

**ON ASPHALTE
ROADWAYS**

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On Asphalte Roadways by M. Léon Malo

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M. LÉON MALO

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ASPHALTE ROADWAYS.

BY
M. LÉON MALO.

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FROM A PAPER
READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS AT PARIS.

TRANSLATED BY J. HENDERSON.



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ON
ASPHALTE ROADWAYS.

MEETING OF THE 20TH FEBRUARY, 1885.

I.

It is a phenomenon as well known as it is difficult to explain, that the more space there is accorded to the Parisian traffic, the more that traffic is increased.

Hardly have they opened a great artery, than it is already insufficient, without the parallel arteries having experienced appreciable relief. Since the Boulevard Sébastopol was constructed, the Rues Saint Martin and Saint Denis are more crowded than ever. On opening the Avenue de l'Opéra, the neighbouring streets were no freer; although the official returns showed in the new street a daily traffic of 35,000 vehicles. The continuation of the Rue de Rivoli has not diminished in the slightest

the bustle in the Rue St. Honoré, quite the contrary; and yet the municipal statistics reveal to-day, in this same Rue de Rivoli, at the corner of the Rue du Louvre, the enormous number of 42,000 vehicles during the twenty-four hours.

How shall this growth be stopped? With what materials shall the public highways be strengthened in order to resist this torrent, every day more threatening to the roads? From whence will they take these materials? How will they employ them? Such are the serious and abstruse questions which do not cease, they say, to occupy so acutely the municipal government, and certainly not without reason.

One can well understand, besides, the number of new experiments tried lately, with the view of replacing, by methods less barbarous, the modes of paving that have been bequeathed to us by our forefathers. An equal sign can be seen in the visits recently made to several foreign capitals by the engineers in the service of the municipality; fruitful visits moreover, as shown by the very solid and very interesting report that the chief

engineer M. Barabant has published on his notes brought back from London. The subject is the order of the day, eminently real and pressing; it bears with considerable weight on the conditions of well-being, the comfort and the healthiness of the city of Paris, and on the economy of its budget; and has therefore a decided place in the discussions of our Society.

Whether it be an advantage or a misfortune, it is certain that our desire for progress never ceases to increase; we are greedy for improvements, each day must bring its own, without which we believe we are receding. The numerous discoveries which, in the last quarter of a century, have transformed the conditions of the well-being of the public, have rendered us insatiable. The public highway ought to adapt itself to these exigencies; a system of roadways, which nevertheless was at its beginning considered a beneficent importation, has recently been cast aside; l'empierrement, better known under the name of macadam, has been abolished throughout the whole central part of Paris.

The suppression of this system has been favour-