

ABOUT STREET PAVING.

How many people in Kansas City know that it is unnecessary to go to the Island of Trinidad for asphaltum with which to pave the streets? Yet such is the fact, for in Los Angeles county, in California, and the adjoining county of Ventura there are inexhaustible deposits of this material, under the control of no single individual or corporation, and it is now finding its way to the markets of the world in large quantities. It is but three years since the deposits referred to were opened up, yet hundreds of tons were shipped to the Eastern states last year, and contracts are now in hand for at least 1,000 carloads. Experience has shown that it is of a quality fully as desirable for paving purposes as that which has already found favor and very common use here.

But there is one thing which stands in the way of this material being brought into competition in Kansas City paving, and that can be remedied only by the board of public works. Petitions for asphaltum paving are invariably made to call for "Trinidad asphalt," and then they provide that the work shall be let to the lowest bidder. It has been explained a hundred times that there can be no competition whatever under this restriction, for there is but one company that can procure that particular material. Let the board of public works make a ruling that shall govern the case and permit the use of other asphaltum, and it will not be long until competing paving companies will be on the ground.

This is a matter that means much to the taxpayers of the city, but nothing will be done to shake off the grip of the monopoly until somebody, not controlled by the agents of the powerful corporation, shall take it in hand.