

A STREET DEPARTMENT.

As part of its municipal administration, Winnipeg should have a well organized and fully equipped Street Department, in charge of a live and experienced street commissioner. The duties of such an official should be the supervision of all work of construction on streets and sidewalks, their sprinkling, cleaning and repair; the most important part of these functions to be careful supervision of all work under construction.

While there are general principles underlying the whole question of street building, which are applicable to all pavements, each requires, in certain respects, a treatment peculiarly its own. If the best results in all cases are to be obtained, the same skill and care must be applied to the cheap as to the expensive. The best materials must be obtained and carefully prepared, and in their handling and placing in the structure, precision and exactness in following the different steps are imperative. The most perfect plan and specification may be provided by the City Engineer, but unless the man directing that work is capable of seeing, and does see, that the true intention of the specification is carried out in detail, imperfect work must be expected.

Many pavements have been condemned, not for any fault of their own, but on account of their being chosen to perform a service for which they were never intended, and oftener on account of their being imperfectly made. The question is one which requires much study and foresight and belongs to the work of an expert. He should inspect all the material employed and closely supervise the work during construction.

Winnipeg has reached that period in its history when temporary work and incapable methods with regard to streets can no longer be afforded. In order to meet the rapidly growing demands, much substantial and costly work must be undertaken, and the wisdom and economy of creating such a department, which belongs to the management of all well-governed cities, must be recognized. London and Toronto are possibly two cities which have the best departments in this respect in Ontario. In street building, the object should not be so much to increase the expenditure of money, as to produce the most profitable results with the amount expended. The wisdom of a greater outlay to bring about a general improvement is best known to the taxpayers, but the