

who built the bridge of Avignon over the Rhine, between 1177 and 1187, A.D. They were a mendicant order, solely however to raise funds for bridges, and continued for several hundred years, and constructed bridges in most parts of Europe. The last of them was the Monk Romain, who was also probably the first of the engineers in the far-famed *Corps des Ponts et Chaussées* of France, when instituted in the early part of the last century.

Efforts were made in France in the reign of Louis XI. and subsequently, by the establishment of post-houses and relays of horses, and by the appointment of the Treasurers of France, afterwards known as the Receivers-General, to improve the great highways; but even these were never suited for rapid travelling, except by horsemen, and they had fallen into a miserable condition at the death of Louis XIV. But under the celebrated *Corps des Ponts et Chaussées*, improvements on systematic and scientific principles were commenced and continued, and admirable roads by degrees provided. These under Napoleon the First were divided into three classes—the royal, the departmental, and the rural roads—the 1st kept in repair by the State, and the 2nd and the 3rd by the provinces and by the districts through which they passed. France has, or at any rate had until now, about 100,000 miles of good carriageable roads.

The best roads in Great Britain, for centuries, were the remains of those left by the Romans. In the 13th and 14th centuries we find efforts made to improve the communications by the removal of trees on either side, and by the levying of tolls to repair roads reported impassable. Turnpike roads were established and acts were passed for repairing and widening some of the public roads on the return of Charles II.; and between the years 1700 and 1770, no less than 530 acts of Parliament relating to turnpike roads were passed. For all this, however, a century ago the roads of Great Britain were in a sufficiently miserable condition. But between this period and the present, there have been constructed or improved