

# A STEAM COMPANY.

## The Supervisors Asked for a Franchise to Lay an Underground Steam System—Police Salaries.

At a meeting of the Committee of the Whole of the Board of Supervisors yesterday afternoon, P. T. Dickinson was heard with reference to the application of himself, David McKay and N. W. Spaulding for a franchise to lay down pipes or conduits in the streets as conveyances for steam and hot water, which, it is designed, will be distributed throughout the city to residences and places of business for cooking purposes, engine power, heat and other uses. Mr. Dickinson stated that the system is patented as well as many of the processes for introducing the steam into dwellings, and the company which proposed to lay down pipes in this city would be obliged to purchase these rights from patentees. The conduits, he said, would be laid about three feet under ground, covered with asbestos and a patented varnish to prevent radiation, then incased in a small box tunnel and stamped down with clay. He guaranteed that the streets would be none the worse for the pipes being put down. Steam and hot water served through pipes coated in this manner can, he said, be served miles away from the heating-place with a loss of not more than 7 per cent in heat. The heat directly furnished through the pipes is enough for all purposes save baking, broiling, roasting and heating flat-irons, and in those cases the steam is to be superheated with a gas-jet or coal-oil flame. In New York and other Eastern cities this method of obtaining heat has met with great success. One restaurant in New York pays \$15,000 a year for steam-heating, cooking entirely with it. The necessary apparatus in houses is to be paid for by the owners. Mr. Dickinson said that the fixtures for a house of ten or twelve rooms would cost from \$250 to \$300.

The pipes are tested for a pressure of 1,000 pounds to the square inch, and would be absolutely safe; in fact, much safer than the fuel and grates now used. In New York city, where a steam-heating company has already laid nine miles of pipe, whose plant runs 50 engines and has 300 other consumers, new houses were no longer put up on its lines without the steam-heating pipes being built in them. A company in Chicago has already contracted for a 9-mile plant, and the system on a smaller scale has been introduced into many other Eastern cities.

Mr. Pond said if the franchise was granted he should insist on a provision requiring the Street Department to perform the work of repairing where the streets were torn up, at the expense of the company. In this way the city would be sure to get the streets back into condition. He had noticed that no corporation which ever displaced the pavement left it in good condition.

Mr. Dickinson said he would prefer that the Street Department should do this work, as that would relieve his company from future responsibility.

The granting of the franchise was taken under advisement until Tuesday next.