

MAKING GOOD ROADS.**Increasing Interest in Better Highways
—A Popular and Growing Demand for
National Aid in Building Country
Roads—Practical Suggestions as to
Road Making.**

Messrs Editors:—The people of the United States are becoming more thoroughly convinced of the evils of bad roads and the benefits of good roads. Good roads are conducive to peace, prosperity and Christian civilization, while bad roads are the ear-marks of poverty, ignorance, superstition and barbarism. The fact that a great majority of our public highways are in a

on account of impassable roads, whereby both the producer and the consumer are losers. Both pay the penalty for bad roads. Such occurrences are by no means infrequent in all parts of the country. Good roads also promote social intercourse, enable the farmer to take his family to visit his neighbors, attend church and to keep his children in school during all seasons of the year. The inconvenience experienced from the lack of good roads is one of the reasons why so many persons, particularly the young men, become discouraged with country life and leave for the city, and why so few give up the city for the country, ex-

labor, as in all other internal improvements. The most economical plan is not always the best and wisest to pursue. The better highways the better services they render, and greater will become the value of property adjacent thereto.

**INCREASING INTEREST IN HIGHWAY
IMPROVEMENT.**

At no period in the history of this country has the question of road improvement been so widely and enthusiastically discussed as at the present time. In the crystallization of public sentiment for the betterment of our highways, the office of public road inquiries at Washington has proven a most important factor. This work is being accomplished by collating and disseminating information, publishing and distributing literature on the subject, testing road-building materials, and in co-operating with other allied forces of construction of object-lesson roads in various sections of the country. The interest manifested in this question is by no means confined to those within the rural districts who are supposed to be the greater beneficiaries, but all classes of our citizens are directly or indirectly interested in this great movement and therefore should be free to express their opinions and lend their assistance wherever opportunities present themselves.

In this age of enlightenment and progress all agree that it is necessary to adopt other and more modern methods of improving our highways than the primitive method of "warning out the hands"—male citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years in proximity to the road to be improved. This has proven entirely too effective, especially with the rapidly increasing population of the country and the constantly increasing volume of traffic on the road. Were every person liable to duty to work with pick and shovel a few days annually, as required by law, but little more could be accomplished than to fill the worst chuck holes, and by so doing ease their conscience and relieve the overseers of the embarrassment of being indicted in the county court. No system of working roads is a just one if labor is compelled to bear the entire burden of the cost and at the same time property enjoy equal benefits by its enhancement in value.

As previously stated, money is the necessary requisite for the improvement of our common highways, but the perplexing problem with our people is "how to get it." Day by day the public is becoming more enthusiastic upon the question as they study it in its various phases, and are of the opinion that, as the roads are a benefit to all, the burden of cost of their construction and maintenance should be borne by all. There are various ways by which this may be done, but like the accomplishment of all great movements, the co-operation of all allied forces is essential. Within the past few years many States have enacted laws and appropriated money for the im-

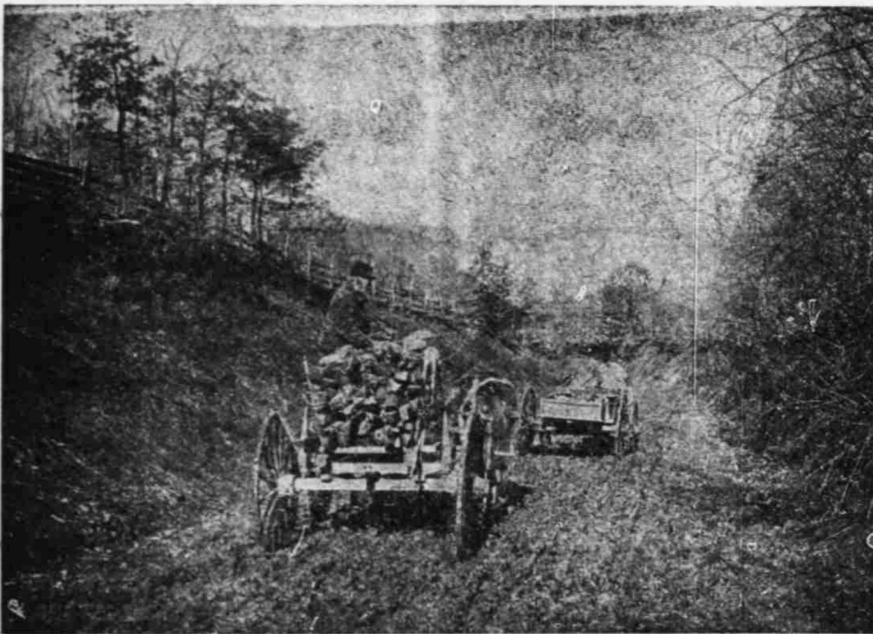
provement of the common roads of the country, and many counties have issued bonds for the same purpose, with equally as good results. Funds for this purpose have also been raised by direct taxation and by individual subscription, but the limited amount collected is generally too small to scarcely make a beginning on the great number of roads to be improved.

