IS A GREAT BIG QUESTION.

Council Grapples With a Hard Problem,

THE LOCAL IMPROVEMENTS

Ald. Shaw Made His Long-Expected Attack Upon the System.

He Says the People Are Sick of It and Want a Change—His Objection to It—Ald. Hubbard Thinks That the System Is a Very Bad One—Ald. Spence, Lynd, Sheppard, Carlyle and Graham Have a Word to Say About It.

For 15 years the local improvement system of constructing and paying for roadways, sidewalks, sewers, street widenings and street extensions has been in operation in Toronto. The system is generally supposed to have originated in the United States, and was introduced in Toronto in 1882 to supersede the system of constructing and repairing out of the general funds, commonly called "the old ward-grabbing system." According to no less an authority than Acting Assessment Commissioner Forman, the working of the local improvement system at its commencement was hailed with joy as being a great improvement on the old system. It has now been in operation long enough to have its faults and defects fully developed, and that it has defects is recognized by everyone who knows anything about its working. Despite the fact that many, if not all, of these defects have been apparent for some years, no legislation has been sought to amend by-law No. 2001, which brought the system into operation, and as a consequence the evils of the system have been allowed to continue, and the whole principle or system has been adjudged by some to be a failure. Though the system still commands the favor of a majority of the property owners its defects have caused such an amount of dissatisfaction that a sub-committee was appointed by the City Council, with Ald. Shaw as chairman, to look into the whole matter and report. This was done early in the year. For reasons too numerous to mention, the Council kept putting off the consideration of this most important question until yesterday, when a special meeting was held to discuss the whole matter.

Ald. Shaw's Resolution.

Since May 3, Ald. Shaw has had a notice of motion on the order paper as follows:

1. That pavements and sidewalks should be constructed at the general expense of the city.

2. That property fronting and abutting upon pavements or sidewalks heretofore constructed shall be exempt from paying anything towards the cost of new pavements and sidewalks until the lifetime of the present pavement or sidewalk has expired and a new pavement or sidewalk is necessary.

3. That a bylaw be prepared and submitted to the qualified ratepayers to repeal bylaw No. 2001, and excluding therefrom pavements and sidewalks upon streets.

Ald. Lamb claimed that the Council was called to discuss the report on the subject sent on by the Board of Works, through the Board of Control. This report recommended as follows:

1. That a pavement be authorized for the city, composed of 8-in. gravel and 4-in. wood curb, costing about $8000 per mile, to be paid for at the general expense.

2. Providing that a better or more expensive class of pavement may be petitioned for by the property owners, and that in the event of such pavement being constructed a rebate shall be allowed to the property owners to the value of the pavement before mentioned, and the balance of the cost shall be charged as a local improvement against the property interested, said property being also assessable for a general roadway tax. The pavement so paid for shall for all time to come be kept up at the general expense of the city.

3. That such streets as are already permanently improved be exempt from roadway tax during such time as they shall continue to be in good condition, but when they require reconstruction the property abutting them shall come under the tax for general roadways.

4. In order that this proposition may be carried out, your committee recommend that the City Engineer prepare an estimate of the cost of renewing the present worn-out pavements with a gravel or such other suitable material as he may recommend, and in order to lighten the burden of taxation it is suggested that debentures for the renewal and reconstruction of pavements be issued for a long period, say 25 or 30 years. In this way the annual charges for new pavements will be largely reduced.

Attacking the System.

The report also contained the views of several of the aldermen on the subject. The Board of Control in sending on this report stated that they did not concur in the proposed abolition of the local improvement system. Council went into committee and Ald. Lamb moved the adoption of the report. Ald. Shaw, in amendment, moved his resolution as above. He then proceeded to deliver his long-delayed attack upon the local improvement system. He spoke with a calmness and deliberation befitting the importance of the subject, and set such a good example to the speakers who followed that the discussion proved an intelligent and thorough one as far as it went. Before entering upon this discussion the Council had under consideration a bylaw in reference to the Gladstone-avenue extension, where the estimated cost of land was $9000, and the actual cost $36,000. Ald. Shaw opened his remarks by stating that this Gladstone-avenue matter formed a fitting prelude to a discussion of the local improvement system. The people, he contended, were dissatisfied with this system. Hard times, no doubt, had something to do with the indisposition on the part of property owners to load up with local rates for pavements and sidewalks, but the local improvement system was responsible for a good deal of the hard times. The property owners' share of the present local improvement debt was $5,562,000 and the city's share $2,000,000, making a total of $7,562,000. A frightful waste of money had been induced by this system. Miles of unnecessary streets, sewers, widenings and extensions had been constructed, which were really valueless as far as public interests were concerned. The system had been woefully abused. It lent itself readily to abuse. Contractors had used it for all it was worth.

