

GOOD ROADS IN FRANCE DECLARED TO BE OF IMMENSE VALUE TO COUNTRY

Network of Fine Highways Connecting Great Cities and Remote Villages Not Built by "Ancient Romans" but by People at Expenditure of \$2,000,000,000 Just Before War.



Road Skirting Amphitheatre of Combe Laval.



The Highest National Road in France From Grenoble To Briancon.



Wonderful Road Building of Dauphine In France.



The Beautiful Macadam Surface Of French Trunk Roads.

BY STERLING HELLO. RENOBLE, France, Jan. 12.—Every American who with the motor transport in France has strong ideas about it. Every boy who was with the motor trucks will back me up in these statements. "Crum Bone" Bragdon of Springfield Mo., and "Clod Masher" Carr of Piedmont, S. C. carried a map of France in their heads. The "Speed Ball" (whose name was Dunn, from Philadelphia) and the "Globe Trotter" (who hailed from Floyd county, Ky.) used to dream and argue on the straight white roads beneath the kim and poplar shade. There were always crowds of them on leave, at our rest station at Uriage, the lovely mountain watering place, 12 miles up a winding valley from this city of Grenobles. Americans had all Uriage, one of the sweetest spots of Dauphine. One summer day we were watching the high road which follows the beautiful broad high road winding up the little valley. The trolley was crowded, the high road was crowded with horses and essence. (It was after America had turned the tide.) "Good old trolley" said a newcomer. "It's got the best of me. Little Jeff, truck expert from Ohio, stopped him. "I've been studying it up," said Jeff. "I'd like to see the man who owns the Globe Hotel, put me up against some farmers, and I'll tell the world these Rubes has got things cinched better than that! The macadam road is the basis of everything. The trolley is an extra. As soon as the war is over, they'll do their own hauling again—they can use the profit!" "Beat the trolley!" inquired the other, incredulously. "Yes, even with their horses and wagons," said the Ohio auto-truck lad. "Up to 20 miles, they say it's considerably cheaper to haul all kinds of merchandise by horse and wagon than to use trolley and railroad—even here, in the mountains! Think, then, the economy on the trolley that the horse and wagon seldom returns empty. I'll tell the world this, Clarence—with roads like these I could marry any girl before she boys on a wooton motor truck!" Hundreds of them were planning to make handsome livings in France after the war. They had the knowledge of the beautiful French roads—and buy the car which they had been running for Pershing, Alas! the sale of all A. F. trucks to the French government exclusively spoiled these, as other plans of home soldier boys. Home folks, be thankful for it—you have the boys back. This is how it came out. The American farmer, before the war was paying \$25 for hauling where the French farmer paid \$7. "When they started that little paper mill, up the valley, you know, by the name of these Rubes was cutting nine. Standing, it would sell for \$3.60 per cubic something or other. Cut, it was worth \$4.40. And the Binoperon Paper Mills were paying \$8.50 to \$7.40 delivered at the works, away off in the valley. Now, in those days before the war, when hauling was, say, \$1 that Rubes preferred to deliver the wood himself; and the mills, for local reasons, made no effort to buy it where it fell. These roads are as smooth as a dance floor, where they haven't been injured by war traffic. The Uriage wheat, delivered by the trolley at its Grenoble terminus, used to cost \$4.75 the 220 lbs. Uriage farmers would haul it 12 miles and deliver it to any Grenoble address for \$4.75! So the commission merchants saved cartage in Grenoble. The war, which sent French wheat sky-high to \$14 (paid to the farmer) and \$10 (served by government to the miller), has raised everything by work of the war. It is an intellectual appetizer that will make you hunger for more. BLACK 2, 4, 6, 10, 14, 18, 19.

two jokes: the roads built by the ancient Romans, and the roads built by Napoleon. Napoleon's armies badly injured the existing trunk roads, and he never repaired them. In the 50 years immediately before the present war (1871-1918) France spent \$2,000,000,000 on non-trunk local roads. The Montana Kid was right. In 1830 Uriage valley was a torrent-swept ravine where bears and wolves roamed. This picturesque road up from Grenoble (constructed when many fine old American turnpikes were beginning to go to seed) has made possible a flourishing watering place, two paper mills, an actey-plant, a cement works, a cement telegraph pole factory, a fire-brick works, and a hydro-electric light and power plant—all in the country. All these flourishing factories in the country—do you get it?—not one in a town. Just only the black in their little God-forsaken valley, as the Montana Kid says. The trolley was dreamed of. Before the trolley was dreamed of, anyone up to the Bourg d'Oisans had opened civilization to remote farmers and gave them a local market. (There had always been a roundabout route to Grenoble; but Uriage as a summer watering place made them an independent market in their own hands.) Why, these farmers take turns sending down their horses for summer use. The boarders, hotels, etc., buy their eggs, milk, vegetables, fruit and meat. All the year round the country factories pay good wages. And even in mountain winter time, the fine roads permit Grenoble glove manufacturers to distribute and collect raw and finished material from cutters and machine sewers in local hamlets and farms. Why, good roads actually permitted the trolley tracks to be laid and equally brought light and power (from the waterfall stations) to villages and isolated farms at two cents the hectowatt before the war. Good roads solved the agriculture problem in France before the trolley. The war, of course, made horses

and essence scarce and dear, but the normal use of the trolley is for passenger traffic, merchandise in less than wagon loads, and freight traveling by rail. The trolley, then, is threading dozens of small towns that would not pay a trolley went the automobile omnibuses—and they have begun it again. Thanks to good roads the purely local country stage coach never died out in France; and it is today a big capacity car (often a troop car of the French front, bought cheap at the military sales) of swift speed and solid tires which would jolt you, sure, on any but these smooth roads. "Long Haul Jake" Wells (of Pittsburg) may give us the laugh here. "Night Hawk" Magee, who was so reliable that he never had but one route, back and forth with the postal carriers to catch the Great Flyer, mysteriously disappeared. Even "Ambition" Woods, who jerked senators and generals from Tours to Paris and back, disappeared. Next issue it will head the column. Americans, get a subscription to Weekly Oregonian received.

Checkers. E. H. BRYANT, Editor. Phone Taber 6213. Portland Chess and Checkers club, Worcester building, Third and Commercial streets, room 216. Contributions solicited. Mail to 443 East Third. PROBLEM NO. 992. For The Oregonian, London, England. The amateur will be inspired to greater achievements by work of the chess. It is an intellectual appetizer that will make you hunger for more. BLACK 2, 4, 6, 10, 14, 18, 19.

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