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"Municipal from cover to cover"

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Flower Festivals and the Community

Most municipalities are keen on advertising their advantages to the outsider, or at least to show their best side, but it has been left to a little city in Ontario to introduce the best method of all to make itself known to the world. Tulips; who can resist then. For three days last month the City of St. Thomas held high court. It was Tulip festival, and visitors came from all parts to admire the public and private beds of this beautiful bulb, surrounded, as it were, with the variegated hues of every known flower. This transforming of the very ordinary into the very beautiful is due to the local horticultural society which is fortunate in having in its president (Dr. Frank Bennett) a man with a vision, and sufficient vitality to put that vision into practice. And the citizens, headed by the city council, have backed the society in competing with each other in the beautifying of their gardens. The result is that St. Thomas during the summer months is one huge flower garden, studied with neat dwellings.

Now surely in this beautifying of their city the people of St. Thomas are advertising their wares in the best possible way. They are doing more. They are propagating the love of the beautiful, and all

that it means, in the minds of their neighbours and their children. They are even spreading the gospel of flowers to surrounding municipalities and it is to be hoped that the day will soon come when every city and town throughout the Dominion will have its annual flower festival. It is strange, but true, that Canada, outside one or two communities, is sadly lacking in beauty in its public thoroughfares and private gardens. There seems to be a general impression abroad that trees and flowers in a public place or street are out of place; that however wide the thoroughfare, it must be completely covered with cement or asphalt or tar, with ugly wooden telephone or telegraph poles on either side to divide the heavy and hard road from the harder pavement. Nothing to soften the view. If a little of the St. Thomas or Hamilton spirit could but penetrate this prosaic utilitarian atmosphere the citizens of many a Canadian municipality would benefit. We believe that if municipal and road engineers were compelled to take a course in landscape gardening their work, without losing in strength or durability, would be more artistic and more in keeping with the wishes of the citizens.