlined the condition of the roads in Quebec as it was many years ago, and traced the development of the idea that good roads were a necessity from the time when the people in Quebec Province looked only to the St. Lawrence River and other great water routes, as well as to the snow roads of winter, for their means of transportation. The Premier spoke of the aims of the Province of Quebec in the matter of good roads, and indicated that a very substantial progress was being made. They had spent seven or eight millions of dollars on roads and had some exceedingly good roads to show for it.

Hon. Louis Coderre, Secretary of State, voiced the hope that the Federal and Provincial governments would come to an early arrangement respecting a grant for road construction and improvement.

The next address was that of Mr. W. A. McLean, Provincial Highway Engineer for the Province of Ontario, and president of the American Road Builders' Association. Mr. McLean spoke on highway legislation. In this connection he maintained, as principles of highway legislation that could have a general application, that cities should assist in the payment occasioned by the building of public highways; that municipal self-administration should be encouraged, and that the central administration should be relied upon for assistance when circumstances demanded.

Dr. E. M. Desaulniers, M.L.A., Chambly County, St. Lambert, P.Q., spoke briefly concerning road legislation for the Province of Quebec compared with other provinces.

Mr. A. N. Johnson, chief state highway engineer of Illinois, presented a very interesting paper entitled "Planning of System of Public Roads," but owing to the lateness of the hour Mr. Johnson was obliged to follow the example of the previous speaker by reading only brief portions of his address. His chief contention was that the first necessity in road construction was to make a plan of the work to be done over a wide area, so that in future years whatever work was done they would be working on the recognized system which, when completed, would be twice as valuable on account of its unity.

In the evening and on other evenings throughout the convention special illustrated lectures were given by the manufacturers of road-building materials and machinery, represented at the Congress. They were well attended and displayed many interesting features in the solution of problems commonly met with.

The next session of the Congress took place on Tuesday afternoon. In his opening address, Mr. Dandurand reviewed the work of the previous day. He introduced the subject of a permanent organization. Later in the afternoon he brought the subject again before the meeting, putting it in the form of a motion, which was unanimously carried. The following committee was appointed to make a report to the Congress: Mr. Geo. A. McNamee, secretary-treasurer of the Good Roads Congress; Mr. W. G. Robertson, secretary of the Canadian Automobile Federation; Mr. I. S. Pennybacker, secretary of the American Highways Association, and Mr. H. W. Pillow, president of the Automobile Club of Canada.

In an address entitled "Important Considerations Entering Into the Selection of Pavements for Roads and Streets," Mr. W. H. Connell, chief of Bureau of Highways, Department of Public Works, Philadelphia, emphasized the necessity for trained men for the construction and maintenance of highways. Enormous sums of money had been uselessly expended by those who employed untrained men not only to construct but to maintain their roads. Next in importance to the personnel, careful consideration should be given to the drainage, the present and probable future traffic, foundation gradient, social and sanitary conditions, and wearing surface. Rigid inspection of a road in the process of construction was an absolute necessity.

Mr. E. A. James, consulting engineer to the York County Highway Commission, presented a paper, read by Mr. W. Huber, of the Ontario Department of Public Works, on "Maintaining Macadam Roads." It was claimed that nine-tenths of the objections to macadam roads arose from an improper observation of the rules which govern their maintenance, rather than from difficulties of construction. A list of the various agencies tending to deteriorate such roads was given prominence among which were mentioned narrow tires. The paper favored the patrol system of maintenance and expressed both the statute labor and the contract labor systems of maintenance as generally satisfactory.

"Points Worth Knowing in Connection with Road Improvement," was the subject dwelt upon by Major W. W. Crosby, consulting engineer, Baltimore. Any comprehensive scheme, according to the speaker, necessitated the selection of the most important roads and also the selection of methods and means to be employed. The construction of good roads should be regarded as an investment which must show both direct and indirect benefits. Borrowed money should be used entirely for construction purposes, and the cost of maintenance should be guaranteed out of annual levies. Major Crosby emphasized the fact that there was no such thing as a permanent road. Every road requires maintenance and careful attention, no matter of what type it may be constructed.

Lieut.-Col. W. N. Ponton, honorary president of the Ontario Associative Boards of Trade, read a most interesting paper on good roads as a factor in the progress of cities and towns. The speaker did not endeavor to present anything in the nature of a technical paper, but his address was a rousing elucidation of the effect upon the country which is sure to follow the establishment and proper maintenance of good roads. He suggested that the Congress should be made a constant and permanent element of influence and that it should appoint a committee to lay before Parliament a well-digested plan for accomplishing the best work by the best methods.

Mr. R. Lehmann, engineer of the French Government Service, New York City, gave a very interesting address