

GOOD ROADS WOULD

**SAVE THE COUNTRY
NEARLY A BILLION**

Improvement of Highways Highest Point of Efficiency Would Cut Big Slice Of Public's Annual Expense.

(Washington Bureau of The Journal.)

Washington, D. C., July 1.—Between half a billion and a billion dollars were saved annually in the United States if every state would improve its highways to the highest point of efficiency.

Calculations just made by the United States office of public roads show that to effect this enormous saving throughout the country will be necessary to improve only about 20 per cent of the roads.

Task Seems Stupendous.

There are now about 2,150,000 miles of road in the United States. Two hundred thousand miles, or about 3 per cent are improved in some manner. To bring the number of miles up to 30 per cent it will be necessary to improve 350,000 more miles. While this task may seem stupendous it is estimated that it can be accomplished by a probable average expenditure of \$7000 a mile, or \$1,750,000 for a fairly complete system. There is to put in \$200,000 in the improvement of its roads. This could be accomplished in a very short

time. "A complete system of roads," said Logan Waller Page, director of the United States office of public roads, "discussing the road movement that sweeps over the country, and an economic necessity. A few figures will illustrate the stupendous saving that could be made.

Autos Number Half Million.

"There are, for instance, nearly half a million automobiles in the United States at the present time; their value, roughly estimated, is close to three billion dollars. There are 1,000,000 horses and, in addition, 21,040,000 horses and 4,123,000 mules, the number growing steadily despite the advent of motor vehicles. The value of the horses is about \$2,276,363,000; the value of the mules, \$600,000,000.

"Then take the pleasure vehicles. The number 307,000, with a value of \$1,500,000,000. Then take the wagons used for commercial purposes. They number 576,300, the total value being \$31,480,000. The wear and tear on these vehicles as a result of bad roads is nearly 25 per cent. A complete system of improved highways would cut this loss in half."

"The great saving in transportation costs for all kinds of products, including those of the mills as well as those of the soil, would amount to many millions of dollars annually. In the case of the corn crop of the south alone, no less than \$7,200,000 would be saved in transportation costs. Deeply as the farmer loves the corn there is for him considerable satisfaction in the thought that the new road will be a help to him."

"Wherever a new road is built or an old one improved the value of the new lands rises automatically. This increase in itself is sufficient in most cases to pay for the improvement. The farmer from the country from the source of the almost insatiable demand for food, is a very conservative estimator. He is not likely to overestimate the value of the new road. The saving throughout the country from all sources, as a result of the improvement of 20 per cent of the roads would be somewhere between half a billion and a billion dollars every year. The saving in the cost of food for the state, the first year and a much smaller sum each year thereafter for maintenance. The whole thing depends, of course, upon systematization and all the states working together, but I think it is a very safe estimate."

Veteran Member of House.
Congressman Robert F. Broussard, who has announced his candidacy for the United States senate, is one of the veteran members of congress, having represented the Third Louisiana district continuously for 16 years.

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