

Ontario's Good Roads Organization

LOCAL self-government, in which road management plays an important part, has reached a most gratifying stage of development in the Province of Ontario.

OWING to the great interest that has been taken in the Good-Roads Movement in Ontario, and in order that Municipal Councils and the Highways Department may work together more efficiently for the common welfare, the Department of Highways believes it essential that the people of this Province should have the leading features of the Good Roads legislation placed clearly before them, and that all should be informed as to the methods of Municipal and Departmental co-operation in this important matter.

THERE has been some misunderstanding in the public mind. This has been due, in some cases, to extreme proposals of well-intentioned people, which have been given wide publicity. One of these proposals has been that the Ontario Government should at once build a great cement-concrete Highway across the Province at a huge expense. Such proposals as these, and many others, have not been approved by the Government, and are not part of the policy.

THE people of Ontario have reason to be especially gratified with the good-roads system as now organized. This system is not one that has been framed in haste. It has been the development of years of varied and wide experience—not only in the location of roads, but in types of roads, and many features of road building.

THE Councillors of Ontario have been consulted in every stage of this development. They have expressed their wishes and opinions through their township and county councils, through the Good Roads Associations, with which many of them are identified, and through their petitions and deputations to the Department from time to time. It has been the aim of the Highways Department to reflect in its policy the desire of the rural people of Ontario in road construction.

THE same policy of Good Roads which is being developed in Ontario is largely similar to the policy that has been successful in many of the Eastern States, such as New Hampshire, Maine and Massachusetts.

THE Department realizes that Good Roads are built as much by means of public opinion and good-will as out of gravel and stone. We have, therefore, planned to place before the Councillors of Ontario, who have so much at stake in this matter, through a series of announcements in the rural papers, details of the Government's Good Roads policy. From year to year this Department has spent considerable sums in publications, holding meetings, exhibits, etc., and yet we have only been able to reach a percentage of the homes.

WE have, therefore, adopted this method as being the least expensive and most effective means of clearing up some misconceptions that have been found to exist; and through these announcements to secure the suggestions and opinions of the councillors and ratepayers of the Province with whom it is the Department's desire to work in the best interests of all.

All Rural Roads Are Township Roads

Therefore, all Provincial road expenditure is aid to township roads. The body responsible for their management, whether township council, county council, or Provincial Department, does not effect the value of these roads to the people of the townships through which the roads pass. Subsidies to county roads and the construction of Provincial Highways, constitute the most effective scheme of aid to township roads. Provincial Highways and county roads are the market roads of the Province.

FROM the inception of the Ontario Highways Department, special attention has been given to the encouragement of "market roads," those radiating from local market towns and shipping points, for the benefit of farm production, and counties which have been operating under the Highway Improvement Act for a few years, have shown most gratifying progress in that respect. It is a well-worn axiom, however, that "roads must be built for the traffic they are to carry;" and the cost is necessarily proportionate to the strength and dimensions of the road; in other words, proportionate to the traffic.

THIS short series of announcements will, therefore, refer particularly to:

1. County Roads.
2. Provincial Highways.
3. Traffic and Provincial Aid.

Department of Public Highways, Ontario

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