

than ours, or any we can hope to have generally within this generation, or perhaps the next, but I do want to say their bad roads are so much worse than our worst roads as to be almost beyond the power of description.

1917 And after.

We find that that was the condition of affairs in this Province down to the year 1917 when this Highways Act was passed. The Highway Act of 1917 which met with such a favourable reception in this House, was passed at the general demand of the people of this Province. Statute labour had become obsolete, it was conceived and made use of at its inception, at a time when people made their own clothes; when people made their own boots; but as conditions went along and labour changed, as farmers had all they could do to attend their farms, and as industries sprang up, it was found to be obsolete. I do not think there is a man in this Province of any experience who will not bear out what I say in that regard. In many of the Counties of this Province, where you would look for something else, Statute labour was not performed at all; in many others conscientious work was done, and in many districts conscientious work was done, but generally nothing was done in the way of continuity; one district might provide enough Statute labour to keep the road in that district in fair shape, but before you got to the next district you went over a section where there was no Statute labour available, and the people of the two districts would not step over one inch, and you went over a section of fairly good road and then a mile or two of abominable road to reach the other fairly good section. It was impossible to provide a consecutive system of highways of any kind of quality in this Province, and pursuant to a general demand the Road Act was the answer of this Legislature. We found on that occasion, and for some years previously that many, if not all the towns and cities in this Province were clamouring for a change. Banners were strung across the street in Halifax and many of the towns of the Province saying "we want good roads and are willing to pay for them." I don't know if they meant that; I am inclined to think, on account of some petitions that have come into the road department, that they did not mean it—and we measure a man's or a community's feeling in a matter of this kind, as in regard to other matters receiving the attention of men in the Province, by how much are they willing to put up to carry it through successfully. Nevertheless, at that time we had a distinct clamour from many of the towns and municipalities for good roads and their expressions of being willing to pay for them. We had resolutions from Boards