

GOOD ROADS.

(Continued from Page 3.)

tension of rural delivery he has an additional need for good roads in order that he may be kept in communication with the outside world.

A great deal has been said, and properly so, in regard to the influence of good roads upon education. In the meeting held at Raleigh, N. C., last year, the speeches which I had the pleasure of reading placed great emphasis upon the fact that it is impossible to have a school system such as we ought to have, unless the roads are in condition for the children to go to school. And Professor Jesse, in the excellent speech to which you listened this morning, also took this position. I hardly know whether to feel grateful to him or indignant that he presented one of the thoughts that I intended to suggest, yet, he presented it so much better than I could, that I think my gratitude overcomes my indignation.

I was thinking this morning, before I reached here, that while we are building great libraries in the cities, we do not have libraries in the country; and there ought to be a library in every community. Instead of laying upon the farmer the burden of buying his own books, we ought to make it possible for the farmers to have the same opportunity as the people in the cities, to use the same books, and thus economize on the expense of a library. But Professor Jesse brought that out, and not only spoke of the library that ought to be connected with the school house, but also mentioned another thing which I feel to be important, namely, the country high school. Have you ever thought what an advantage the child in a city has over the child in the country? Our country school houses teach the lower grades, but it is impossible in any community to have a high graded school with only a few students, except at great expense. In cities, when a child gets through the graded school, still living at home and without expense to himself or his parents, he is able to go on through the high school. But if the country boy or girl desires to go from the graded school to the high school, as a rule it is necessary to go to the county seat and there board with someone; so the expense to the country child is much greater than to the child in the city. I was glad, therefore, to hear Professor Jesse speak of such a consolidation of schools as will give to the children in the country advantage equal to those enjoyed by the children of the city.

And as you study this subject, you find it reaches out in every direction; that it touches us at every vital point. What can be of more interest to every parent than bringing instruction within the reach of every child? It does not matter whether a man has children himself or not. He may have a small family, like the graduates of Yale and Harvard are said to have (they average about three), or he may have a family large enough to excite the admiration of the president. No matter whether he has few children or many; every citizen of a community is interested in the intellectual life of that community. Sometimes I have heard people complain because, having few children, they thought themselves overburdened with taxes for the education of other people's children. My friends, the man who has no children cannot afford to live in a community where there are children growing up in ignorance; and the man with none has the same interest as the man with many, barring the personal pride of the parent.

Anything, therefore, that contributes to the general diffusion of knowledge, anything that makes more educated boys and girls throughout our country is a matter of intense interest to every citizen, whether he be the father of a family or not; whether he lives in the country or in the town.

And ought not the people to have an opportunity to attend church? Why, my friends, I am coming to believe that what we need in this country even more than the training of the intellect, is the development of the moral side of our natures. I believe with Jefferson, that the church and the state should be separate. I believe in religious freedom, and I would not have any man's conscience fettered by act of law. But I do believe that the welfare of this nation demands that man's moral nature shall be educated in keeping with his brain and his body. In fact, I have come to define civilization as the

harmonious development of the body, the mind and the heart. And we make a mistake if we believe that this nation can fulfill its high destiny and mission, either with mere athletes, or even with scholars. We need the education of the moral sense. And if these good roads will enable men, women and children to go more frequently to church, and there hear expounded the gospel, and there receive the inspiration that comes from the holding up of the life of the Man of Galilee, that alone is reason enough for good roads.

Then, too, I am satisfied that the people of the country do not have enough of social life. It is one of the things that we all should regret, that the extremes of society have been pushed so far apart, that some who think themselves at the top know nothing but society, while those who are declared to be at the bottom, know nothing of society.

Again, the people of the towns, especially the rural towns, are interested in making it possible for the people in the country to reach their local market or trading place during all times of the year, for, throughout the agricultural portion of the country, at least, the villages and the cities rest upon and derive their support from the farms.

I think I ought to make this plain. I once said in a speech (1896): "Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic. But destroy our farms and grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country." I thought I was stating a truth; I never supposed it could be distorted, but when the election was over I received a dodger which had been circulated just before the election, saying in big letters: "Burn the cities," without anything else, and it was declared to be the utterance of "Anarchist Bryan." So I think it is necessary to qualify the statement a little and assure you that I do not want to destroy the cities; I simply want to remind you of a very patent fact, and that is, that the cities rest upon the country. That the farm is the life of the cities, and that especially in the agricultural communities the people in the cities are intensely and vitally interested in enabling the people of the country to get into the towns to do their trading. Sometimes I have heard country merchants express dissatisfaction because the people of the country sometimes buy of the mail order houses. If the country merchant wants to keep the trade at home let him help to make roads good between the patron and his store. That is the best way. He cannot expect that people who are prevented from going to town will refuse to utilize the best means of supplying their needs. I repeat that people in the town are interested in making it possible for the people of the country to get into town.

