

Street Wear.

The city of Winnipeg goes further in its efforts to protect the city pavements, than merely regulate the width of tires. A by-law provides that horse-shoes shall not have circular corks less than three-quarters of an inch in diameter at the point where the cork rests upon or touches the pavement; and that horse-shoes shall not have square corks less than three-eighths of an inch square at the point where the cork rests upon the pavement.

Such a by-law will be of undoubted benefit to the many property owners who have taxed themselves heavily to pave the streets adjoining their homes with expensive asphalt, brick and broken stone pavements.

Much as we may regret the indications that, for city use at least, the horse is likely to become a rarity, there will be much gained in the saving of pavements when the motor vehicle comes into general use. Slowly but surely the motor-vehicles and rubber tires are growing in popularity, and their general adoption is a certainty of the near future.

Action in regard to the Highway Improvement Act is increasing, and among the counties interesting themselves in the matter are: Leeds and Grenville, Renfrew, Bruce, Welland, Lanark, Peel, Wentworth, Victoria, Dufferin, York, Elgin, Hastings.

Conferences have been held in most of these cases between county and township councils, and wherever the question has been properly understood, there has been, practically, unanimity as to the benefits to be derived, and township councils are lending their aid to the selection of the most important road within their several townships.

Should a county council take advantage of this Act, the council is expected to prepare a plan of the county showing the central points and places of business, designating such roads, as in their opinion would best serve the requirements of traffic.

Where possible, it would be well to have the system a connected one, but this point is not of sufficient importance to make it compulsory.

In designating the roads, unless there is some glaring discrepancy, or a protest from some section of the people interested, the plan of the county council as to the roads, whether connecting or not, will be accepted by the government, believing that the county council with the advice of township councils will view the matter from the county standpoint, and that they are best able to frame the most serviceable system and the one upon which the expenditure will be of the greatest good to the people.

The impression prevails, in some localities, that the Department of Public Works will require an expensive standard of road. On the other hand a fixed standard will not be laid down. That will be left to

the county engineer or commissioner having charge of the work, and his report as to the treatment of the road and the character and cost of the work undertaken will, for the most part govern. That report, however, it will be necessary to submit to the government, but so long as it embodies the elementary principles, observing proper drainage, crowning, and as far as possible uniform grading, and a systematic application of material, it will meet the requirements.

For example, in going over a road which falls within a county scheme, the first mile, owing to its having already been graded, graveled, etc., to some extent, may only require patching and simple repairs to put it in good condition, at a cost of not more than \$100; whereas the next mile, unimproved and neglected, through swampy land, etc., might cost \$1,000 to drain, grade and gravel or stone, the required depth or thickness. And the next mile, being at the outer end of such road, on favorable soil and receiving but little traffic, might be made equally good and serviceable by proper grading, draining and a light coat of gravel, at a cost of a couple of hundred dollars.

The number of miles of road to be comprised in a system is not limited by the Act. The amount of money which a council spends on these roads may be such as they see fit to raise, and the improvement made on the system may be placed where it will be most serviceable and effective in the bettering of the condition of these roads, drawing upon the government's special fund for one-third of the cost, up to, but not exceeding, the county's proportion of the \$1,000,000.

The material to be used will be such as the council and superintendent deem the most economical and profitable, preference being given to that of the locality.

The aim of the Act is not so much to oblige the building of an expensive system of complete roads, as it is to place the management in hands that will provide uniform and systematic work, employ and properly operate modern and economical implements, such as rollers, rock crushers and graders; and provide careful, constant and methodical supervision in maintenance; to provide object lessons in the care and treatment of roads and set examples for those having charge of the remainder.

The Act as it stands has the alternative plan, whereby townships may individually carry on the work, but the Department believes that this can be best accomplished by the county council, because as a council, they would have charge only of these particular roads, would have sufficient work for and naturally employ a competent man to supervise and care for it.

Whereas under township control, the township council having charge of these special roads as well as all the other roads in the township, will be influenced after the first expenditure to make future municipal expenditures on other roads, and those designated for government aid will

be neglected. While other roads in a township remained unimproved many councils, after once improving a road under this Act, would find it impossible to make a sufficient yearly expenditure to properly maintain it, and under such conditions the first outlay would be little better than wasted. There are other reasons, familiar to most experienced councillors, why the principal roads, those subjected to extremely heavy travel, can be better and more economically maintained by the one larger body in the county rather than by the half dozen separate townships working independently of one another.

It cannot be doubted that county councils, constituted as they now are, will take a deep and intelligent interest in this work, and will strive to create such a distinction between their results and those under township management as to stimulate a friendly rivalry which must naturally do much in the interest of improved roads and economical management.

To be Operated by Water Power.

The town of Almonte has bought a water-power at a cost of \$13,000, with which to operate the electric plant recently purchased. Electric plant, \$14,750; arbitration expenses, \$1,200; water power, \$13,000: total, \$28,956, is the expenditure to date. Municipal ownership of public utilities is growing in favor, and the enterprise of Almonte in this regard is an index to the feeling gaining ground throughout the province. With cheap power, such as Almonte has secured, the operation of the electric plant is on a favorable basis.

Kingston Arbitration.

The award of Judges McDougall, Price and McTavish, arbitrators appointed to fix the price at which the works and plant of the Kingston Light, Heat and Power Company are to be taken over by the city, has been made. The award fixes the amount to be paid for the works at \$170,373. Judge McTavish and Judge McDougall find that the company is not entitled to anything for franchise, as the city never contracted to purchase the franchise. From this Judge Price dissents. The three judges agree that upon appeal to the High Court if the company is to be allowed for franchise, the value shall be \$80,000. Judge Price was the company's arbitrator. Under the award each party shall pay its own costs, and the city pays the arbitrators' fees, the costs of the award and the stenographer's fees. The company, when asked by the council to place a value on their property, asked \$373,000. The tangible assets of the company, in their inventories submitted to the arbitrators, were placed at \$223,111.33. The company officials say they will appeal to the court on the question of the value of the franchise. The arbitrators fees amounted to \$2,146.70.