Miles of Worn Out Pavements.

Ald. Shaw here referred to the first edition of Ald. Lamb's "Facts About Toronto," in which it was stated that in this city there were 256 miles of streets and of these 176 miles were paved. In the second edition of the controller's literary effort he had wisely left out any mention of the number of miles of paved streets, because it was really a question whether half of them were paved or not. There were 120 miles of cedar block pavement in Toronto and the Engineer had reported that 41 miles of these were worn out. Under the local improvement law the property owners could not be compelled to put these pavements into better condition, and they would not do so voluntarily, as shown by the number of petitions that were coming in against such works. If one-half of the property owners said no the city could not pave the street either as a local improvement or at the general expense. If two-thirds of the property owners want a pavement, no matter how costly it was the city had to pay one-third of the cost, and the remaining one-third of the property owners had to pay their share, whether they were able or not. This was a serious objection. Another objection was the assessment per foot frontage. Take Yonge-street for instance. The property on this street from King to Hayter was assessed at $5,000,000, and from Grenville to Bloor at $1,000,000, yet this property on the northern part of the street, the value of which was depreciated by the concentration of business on the southern half of the street, paid exactly the same rate per foot frontage for the pavement on that street as the more valuable property did.

Another Objection Cited.

There was nearly 2000 feet less asphalt pavement on Adelaide-street from York to Spadina than on King-street from Sherbourne to Simcoe, yet the property owners on Adelaide-street were paying more for their pavement than property owners on King-street were. It was true that there were car tracks on King-street, but that was all the more reason that they should pay more as the cars brought business to the street.

Ald. Shaw next referred to the attempt that was made to force property owners to repair macadam roads on the local improvement system. The property owners' share of the cost of this work was $3,850, and the city's share $11,515. The property fronting on macadam roadways in wards 2, 3 and 4 was assessed at nearly $23,000,000, representing $400,000 in general taxes. They had asked for $13,000 for repairing macadam roadways. The Board of Control reduced this appropriation to $5000, and the Council had made it $8000. If the Council had given Street Commissioner Jones the $11,516 that was paid as the city's share of the work as a local improvement he could have done all the work without any cost to the property owners. The city had paid $11,516 as its share of the cost of repairing a few macadam streets, yet it was found difficult to get $8000 for repairing the 40 miles of macadam roadways in the city. It was never intended that repairs should be done as local improvements. There were 15 miles of asphalt pavement in the city. On Jarvis-street alone there were 27,000 yards of asphalt, and there would be a pretty row when the item came for repairing this at $1.50 per yard.

About Ward Grabbing.

Ald. Shaw said he had only heard of two objections to doing away with the local improvement system. The first was that the ward-grabbing would result. This was only a myth. The late Ald. John Baxter, one of the shrewdest, most energetic and most economical aldermen that ever sat in the Council, perhaps got a few hundred more feet of pavement for his ward than other aldermen got for theirs, and they called him a "ward-grabber."

Ald. Carlyle: So he was.

Ald. Shaw said that there was a Board of Control now, and they would see that sectional interests did not dominate. Under the general system an effort was made to keep down the rate, but now local improvements of all kinds were let go through and a big debt heaped up.

The second objection that he had heard was that Ward Three would get the worst of it if the general system was restored. He would not say anything about this objection, but would allow anyone else to raise it and prove it if he could. Toronto could not afford to have her streets in their present condition much longer. It looked too much like bankruptcy. Ald. Shaw concluded by again enumerating the defects of the present system, and trusting that the Council would see fit to abolish it as far as pavements were concerned.

Ald. Hallam's Views.

Ald. Hallam agreed that something must be done, but that something was not the abolition of the local improvement system. It was the best system that had ever been before the Council. Ald. Shaw and every other old member of the Council knew that there was ward-grabbing under the old system, and that the alderman who had the biggest pull with the Engineer got the fatted calf.

Ald. Leslie: What is ward-grabbing?

Ald. Hallam replied that Ald. Leslie knew well enough what it was, and Ald. Shaw knew the secret of its working very well. As for the late Ald. Baxter he was the prince of ward-grabbers. The people were not in favor of abolishing the present system, and anyway it was no time to take a vote now, when so many people were out of town. The vote, if taken at all, should be taken in the fall.

The Views of Ald. Lynd.

