

Maintaining the Streets and Sidewalks

During the coming season the municipal councils will be much exercised as to how much they can afford to spend on their streets and sidewalks. The war has lasted much longer than was anticipated, and many councils who in the spring of 1915 determined not to spend a cent, only for the most necessary repairs, until the war was over, now find themselves in the position of being forced to spend more money than they care about to keep their streets from utterly going to ruin. The difficulty of keeping streets in anything like repair on an increased cost in labour and material has been made worse by the increasingly large number of automobiles that have come into use, even since the war started. These power-driven vehicles have simply worn down everything they have run along into dust, and certainly the compensation that the owners give in the form of licenses is anything but adequate to pay for the extra cost of maintenance made necessary by their use of the roads. (We recommend the perusal of an article by Mr. Chas. Mullen on this subject that is given in another part of this issue.) But the

fact remains that the roads and streets have to be properly maintained in the meantime by the community and the money must be forthcoming from somewhere. It is this "somewhere" that is bothering so many councils and we sympathise with them. To borrow is expensive, for money was never so dear as it is to-day, and to increase local taxes is unpopular, particularly in face of the new Federal budget, which calls for heavier taxes, but the street situation has to be squarely faced in each community, for the citizens have the right to demand the proper upkeep of the public thoroughfares, only they must be prepared to pay for it all.

Those municipalities that have local improvement by-laws are best off to-day, for therein the local proprietors pay the bill for those streets and sidewalks facing their respective properties, which in the case of rented buildings is added to the rent, but again we repeat—in referring to another subject—that the citizens of Canada were never so well off as they are today and consequently are in a position to pay for the privilege of well maintained thoroughfares.

The Responsibility of Local Councils in Food Conservation

The Board of Food Control has since its establishment passed many orders relating to the control and greater production of foodstuffs, and though to many unthinking people some may appear drastic yet every one of the orders were and are necessary if Canada is to do her duty to her men at the front and to her Allies. That the Food Board has been remarkably successful in the great work that it has undertaken is seen in the largely increased exports of Canadian foodstuffs to England where it is carefully distributed to the armies in the field, and then to the civic populations of Great Britain, France and Italy. But we in Canada will have to do much more in the way of conservation of food before we can say that we are doing our best and now that the Food Board and its staff are directing all their energies and orders to the one purpose of sending every ounce of food possible across the water it is up to every citizen in this country to help. The British Food Controller has stated very emphatically that the successful termination of the war depends almost entirely on the food that can be brought into the Old Country from the United States and Canada. In a recent interview he said, "Our armies, the armies of the other European Allies, and—yes, the American and Canadian armies in the field, might face starvation if we of the Allies, and more especially if we, America and Britain (which includes Canada) did not pull together."

Surely then Canadians have every incentive to assist the Food Board in its work of releasing every bushel of wheat and every pound of beef it can, so that those on the spot can "carry on." This country is just as much in the war as England, France and Italy, though over there not a slice of bread is wasted nor an ounce of sugar unnecessarily used, both commodities being too scarce, and while in none of the European Allied countries is there actual want the people are continuously on short rations and al-

ways perilously near the bottom of their bread bins. The armies, of course, must always be well fed. We in Canada on the other hand have not been deprived of an ounce of our usual quantity of food, though we have been asked, and if eating in public places compelled to substitute other food in its place. Not a great sacrifice and in most cases good for our stomachs sakes.

But while the Food Board is doing splendid work under the able chairmanship of Mr. H. B. Thomson it cannot do everything. It cannot always put its own orders into force for the simple reason it has not got the machinery, but with the co-operation of the local councils every order made could be carried out effectively, and we do say as emphatically as we can that it is the duty of every council in Canada to give that co-operation. The local police should be instructed to put into force every order affecting public eating places, bakeries, etc. We find on inquiry that the great majority of local trades people loyally obey the food orders, but that there are usually a few whose conception of the war is the opportunity to make extra profit for themselves. These people should be made an example of and it is the local councils who, through their police, should set the machinery in motion. Apart altogether from the responsibility of each local council to carry out their part in this great national effort there are the fines to be considered which in every case goes to the authority that prosecutes, and as the minimum fine is \$100 the income in some of the larger centres would at first be considerable. Such an opportunity for the local councils in Canada to do a great national work has never been presented before and we believe that when it is brought home to them they will rise to the occasion, but time is passing and the councils cannot get into the new harness of national food control and greater production too quickly.