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The Good Roads Movement



THE COUNTRY is nothing theoretical or visionary in the advocacy of good roads. No movement that has been inaugurated for the benefit of the farmers of this country has in it more practical and beneficial results than the improvement of our roadways. Properly made and well-equipped roads that can be travelled on with comfort and ease, at any season of the year, mean money in the pockets of the farmers who are so fortunate as to live on or adjacent to them. They add greatly to the social benefits of rural life, and very much improve the appearance of the country as well as increasing very materially the values of the farms bordering on the roadway. On the other hand, bad roads which become almost impassable at certain seasons of the year, are a serious detriment to the progress, social, or otherwise, of any community. There are thousands of dollars lost to the farmers of this country every year through bad roads. They very much increase the cost of marketing produce, and often the farmer is unable to get his produce to market at all, because of the impassable condition of the roads in the early spring and late fall. But why dwell on this feature of it. The farmer of to-day needs no elaborate argument to show him the necessity of improved roadways, or the great loss he is sustaining every year from bad ones.

Since the inception of the good roads movement in this province several years ago, there has been gradual and steady progress, both on educational and practical lines. This has culminated in the passage of an act at the last session of the Legislature, appropriating \$1,000,000 for road improvement. Our readers are familiar with the scheme for expending this money. In his fifth annual report just published, A. W. Campbell, Commissioner of Highways, in referring to this appropriation says:

"The object of the present measure is not so much to aid by the gratuitous distributing of money, but has for its aim a nobler purpose. While it aims to encourage the doing of a work which is acknowledged by all as being an important and necessary service, its prime object is to equalize and lighten the cost. The unfairness and injustice of the present system of taxation for highway construction is so noticeable as to be a matter of wonderment that some step of this kind has not been, ere this, devised by government, or compelled by the people."

The good work already accomplished in this province for improving the highways has had its influence in other provinces of the Dominion. We give elsewhere a brief summary of some recent legislation in Prince Edward Island along this line. This legislation practically means the abolition of the statute labor system and the substitution of what is known as the contract labor system in the Island Province.

The working out of this legislation will no doubt be watched with interest by the advocates of good roads all over the Dominion.

A reference to the statute labor system reminds one that in a few weeks the farmers in all parts of the country will be called out to put in their allotted days of labor on the roadways. Doubtless the same methods will be followed in performing this work as of old. There will be no definite plan followed in laying out the work. Each pathmaster will look after his own division as he thinketh best, and thus the same variable results will ensue—no uniformity, no permanency and no definite advancement toward improved roads. Councils, where the statute labor system is still in vogue should, before the work begins, decide upon some definite plan for the guidance of pathmasters. A road-making machine could do good work in every township if properly managed. In this way something in the nature of uniformity may be brought about.

While many of the townships in this province are still clinging somewhat tenaciously to the statute labor system, it is gratifying to know that a transition period has set in. As noted elsewhere, fully 10 per cent. of the municipalities have commuted or partially commuted the system and with very great success. The by-law of the township of Pelham commuting the statute labor system, given in another column, is well worth investigating by township councillors and ratepayers generally. This commutation plan may not be perfection, yet it is infinitely superior to the old system, and could be adopted by every township in the province to the general advantage of the roadways and its citizens. The statute labor system is a most expensive one, and does not give permanency or uniformity in road improvement. The value of the statute labor expended on the roadways of this province during the past ten years is estimated at over \$10,000,000, or \$1 for each day's labor performed. Had this amount of labor been commuted at, say 50c. per day, it is pretty safe to conclude that the roadways of this province would be in a much better condition than they are at the present time.

Marketing English Chickens

Valuable Hints for Canadian Poultry Raisers

It is important that our farmers who supply poultry for the export trade should be familiar with the kinds of birds and the quality of product best suited to the English market. Dr. Boulthée, manager of the Canadian Produce Co., has just returned from Great Britain, where he made a study of the breeds used in England, and the fresh-killed English chickens as sold on the English markets. He obtained a large amount of information which cannot but be of value to Canadian poultry-raisers, and has kindly sent