Ald. Lynd said that Ald. Shaw had not convinced him that the present system should be abolished. Ald. Shaw had not referred to the condition of the streets prior to the introduction of the local improvement system.

The Mayor: No, that was judiciously left out.

Ald. Lynd, continuing, said that Ald. Shaw had not suggested a complete scheme for substitution. The speaker would admit that the local improvement system was not satisfactory in its present form. It should be amended so that when the City Engineer said a street was dangerous the city should have power to say that a pavement must go down and charge it as a local improvement, or the city should have power to petition according to the amount of the share it paid. Its application should be made general. With the amendments suggested it was the best system yet devised. He was afraid that if it was abolished many parts that are now opened and improved would be neglected. He would like to see a different system of repairs from that now in force. The present system was too expensive. The streets should be looked after every few weeks, and not allowed to get into bad condition.

Ald. Spence Speaks Out.

Ald. Spence asked if there was any outcry for a change in the system. Ald. Shaw referred him to the petitions against proposed works, but Ald. Spence replied that these petitions only showed that the people appreciated the safeguards that the local improvement system afforded. One of the best arguments in favor of this system was the fact that it was being generally adopted all over the world.

Ald. Hubbard: Name a city.

The Mayor: London, Eng. The betterment system is practically the same as our local improvement system.

Ald. Hubbard: It is not the same at all.

Ald. Spence said it was the same in principle. People who could not afford to pay for a pavement in front of their own property would not rush to pay for one in front of someone else's property. People who had been extravagant once must suffer for it and it was only taking a cruel advantage of a man's necessities and the hard times to suggest such a change as Ald. Shaw proposed. Toronto was not so badly off for pavements. There were good streets in the city, but many property owners would not submit to local improvements because they did not think that they needed them. Ontario-street, for instance, should be repaired, not renewed. The local improvement system should be available just to the extent that the people wanted it. Let the people have a local improvement principle for repairs. He could not support Ald. Shaw's resolution.

Hubbard Says It is Rank.

Ald. Hubbard said there must be some cause for so many streets being in such a bad condition. The local improvement and the betterment systems were not at all alike. The local improvement system was imported from the United States. Washington would have been financially ruined by it had not the Government come to its rescue. It had been abused here in Toronto. Streets and sewers had been put through farms and he had never seen any ward-grabbing that compared with the present iniquitous system. The aldermen might vote Ald. Shaw's resolution down, but the people would attend to them later on. The newspapers favored the present system because they got advertising by it. The system was too expensive and required too heavy an outlay for clerical and other work to carry it out. He had found that sidewalks cost from 3 to 6 cents per foot for clerical work under this system. Continuing, Ald. Hubbard attacked the method of carrying out the system and referred to several works which he considered in point. The macadam on Wellington Road had been down for 16 years and was still in good condition, and yet the Engineer only gave macadam a life time of three years, making the payments so heavy that the people refused to have the pavement. As for ward-grabbing there was none of it in street lighting which cost $104,000 a year, and in which every alderman had something to say. There was none of it in the street watering system which, on the whole, was satisfactory. He believed that roadways could be done in the same way. The Board of Control would see that there was not much ward-grabbing. He would either amend or abolish the local improvement system. He would reduce the width of many of the streets to from 21 to 24 feet, and would take macadam as a basis. If the property owners wanted a better road let them pay the difference. The local improvement system was one of the worst schemes on the face of God's earth to load up debt. Many of the streets only needed repairs. He was in favor of a radical change and pointed out that the city could not make a man pay for the general rate when he was paying for locals.

Ald. Sheppard on Deck.

Ald. Sheppard remarked that Ald. Hubbard had dealt in generalities and had pointed out no way out of the difficulties. If the local improvement system was abolished the city would have to assume a debt of over $5,000,000, being the remaining payments for locals or else do a great injustice. The city would have that much less taxable property which would be the same as assuming the debt dollar for dollar.

Ald. Shaw replied that Ald. Sheppard was in error. It was not intended to interfere with sewers, street extensions, etc. The change would be in the pavement system only, and would not necessitate the assuming of anything like $5,000,000.

Ald. Carlyle spoke briefly. The local improvement system was by no means a perfect one, and he would like to see the people pronounce upon it.

Ald. R. H. Graham intimated that he was not in love with the present system and agreed with Ald. Shaw that the question should be settled by the people.

At 6 o'clock an adjournment was made until 8 p.m., but in the meantime a little scheme was concocted to break up the quorum and only 10 aldermen turned up at 8 o'clock. No date was fixed for resuming the discussion.

