

The Highways of the Pacific Coast

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WHAT would you consider one of the biggest assets that the Pacific Coast has to-day? What would you consider the asset that is least capitalized of any of them? Why, this Great Out-of-Doors of ours! Our wonderful scenic attractions, our game, our fish and our wonderful climatic conditions that ever welcome the Automobile tourist and Sportsman. These are the assets that up to the present time have been lying dormant. It is hard for us who have lived our lives in this God's country of ours to appreciate how fortunate has been our lot.

We are awakening to the possibilities that confront us—just awakening—that is all. Our great work is now to capitalize these resources of ours that have hardly been scratched as yet.

The automobile has, and is revolutionizing transportation—it is taking people out of doors where they can see things—where they are brought face to face with the great possibilities that lie before us. People are being brought closer to nature—they come in contact with our wonderful mountains and valleys—they see for themselves the opportunities that are lying dormant at our doors.

Now, what are we to do? Allow this wonderful scenic country of ours to lie for another decade, or shall we awaken to our possibilities and by means of modern highways tap this big asset of ours, and then capitalize it to its fullest extent? Advertise it, and people from all over the world will come to this Pacific Coast of ours. They will tour it—they will advertise its wonderful beauties and possibilities. They will find opportunities for investment, for it takes an outsider who sees things with different eyes and at different angles than we, who are here all the time, to appreciate them.

Now comes the problem—how are we going to build these highways?—for we must have them. The well-to-do counties where the population is large can bond themselves for the building of permanent highways—they can afford to do it. But how about our large mountain counties, where all our wonderful scenic attractions lie? Is it right for these sparsely populated sections of our great Western country to stand the burden of building these highways and maintaining them? No, it is not just. The large municipalities, the big cities, in fact, the State at large, should develop their own resources by building and maintaining State highways throughout these districts.

There is strong talk now-a-days of municipal ownership of railroads and of other public utilities. Why not develop that which we already own—our highways? Let our States and National Government work together and build modern roads, tapping sections of country where the railroads cannot enter, and develop this almost virgin country of ours.

California, by her \$18,000,000 bond issue, is working along these lines. By another bond issue, she hopes to assist in further developing her mountain districts. By these means the big burden of taxation will fall upon the large municipalities where it belongs, and not upon the small owner of property in the thinly populated sections of our country.

Laws that were in effect fifty years ago, or five years ago, for that matter, need changing in order to conform to the new conditions that now confront us—both as to means of raising money to build these highways and also the maintenance of not only the permanent highways, but all our roads. There must be co-operation between the cities and the counties, the counties and the State, and the States and the United States.

It has been my good fortune to be associated to some extent in this highway work. It is a big subject and I assure you that it is my desire and ambition to work along the lines that I have outlined with the idea of assisting our thinly populated and mountainous counties in the developing of their resources, which means the developing of our entire country.

This big Out-Doors belongs to all of us. There is no country in the world that can compare with ours. Let us enjoy it and show it to the people of the world—and then capitalize it,

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