OUR DEFECTIVE ROAD LAWS.

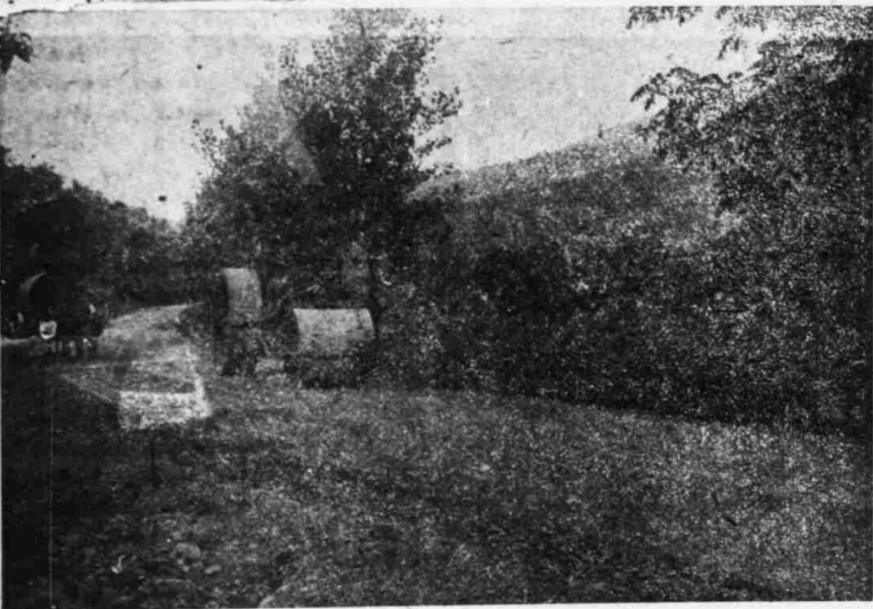
Since our National Government has shown such liberality in appropriating enormous sums of money for rivers, harbors, railroads and the building of country roads in our newly acquired possessions in which the masters have but little interest, many are of the opinion that Uncle Sam might well afford to lend some assistance to our own people, who pay all these expenses, by co-operating with the State, county, township and individual contributors in the improvement and maintenance of our common highways. By this method the burden of expense would be more evenly distributed and no one would be injured, but all materially benefited. To make this plan effective, much agitation and education among the people will be necessary. Already considerable progress has been made along this line through the public press, the organization of good roads associations and otherwise, and as an evidence of the increasing popularity of this plan, resolutions of approval are being adopted by many State Legislatures, political conventions and by various industrial and labor organizations in all parts of the country. The result of this agitation and organization on the part of the farmers and business men of the country has led to the more serious consideration of this important question by the law-making powers, not only of the several States, but of the nation as well. Many States have already provided large sums of money for the betterment of their roads, and now the general Government is being appealed to for assistance. About one dozen bills were introduced during the Fifty-eighth Congress asking that one-half of the cost for the improvement of the common roads of the country be paid from the National Treasury so as to facilitate the delivery of the rural mails and the general traffic, and none are meeting with more popular favor than the one introduced by Senator A. C. Latimer of the Palmetto State. Mr. Latimer is a good roads enthusiast, and does not intend to relax his efforts and energies in this direction until something has been done by the National Government to assist farmers in the improvement of the common roads of the country.

**GROWING POPULARITY OF NATIONAL
AID.**

The demand for this action comes from all sections of the country, and is therefore not a sectional nor a political movement. The exponents of this measure agree that no internal improvements would more materially benefit the country at large

BEFORE AND AFTER TAKING.

BEFORE TAKING. Season of winter. Road in such a condition that business is unable to get down to business without being able to give



II.—Portion of Same Road Macadamized.

most deplorable condition, infinitely worse than those of less progressive countries, is quite apparent. Especially is this the condition of affairs during the winter season, when those living in the rural districts are compelled to use the roads in marketing their products and in the education of their children.

COST OF BAD ROADS

Good roads enable the farmer to haul more produce with the same expenditure of horsepower, and also to save time and wear and tear on horses and wagons. An abundance of surplus fruits and vegetables are annually left on the farm to decay

cepting for a temporary sojourn, at that season of the year when nature is at her best in the country and worst in the city. With good roads neighbors would be more neighborly, churches more prosperous, and the school districts would be enlarged, so as to enable them to have better school houses, better school teachers, and better schools.

Now that these facts regarding bad roads exist, no person denies. And naturally the question arises, Can these conditions be improved? There are many ways in which this can be done, but to do it right everybody admits that it can be done only by the expenditure of money and