Harbor Improvements. The representatives which the Council appointed to interview the Government, in conjunction with deputations from the City Council and the Harbor Commissioners, waited upon the Minister of Public Works and his colleagues on Feb. 21st, and laid before them the necessity of dredging and improving our harbor, in order to make it of the same capacity as the St. Lawrence and Welland Canals, it being desirable that vessels drawing 14 feet of water might be able to enter the harbor and discharge cargo at the various docks.

At the last session of Parliament $50,000 was appropriated for the purpose of diverting the Don, which work has not yet been commenced, but no money was voted for dredging the harbor. I can only express the hope that a further appropriation will be made at the next session of Parliament, in order that such an important port as this may have reasonable and adequate facilities for handling the increased traffic which is anticipated.

I see no reason why sufficient money should not be voted in order to carry out this most important work without further delay. Large sums are annually appropriated for carrying on similar improvements all over the Dominion, in places of less importance and where the necessities are not nearly so great.

Municipal Taxaxtion. The Council for a number of years past has appointed a committee which has given its attention to the question of Municipal taxation. I have nothing to add to the views which it has given expression to from time to time, and which have been endorsed by the Council ; it might be well to repeat them here :—

1st.—That all taxes on business personalty be abandoned.

2nd.—That a business tax on rental value be substituted for personalty on business capital.

Under existing conditions, in almost every instance where important manufacturing enterprises are attracted to the city, it is necessary for the city to exercise its powers in regard to partial or total exemption. If capital is to be induced for investment into mercantile projects, or manufacturing industries, there should be some alteration in the law whereby it is not subject to practical consfication. There is no more reason why merchandise brought to this city for distribution, for outlying points, should be taxed while it remains in warehouse here, than that the gold and silver lying in the vaults of our banks should be. Grain, cereals, flour, live or dead stock warehoused here are exempt from taxation. Therefore it will be seen that under our Assessment Law, the principle, so far as these articles are concerned, is conceded.

If we want to make this city the manufacturing and distributing centre which we desire, then some better law should be sought for by which capital would more readily seek investment in productive enterprises. I desire to point out that this city is laboring under a great disadvantage, as compared with Montreal, in respect to the way capital is subject to taxation to the full extent invested in merchandise, or in other words, upon personalty as against taxation on rental value, as it exists there. I quite agree with the policy adopted by the city of holding out special inducements for the location here of manufacturing industries, but the law should be such that these special inducements would not be necessary ; this practice illustrates the weakness of the law.

At the last Session of the Ontario Legislature there were at least three Bills introduced in regard to the Assessment Act which were of far-reaching importance. Representations were made before the Municipal Committee of the Legislature by deputations from this Board, urging that no alteration should be made in the existing Act, until all the questions of the Act, as it now stands, should have been thoroughly considered. The objectionable qualities of the amendments in each case were pointed out,