City Hall Notes.

The Court of Revision met yesterday and made a few reductions in the first division of the second ward.

Collingwood Schreiber, Government Engineer, inspected the York-street bridge yesterday. The change in the grade will be made by the city or the Toronto Railway Company.

The Medical Health Officer reports that scarlet fever is on the decrease. An analysis of the tap water shows it to be in a very satisfactory condition.

W. Williams, who brought the motor wagon to Toronto, had an interview with the Mayor yesterday regarding the establishment here of a factory for the manufacture of the new vehicles.

The recommendation for a cedar block pavement on Queen-street west was referred back by the Board of Works yesterday.

Bylaws were passed yesterday exempting the Gutta Percha & Rubber Company and William Harris' abattoir.

Hanlan's Point Roof Garden.

The patrons of the Roof Garden last evening, notwithstanding the extreme heat and the counter attraction in the city, found a hot show in a cool place. Carroll and Lewis are without doubt the cleverest male prima donnas in the business. W. E. Ramsay in his military song made an instantaneous hit. Leonard and Fariton gave us a rich and rare bit of Irish comedy that immediately caught on, and Dick and Alice McAvoy as the kids of Hogan's Alley gave us one of the latest New York successes in a manner most refined, humorous and up to date. Every evening, rain or shine, and Saturday matinee.

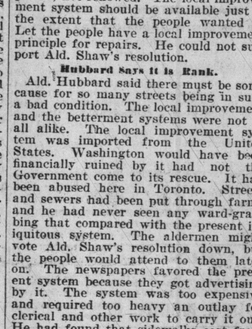
Lost His Pay.

Inspector Murray of the Attorney-General's Department lost two cheques yesterday which were drawn by the Government and made payable to J. W. Murray. The cheques were lost between the Parliament Buildings and Church-street, and the finder will be rewarded on returning them to the Attorney-General's Department, Parliament Buildings.

Sons of Scotland.

At the semi-monthly meeting of the Sons of Scotland last night the half-yearly financial report was presented, showing that the expenditures had been $527.99, which leaves a balance on hand of $104. One new member was initiated, viz., Mr. William McDowell.

Pabst's Milwaukee Lager—the purest malt beverage in the world—is sold by all leading hotels and wine merchants. James Good & Co., sole agents. 246



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COLIC, CHOLERA, CHOLERA-MORBUS, DIARRHOEA, DYSENTERY,
And all SUMMER COMPLAINTS of Children or Adults.
PRICE, 35c. Beware of Imitations.

Melting Prices

STORE OPEN DAILY 8 A.M. TO 6 P.M.

WE MAY THINK THE WEATHER a very commonplace matter for talk, but it forces itself upon us and commands consideration. We must dress as the weather dictates, and we suit our pleasures to the seasons.

Hot weather is here with a vengeance just now, and the demand is for hot weather goods. The lightest and daintiest of fabrics are on our shelves, and novelties suited to the summer season.

Our talk is interesting because seasonable, and interesting because midsummer means a break in prices that does not occur at other times of the year. Everything is down in price for July.

Pretty Parasols.

Ladies' Sateen Parasols, wide spot or stripe, special 65c
Ladies' White Frilled Parasols, 85c and 1.00
Ladies' White or Cream Silk Parasols, with frill, $1.25, $1.50 and 1.65
Ladies' White Japan Silk, with gilt or silver frame and white handles, plain, $2, with frill 2.25
Ladies' Black Silk and Wool, with frills, $1.25, $1.50 and 2.00
Ladies' Black Silk Parasols, with frill, special 3.00
Ladies' Colored Silk Parasols, with fancy pattern or stripe, reg. $3 and $3.50, special 2.50
Ladies' Black Silk Parasols, lined with colored silk and black lace or all black lace, with colored silk, reg. $7.50, special 5.00
Ladies' Black Silk Parasols, lined with light colored silk, reg. $5, for 4.00

Specials in Draping Materials.

38 in. Cream Curtain Scrim, special 5c
38 in. Cream Curtain Scrim, reg. 10c, now 6½c
38 in. White Curtain Scrim, reg. 12½c, now 8c
Ecru Sash Curtain Net, tamboured design, and border, reg. 35c, now 25c
43 in. Cream Madras, with small colored design, handsome goods, reg. 30c, now 15c
36 in. Golden Draperies, specially silky designs, the most effective material for cushion coverings and drapes, reg. retail price 25c, our price 18c
"Souvenir of Canada" Cushion Tops, our own design, bears the crests of all the provinces and also the coat-of-arms of our own city. The design originating from a Union Jack with border of maple leaves, beautifully tinted, the only novelty of this kind yet produced, size 18x18, sateen tops 20c
Size 18x18, satin tops 35c
A very sensible article to send to friends in foreign countries as a souvenir.

