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GOOD ROADS PAY.

No More Profitable Experiment Can Be Made.

RAILROADS AND WAGON ROADS.
The Improvement of the One Means the Prosperity of the Other.—Hints for Improvement.

The National League for Good Roads is one of the most beneficent organizations in the country. The movement of which it has taken charge was very largely prompted, if it was not begun, by the efforts of the wheelmen, who have done a great deal of public good in other ways, and especially by securing a more accurate mapping and a better system of guideposts in many parts of the country than prevailed anywhere before their labors began to bear fruit.

It may be said that everybody who has paid any attention to the subject is now convinced that good roads pay, and that there is no more profitable investment for an agricultural community than the first cost and the maintenance of highways that are considerably more expensive and immeasurably more remunerative than any that now exist, except in the case of great towns, and that are very seldom to be found even there. But it would be a great mistake to assume that improvement is certain because the advantage of it is demonstrated.

It is within bounds to say that the great majority of the farmers of the United States never saw a good road and do not know what it is. A road that is a mere spring, a Sahara in summer, a series of ruts and ridges frozen stiff in late autumn and a slough whenever there is a thaw in the winter is to them the normal means of rural communication. If they had known and used good roads they would not tolerate the existing roads for a moment, but because they do not they will go on acquiescing in the existing country roads with as much as they can get for the moment, and that is born of ignorance.

The only way to break in upon the apathy is to dispel the ignorance, and that can be done only by bringing good roads within the reach of the people of the rural districts, or at least within their knowledge, and enabling them to find out for themselves the difference between them and the roads of which they have grown to regard the defects as incurable. This must be done, under any system, by the states and requires state legislation. If there were, say, ten miles of model roadway in every county in the state of Oregon, it is quite certain that within a very few years this mileage would be multiplied tenfold by the efforts of the inhabitants themselves, who would have come to learn what an enormous saving to them in money and time, as well as what a great advantage in comfort the new roads would bring to them.

The efforts of the national and state leagues ought to be devoted to bringing about such legislation in every state. In one state the matter has already become a political issue, for the candidates for the legislature in Illinois have been officially interrogated as to their position on the subject. It is not likely that many of these candidates had ever given any thought to the matter, but being required to take a stand concerning it, nearly all of them have returned satisfactory answers. This ought to mean that if a well-mannered bill were presented to the legislature of Illinois provided it would be enacted and put into execution. When that is accomplished the battle will have been won.

It is in the eastern states that the need of good roads is perhaps most urgent. The abandonment of New England farms, attributed to western competition, would scarcely have been possible if the farms had been connected by decent roads with the market towns or the railroads, one of which ought to be within easy driving distance of every farm in New England, and should be so if the roads were what they should be. The more eastern agriculture changes from the raising of staple crops to "truck farming" the more indispensable to it are easy, well built, well drained roads that are practicable at all seasons of the year.—New York Times.

Not the Farmer Alone Will Profit.
West, north and south comes the cry for better roads for the farmer—better roads for the village and city man. The public is being educated on the subject by that peculiar and very American method in which the newspapers are the instructors. Methods of good road building are being discussed; the men who use the roads are giving their evidence, their opinions and their need of a standard concerning it. In a few years good roads will be as much a part of the prosperous township as post-offices and school houses now are.

It is not the farmer alone who would be benefited by good country roads. The persons who conduct the market and those who make their purchases at it would share in all the good. The towns as well as the farms would feel an acceleration of business. There is an elemental quality about the road reform. It lies at the very foundation of things, and the sooner the farmer and merchant find it out the better it will be for them in particular, and for the country in general.—Omaha World-Herald.

Bicycles Helping the Good Work.
Look at the wheel will be pleased to find Professor Shaler, of Harvard, declaring in The Atlantic Monthly that "in its social importance the bicycle deserves to rank next to the railway and the telegraph and among the inventions of our waning century." General Miles has recently assigned to the bicycle a high military value, not only for courier service, but for the transportation of bodies of troops. But Professor Shaler's appreciation of its use is still higher and more comprehensive. One of the special services performed by the wheelmen is to create an interest in the bettering of the public roads. "Every cyclist becomes a critic of the highway he travels," says Professor Shaler, "probably to be reckoned by the million." He ascribes the recent remarkable growth of interest in the improvement of highways largely to their introduction.

They increase appetite, purify the whole system and act on the liver. Bile flows small.

The subject of "good roads" and how to secure them is one that is deserving of all the attention and agitation that it has of late received in this country, where the need of the article is most disagreeably apparent in whatever part of

the country one may travel. Among those gentlemen who have manifested deep interest in the matter, and who have contributed freely of their means, with a view to remedying the evil and bringing about the improvement so earnestly desired, stands Colonel A. A. Pope, of Boston, who has long been untiring in his able efforts in this direction. One of his most recent moves in the premises has been to send to the presidents of different railroads through-out the country letters urging the establishment of a "road department" by each company, for the purpose of aiding in promoting the improvement of the common roads of the country. A copy of the letter appears below:

DEAR SIR—Permit me to urge upon your attention the great importance of good roads as factors in the development of the United States. The condition of the common country roads is the index to the prosperity of railroads. When highways are impassable freight and passenger earnings are necessarily diminished and the price of railroad securities lowered. When the roads are in good condition merchandise is commodated at the depots, and in moving it trains are delayed and accidents increased. A uniform good condition of roads would enable railroads to handle freight more expeditiously.

Good roads are the means by which a country is built up populously and prosperously. Bad roads delay civilization and cause districts to be sparsely settled, and poverty and ignorance to abound. The railroad companies of this country, representing millions of employees and billions of capital, and controlled and directed by men of high intelligence, have a commanding influence in every legislative hall in the United States.