There is a broader view of this question, however, that deserves consideration. The farm is, and always has been, conspicuous because of the physical development it produces, the intellectual strength it furnishes and the morality it encourages. The young people in the country find health and vigor in the open air and in the exercise which farm life gives; they acquire habits of industry and economy; their work gives them opportunity for thought and reflection; their contact with nature teaches them reverence, and their environment promotes good habits. The farms supply our colleges with their best students and they also supply our cities with leaders in business and professional life. In the country there is neither great wealth nor abject poverty—"the rich and the poor meet together" and recognize that "the Lord is the Father of them all." There is a fellowship and, to use the word in its broadest sense, a democracy, in the country that is much needed today to temper public opinion and protect the foundations of free government. A larger percentage of the people in the country than in the city study public questions, and a smaller percentage either corrupt or are corrupted. It is important, therefore, for the welfare of our government and for the advancement of our civilization that we make life upon the farm as attractive as possible. Statistics have shown the constant increase in the urban population and the relative decrease in the rural population from decade to decade. Without treading upon controversial ground or considering whether this trend has been increased by legislation hostile to the farm, I may suggest that the government is in duty bound to jealously guard the interests of the rural population, and as far as it can, make farm life inviting. And it may be added, comfort is a relative rather than a positive term. Transportation by wagon did not seem slow until the steam engine made more rapid travel possible. The tallow candle seemed

bright until it was dimmed by oil, gas and electricity; the flint and the steel were convenient enough until the friction match displaced them. In the employment of modern conveniences the city has considerably outstripped the country, and naturally so, for in a densely populated community the people can by co-operation supply themselves with water, light and rapid transit at much smaller cost than they can in a sparsely settled country. But it is evident that during the last few years much has been done to increase the comforts of the farm.

In the first place, the rural delivery has placed millions of farmers in daily communication with the world. It has brought not only the letter, but the newspaper to the door. Its promised enlargement and extension will make it possible for the wife to order from the village store and have her purchases delivered by the mail carrier.

The telephone is also a great boon to the farmer. It lessens by one-half the time required to secure a physician in case of accident or illness—an invention which every mother can appreciate. In a hundred ways it saves time and steps.

The improvements in the methods of manufacturing gas, and the invention of machines suitable for family use, must not be overlooked. It is now possible for every farmer to install at a small expense a gas plant sufficient for the production of the light necessary for his house. While the extension of the system of private water plants has not been quite so rapid, it is still very marked. Probably no one modern convenience enjoyed in the cities is more missed in the country than the water system that supplies the kitchen and the bath-room. No woman who lives, or visits awhile, in the city can return to the country without noticing the difference between the faucet and the pump.

The extension of the electric car line also deserves notice. It is destined to enlarge the limits of the city and to increase the number of one, two, five and ten-acre farms at the expense of flats and tenement houses. The suburban home will bring light and hope to millions of children.

But after all that has been done and is being done by the improvements above referred to, there still remains a pressing need for better country roads, a need emphasized and made more apparent by the pavement of city streets. As long as mud placed an embargo upon city traffic the farmer could bear his mud-made isolation with less complaint, but with the improvement of city streets and with the establishment of parks and boulevards, the farmers' just demand for better roads finds increasing expression.

Just to what extent action should be taken by the federal government, the state government, the county and the precinct, or in what proportion the burden should be borne is a question for discussion, but that country roads should be constructed with a view to permanent and continuous use is scarcely open to debate.

There must be a recognition of disease before there can be an intelligent discussion of a remedy; but when the disease is once located the people may be depended upon to find not only a remedy, but the right remedy. The people are beginning to realize that bad roads are indefensible and are prepared to consider the remedy. I have discussed simply the disease, and have tried to point out that we are not helping the farmer to keep up with the progress of the townspeople. I have tried to show that from every standpoint, from the farmer's standpoint, from the standpoint of the citizen of the town, and from the broader standpoint of the patriot, the farmer's interests must be looked after. And when this disease of bad roads is once understood, then you can trust the intelligence of the American people to do whatever is necessary. Meetings like this will not only emphasize the fact that bad roads are intolerable, but will bring out men who are interested in these questions, who have studied them, and can present remedies for your consideration. And I have such confidence in the patriotism and intelligence of the American people that I believe that in the clash of ideas and conflict of views, the best will always be triumphant, the people having the benefit of the combined wisdom of all the people.

In some countries the people have not the right to suggest, not even the right to pass upon a suggestion; but under our form of government the people not only have a right to sit in judgment upon every suggestion made, but have the right of suggestion; and in this "multitude of counsel there is safety."