

A half-natural stretch of fair road with the village in the foreground and the rustic hotel close by.

THE MOTOR AND THE ROAD

Also the Country Hotel in Some Places Changing to the Rustic Inn

ONCE upon a time in a country of Western Ontario there was—and still is—a marvelous country road; a road which runs for fifty miles and more along Lake Erie, and is still a favourite route for motor-cars touring from Eastern Ontario and Buffalo to Detroit. The road is a pure gravel road; natural beach gravel, turnpiked and built by statute labour.

But there was a pathmaster who, seeing that the road was perfect, and not knowing how else to earn his money, ordered the taxpayers out to "improve" his section of the road by plowing clay out of the ditches and heaping it on top of the gravel. One old 'residenter,' indignant at the insult to the good gravel road, scooped up a bagful of the unspeakable clay and took it out in his buggy to the township council. The council immediately ordered the pathmaster to put that blankety-blank clay somewhere, in the fence-corners, over the fences, down the lake bank—anywhere to get it off the gravel.

Which was so done.

Roads will always be a first consideration to the man who motors away from town. There are roads in Canada that motorists have cursed both loud and deep. Most of them were bad enough by nature. Once upon a time the farmer by statute labour more or less improved them. When he turnpiked with blue clay and sods he sometimes made them worse.

When the motor era came in, roads that were fair to middling by nature and statute labour, became grievously bad by overmuch travel from swift rubber tires. Hence in middle Ontario it has become necessary to make new roads by the spending of many thousands of money and quite regardless of the township pathmaster.

Now the roads may have been bad enough, but the stopping places for motoring refreshments were decidedly worse; mainly ham and eggs and flies on the side. The customary country hotel is the most uncomfortable and unprofitable "joint" whereat a motorist can stay. Mostly he keeps the road till he gets back to town. Whereby country innkeepers lose much valuable trade.

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Roadside Inns for Tourists.

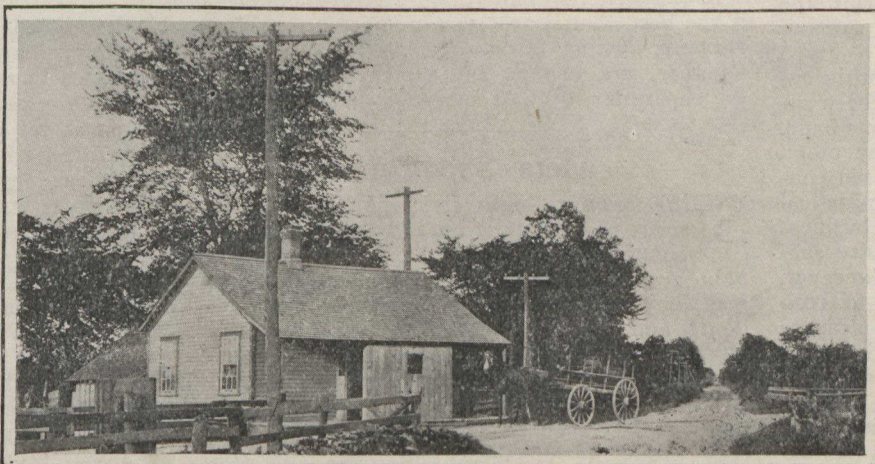
NOT of all men tourists would care to make their refreshment stops at Tea Inns. But, by the same token, not all women would clamour



Making good suburban roads near a handsome city. Millions of tons of excellent paving stone in Hamilton mountain.



Tearing down the house of the old road-maker. Tollgate on Hamilton mountain succumbs to good roads movement.



A tollgate relic that still survived a year or two ago in Lambton, Ont.

for a wash and a bite at a Road House more or less infested with noisy chauffeurs. Men have their preferences, but some men do like their cups of tea, particularly if there be ladies in the party.

Because of conditions just hinted at there has sprung up in the neighbourhood of the large American cities, and also along some of the more popular routes of motor travels, a new type of inn or restaurant, attractive, picturesque, cleanly—frequently quaint. These are variously alluded to as Tea Inns, Tea Houses or Tea Shops. But, whatever the style or name the tea served invariably is hot and delicious, and the service very satisfactory.

This is a suggestion for country people who live along the main highways of automobile travel to add to their income. An enthusiastic automobilist said recently: "There is today no need so great as a comfortable roadside resting-place for touring parties; and the most up-to-date country woman is the one who most quickly realizes this and conforms to the new order of things. Let the country girl who longs to go to the big cities to scratch for pennies stay at home and pick up dollars in her own front yard."

Almost every prosperous tea-room combines some selling enterprise with it. Sometimes it is a gift shop, sometimes home-made preserves. One enterprising tea-room puts up weekend baskets of home made candies that are eagerly bought up. Another sells whole roast chickens, old-fashioned delicious pies, and home-made doughnuts.

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Small Country Hotels.

AFTER all the little inns of a country are about the only point of contact that the average traveller has with the people of that country. For indeed, what people eat and drink, and how they are contented to live out of their own homes, tells one a vast lot when you come down to it, says Mary Heaton Vorse, in *Harper's Magazine*.

The moment you leave the land of big hotels and step into one of the little hostelries you find along the roadside you can make up the whole civilization of the country if you are clever, as a Buffon could reconstruct the whole animal from one bone. What more eloquent of the civilization of France, for instance, than the excellent omelet you may find waiting for you in almost any little hotel from Dieppe to the Midi? "Der Mensch ist was er isst," and one could spend years in studying the customs and manners of France and Germany, and yet find it all in the contrast between that marvelous roast chicken, the art of which is lost the moment you put foot over the border, and the estimable salad of France with the beer and the ever-present productions of the pig in the small hostelries of the Fatherland. What more significant of at once the poverty and the richness of our civilization in this country, where all the fruits of the earth—or at least the vegetables of it—are served in the country hotels in a series of shilly and forbidding birds' bathtubs? We are a nation who ask for a ruinous plenty and are content, in more things than food, to have this plenty cold, unappetizing and ill-served. It is a far cry from Ponce up the coast to the little ordinary hotel of the small town. Could not a sagacious traveller plumb our heights and depths for these?

Such a picture is very common in Canada. The real country hotel is only being discovered as a possibility. Its evolution from the rustic hotel of the nineteenth century will soon be under way.