

COUNTRY ROADS

From Prime's Crop Bulletin.

For the last six weeks I have seen nothing but railroads and country roads. The railroads upon which I have traveled have all been first-class and nothing has occurred to interrupt my journey except the floods over which man has no control.

It was very encouraging however, to find everywhere a deep interest and everybody anxious to know how we could improve our common highways with the least expense.

Chas. A. Willis, secretary of the New York Horse Association, in an article published recently in the New York Sun, takes the same view of this road question that we have, and that is, that good roads must come by compulsion and not by option.

Dr. Chas. F. Butler, of Buffalo, New York, writes: "To-day England is crossed and re-crossed by fifty thousand or more miles of macadam road ways, and it is easily demonstrated that nothing except perhaps the repeal of her corn laws has added so much to the intellectual and material prosperity of her citizens during the past century as the enlightened policy of highways construction and repair."

In the discussion of the subject of good roads, four plans of improvement have been suggested, and I quote this from the article by Mr. Willis:

Figure 1, National Roads—laid out through the state and territory at National expense and under the supervision of the National Government Bureau.

Figure 2, State Roads—laid out through the counties of the state at state expense and under state supervision.

Figure 3, County Roads—laid out in each county connecting the various towns in the counties and under the supervision of the board of supervisors and at the expense of the county.

Figure 4, Town Roads—laid out through each town at town expense and under the supervision of town authorities.

Chief Consul Gerould, in a recent interview, takes the ground that the movement in favor of good roads must be supported by the farmer or it can never succeed. They are the men who will most directly profit by any well directed expenditure on the highways and the men who are engineering the movement will do well to organize a campaign of instruction among the farmers.

the state of Illinois the roads are for a large portion of the year almost impassable for man and beast. In this state there are nearly forty thousand men riding wheels more or less of them at some time during the year make use of the country roads. If these men should combine and throw their voting strength in favor of the candidates who would work heartily for the cause, there is no question but that a legislature favorable to an increased road tax would be elected and both the wheelmen and the farmers would soon find a wonderful difference in the character of the roads over which they are obliged to ride.

The following letter of a practical nature shows what the farmers are beginning to do:

In my conversation with you last week in regard to the improvement of highways, I made mention of the fact that in the township where I lived the highway commissioners were making some improvements in the country roads.

The farmers as well as the merchants and others residing in the township are in sympathy with the movement and are not only willing to have the improvements made, but vote to pay their proportion of the tax levy necessary to make some improvements each year.

At present this township has about eight miles of good roads and the outside of village and corporation lines and it is the intention of adding to this each year, until all of the roads in the township have been improved.

In addition to the tax levy, the commissioners usually succeeded in getting in the extra tax for the improvement of the roads.

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