

Recent Highway Development.—The growth of motor traffic during and since the War has greatly stimulated the movement for increased and improved road construction. Good roads associations assisted by the automobile clubs are to be found in most of the provinces for the education of the public in the need for improved highways. With the rapid increase in the percentage of motor car owners to the population (see p. 685-6) the demand for improved roads became insistent after the War. Furthermore, the advantages to be gained by attracting touring motorists have been a powerful incentive to governing bodies to improve trunk roads and scenic highways within their jurisdictions. One sphere where the motor car has been of special economic advantage has been in rural areas, where its speed and economy are a great improvement over the old horse-drawn vehicle. As a result, in the 1931 census every second farm reported a farm-owned motor vehicle (1.96 farms per farm-owned motor vehicle). This widespread rural ownership of automobiles has resulted in the improvement of secondary rural roads.

A table of road mileage in Canada follows. When it is considered that throughout the Dominion there are about 26 persons to every mile of road and that on an average there is one mile of road for every 9 square miles of land, the magnitude of the problem faced in the construction of these traffic routes is realized. A small population scattered over a large area has made this, like other transportation problems, particularly difficult of solution.

33.—Classification of Canadian Highways, by Provinces, Dec. 31, 1931.

Province.	Unimproved.	Improved Earth.	Gravel.	Water-bound Macadam.	Bituminous Macadam.	Bituminous Concrete.	Cement Concrete.	Total.
	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.	miles.
P. E. Island.....	1,999.2	1,396.0	245.9	—	—	4.7	1.5	3,650.0
Nova Scotia.....	6,949.3	3,434.8	4,287.4	30.2	17.5	—	—	14,719.2
New Brunswick.....	2,418.0	4,353.0	5,039.0	—	13.0	—	—	11,825.0
Quebec.....	20,673.0	242.9	12,590.9	1,486.6	234.8	405.7	129.8	35,763.2
Ontario.....	—	19,518.0 ¹	43,066.7	546.8	808.4	1,078.5	1,392.7	68,411.1
Manitoba ²	—	1,496.9	3,642.9	—	—	81.0	9.9	5,230.7
Saskatchewan.....	56,769.3	96,726.9	2,113.0	—	—	—	—	153,609.2
Alberta.....	41,006.0	19,723.0	1,633.0	—	70.0	—	—	62,428.0
British Columbia ³	3,178.5	10,849.7	8,029.1	119.9	71.7	122.4	50.5	22,459.6
Totals.....	132,987.3	157,741.2	80,647.9	2,183.6	1,235.4	1,692.3	1,583.9	378,004.0⁴

¹ Manitoba figures are as at April 30, 1931. ² B.C. figures are as at Mar. 31, 1931. ³ Includes some unimproved earth roads. ⁴ Includes 42.5 miles of other classes. ⁵ 23,056 reported for 1930.

The great improvement indicated above in the extent and character of Canadian highways has entailed the expenditure of large sums by governing bodies, chiefly provincial or municipal authorities, as roads are under their jurisdiction. Unfortunately, there are no comprehensive or comparable statistics available regarding these expenditures prior to 1928. Expenditures by the Dominion Government have taken the form of subsidies to the provinces for specific highways and have been made under the Canada Highways Act, 1919, largely in the few years immediately after the War, and under relief legislation during the present depression to aid in providing useful employment. These subsidies paid in 1931 are shown in Table 34.

The Canada Highways Act.—Partly in response to the general demand for improved highways and partly to increase civilian employment at the end of the War, the Dominion Parliament, by c. 54 of the Statutes of 1919, authorized the expenditure of \$20,000,000 for the purpose of constructing and improving the highways of Canada during the five years succeeding the passage of the Act. In its apportionment, grants of \$80,000 were made to each province during each of