Your Trunk For Summer Travel.

On the second floor, quickly as you get off the elevator, you find the assortment of trunks and valises. This is the travelling season, and our stocks are large and well assorted to meet all requirements. Where we guarantee everything from the best manufacturers, prices are unusually close at this time:

Marbelized Iron Trunk, tray covered hat box, barrel top, 28 in., special 1.15
Canvas Telescope Valises, 3 straps all round, 22 in. long, reg. $1, special 85c
Tan Leather Club Bags, nickel lock and trimmings, 14 in. long, reg. $1.25, special 1.10
Marbelized Iron, Tray-Covered Hat Box, barrel top trunk, 34 in. long, reg. $2.25, special 2.00
Square Canvas-covered Trunk, steel corber clamps, iron bottom, hardwood slats, strong lock and spring clasps, 34 in. long, reg. $3.10, special 2.80
All Leather Tan Club Bag, with nickel trimmings, reg. $1.25, special 1.00

Ladies' Belts.

It only seems necessary to speak of Simpson's and Belts, the trade is reaching such dimensions. Price is just as varied as kinds. You want to see what an assortment we are offering at 25 cents.

Summer Clothing.

Let everyone remember our sale extraordinary of Men's and Boys' Summer Clothing. It started yesterday, and means bargains every day throughout the month. We can suit you beyond doubt.

It is yours to enjoy all the comforts of the big store. What a cool store in summer! Meet your friends at the fountain on the main floor—nothing like Simpson's Ice Cream Soda.

THE ROBERT SIMPSON CO. LIMITED
S.W. CORNER YONGE AND QUEEN STREETS,
170, 172, 174, 176, 178 Yonge Street. 1 and 3 Queen Street West.

W. A. MURRAY & CO.

Special July Sale.

500 DOZEN
LADIES' SHIRT WAISTS
Worth $1 and $1.25—Now Selling at 50c Each.

W. A. MURRAY & CO.
KING STREET EAST, TORONTO.

Proof against ignition by accident

Capital Safety Match

In neat sliding boxes.
For Pocket and Household use.

Ask your dealer for them THE E. B. EDDY CO., Limited, Hull

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Can we not make a bargain?

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No. 1 Dry Pine	3.50	"
Pine Slabs	2.25	"
No. 2 Wood	3.50	"

Cutting and Splitting 50c extra.

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OFFICES:
6 KING STREET EAST
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Best Quality COAL AND WOOD Lowest Prices

Special Reduction in Wood.

Best Maple and Beech	$4.50	per cord
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Sound Dry Slabs	2.25	"

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CEYLON TEA

blend picked on the richest gardens it
Its natural flavor retained by being
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Now we are catching it—scorching days these—All our straw hats are to be cleared with little regard to profit. We are doing some fixing up in the store and want volume of stocks down.

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In Split Straws, Fine Manillas and Panamas, we have assortment enough to meet the calls of all classes, and price for everything is special. Our Palm Leaf and Manilla Hats are the kind that middle aged and elderly gentlemen like—and they are so comfortable.

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Fresh Clams, Brunswick Brand, 15c.
Fresh Scallops, 15c a tin.
Soused Tongue, 10c lb.
Soused Pigs Feet, 6c lb.
Royal Salad Dressing, 25c bottle.
Extract Lemon, 2½ oz. bottle, 12c.
Clover Honey, 7c lb.
French Prunes, 3c lb.
Royal Black Lead, 7c box.
Lana Oil and Buttermilk Soap, 19c a box.
Ammonia Soap, 3c cake.

The Grange,
126 King Street East.

The Time Is NOW

To buy a handsome clock. Just the same good quality that you've known to be sold here the past 25 years, with the new designs and all the latest improvements added—but the 25 per cent. we are giving off any clock in our store saves you a third the price usually asked for them.

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choice from goods that usually sell at $1.25, $1.50, $1.75, $2 each.

Summer Walking Skirts

In neat fancy checks, at $5 each.
Slip Waists, all colors, 75c each.
Silk Waists, $5, $6, $7.50 each.
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Printed Cambric Wrappers, a very special lot, worth $2, for $1 each.
Moire Silk Sash Ribbons at 30c and 50c per yard, usual 50c and 75c yard.
Ladies' Linen Collars and Cuffs.
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