Every railway corporation can request its officers, agents and employees to do what they can to create a right sentiment in regard to the improvement of highways in their respective neighborhoods, and all along the various lines depot masters and freight agents can report to a road department, established by the company, the conditions of the roads in their towns and what is being done to improve them. Those depot masters could be furnished from time to time with pamphlets containing instructions for the construction and maintenance of highways, for distribution to persons doing business at their stations, and thus educate them to build better roads, as well as to see that their better highways effect saving in transportation. Any railroad running through a territory having good roads must have a great advantage over a competing line with poor roads from its stations.

The executive officers of a railroad corporation can instruct representatives in congress on the importance of better highways, so that favorable legislation may be secured. Newspapers to whom railroad companies extend their patronage might be requested to devote space to agitate this matter. The building up of suburban districts, which is of such a profitable character to railroads, is first brought about by those who wish to sell land. Aside from the material advantages that may accrue to a railway by aiding in the work of agitating the subject, there is to be considered the broader question of the great benefit that might be conferred upon the entire community.

Will you not aid this great movement, which is of so much national importance? There will be sent to you a memorial on the subject of roads, which contains the opinions of the following presidents of railroads: Stuyvesant Fish, Illinois Central railway; M. E. Ingalls, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis railway; C. J. Ives, Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern railway; W. C. Van Horn, Canadian Pacific railway, and many others.—New York Recorder.

What the Farmer Pays.
It has been estimated that the farmers of the United States pay the enormous sum of \$660,000,000 every year for the transportation of produce and grain from the farms to the nearest market place. Under the most favorable conditions wagon transportation over the average road costs from fifteen to twenty cents per ton for each mile. During part of winter and in early spring the roads are usually impassable, field work is out of the question, and nearly 18,000,000 draft animals have to be kept in idleness, causing a loss of at least \$75,000,000. From figures recently prepared by Mr. John M. Stahl, an authority on the improvement of good roads, it is learned that the establishment of good roads would save the farmers of the United States \$500,000,000 a year—a sum which would wipe out the national debt in three years.

A system of gravel and macadamized roads, built by competent men, is needed in every state of the Union. The legislatures of a number of states have shown a disposition to aid the advocates of good highways. Soon we may expect the passage of bills providing for the inauguration of the work. But before the movement receives the hearty support of the farmers they must be convinced that the actual distance from farm to market is not to be measured by miles, but by the character of the roads, and that poor dirt roads are a tax exceeding in volume every other burden borne by the rural population.

As soon as farmers take the trouble of keeping regular accounts of the cost of hauling products they will demand better roads. Until then the agitation must be kept up by the press and the growing class of bright young men and women commonly called "bicycle cranks." The latter, under the able leadership of Mr. Isaac B. Potter, have already accomplished a great deal. If they continue the good work substantial results are bound to reward their labors.—Chicago Graphic.

Guaranteed to cure Bilious Attacks and Constipation, Small Bile Beans.

The following article, written by James B. Brewster, of New York, for Good Roads, gives some good suggestions for the use of convict labor. One of the great questions of the present day is how to improve our public roads, and in its discussion we are often confronted by another—to wit, What is the best way to utilize our prison labor?

A plan is here suggested for the solution of this second question and for the material advancement of the work contemplated by the first. Most country roads and many city and village streets may be largely improved by the use of a material produced by the employment of unskilled manual labor. I refer to the broken or crushed stone commonly employed in making telford and macadam roadways. Assuming now that many of our prisons are so situated as to be within accessible distance of good stone quarries (which is in fact the case), how can we employ our prison labor in the making and distribution of

Highest of all in Leavening Power.—Latest U. S. G.

Royal Baking Powder

ABSOLUTELY PURE

This road material so as to distribute the benefit equitably among the districts "bear and remove" Of course a suitable plant for the economical production of good broken stone and its assortment into different sizes should be erected at the expense of the state, and good railway connection, together with a proper equipment of freight cars, must be provided to handle and deliver the material as fast as needed.

This being done, the question of distribution is next in order. The material having been produced at the expense of the state at large, an expense of which each town, near or remote, shares its burden according to the value of its property. It is manifestly proper that each town should receive the road material produced by prison labor at a cost equal, as nearly as possible, to that paid by other towns for similar benefits. For example, Montauk is 150 miles from Sing Sing prison, while the town of Sing Sing is, say, one mile, and the cost of transportation by rail should amount to one cent per ton per mile, and the cost of production of road material at the prison should be found to be one dollar per ton, it would be manifestly unfair to charge the Montauk consumers \$2.50 per ton for material delivered at Montauk, while the same material could be delivered at Sing Sing for less than half that sum.

If, however, a uniform price of seventy-five cents per ton could be paid to the cost of production (one dollar), thus requiring these two towns each to pay not the actual but the average cost of material as delivered at both places, a principle of equity would be followed in the distribution of the material, and the benefits and general satisfaction would be justly bestowed and general satisfaction insured. In a similar way intermediate places could be served, and the price made the same to all localities. I have used the illustration as an illustration merely. The perfection of the general plan of course involves extended and careful computation, so that an average might be determined which should be observed in fixing a uniform price for this material to consumers in all parts of the state.

Besides the enormous advantages which the operation of this system would bring to the many towns that are now demanding improved roads, it would offer unquestioned advantages in the settlement of the prison labor question and operate strongly to the industrial benefit of the convicts employed. The variety of workmanship required to produce good road material would call into activity the trained and