

### The Water Works Contracts.

We publish, on our first page, the Report of the Committee of the Common Council in reply to Engineer McALPINN's justification of his award of the Contracts for laying the Water Pipes in the city. The Report is elaborate, but lucid and comprehensive. It should be read by every taxpayer in the city. It shows, most conclusively, that the award was improper, and that by it, the city will lose many thousands of dollars. The Report may be thus epitomized:—

1st. The Report develops a system of awarding contracts, which sweeps away all propositions, and makes everything depend upon the mere opinion or dicta of the Engineer.

2d. It exposes the tergiversations of the Engineer, who hesitates not to sign a report at variance with *known* facts, and insulting to the good sense of the citizens. He asserts that the dimensions of the ditches adopted by the Commissioners, and upon which all the proposals were based, were a *minimum*; whereas, the Superintendents testify that the excavations, as actually made, are less than these very dimensions.

3d. To relieve himself from suspicions which might otherwise be justly entertained on account of the marked difference in the bids for furnishing sand, he says that the fact that the sand would be furnished by Mr. VAN RENSSELAER free of charge, was freely communicated to the bidders by the Commissioners and Engineer. Messrs. McGRADE, BROWN, DOWN and HILL swear they received no such information. To explain the difference between the amount of sand required by his tables and that reported by the Committee as having been actually used, he adds:—"Some of these trenches have been excavated wholly, and others chiefly, in sand." The testimony of the Superintendents proves this to be a misrepresentation.

4th. By his tables, 8,010 square yards of extra stone were required to repave the ditches. The Committee, in their former Report, disputed the correctness of this item. To prove it correct, the Engineer says that in the distance of 10 miles the contractor has furnished 500 yards of extra paving stone. To show that this statement is incorrect, the affidavits of several pavers well known to our citizens are produced by the Committee.

4th. The affidavit of DANIEL C. SHERMAN shows, that while he, as Superintendent, endeavored to have the Ditches formed to the Engineer's *minimum* dimensions, he was called to account by the contractor, because *the understanding was that the trenches were not to be made to the size required by the specifications.*

5th. A studied and well-arranged plan appears to have been adopted to preclude the Committee from obtaining such information as ought to have been readily and most cheerfully furnished, and which undoubtedly would have been given under *ordinary* circumstances.

6th. The report shows that while the present Contractors are receiving at least \$1,500 per mile, they were urged to sub-let it for \$300 per mile, from which the tax-payers can judge something of the enormous profits that are now received upon work, no small portion of which exists only in the Engineer's tables.

7th. The *strict conformity to the printed forms* that was required, was mere bagatelle, for the present contractor, not having even made a bid, *did not conform at all*; being a non-resident, perhaps he was exempt, on that account, from going through the formality of submitting a proposition.

8. The paving stone (8010 square yards) was an *after consideration* of the Engineer's, and appears first in his tables prepared after the propositions were opened.

9. If the work had been let by the terms of the advertisement, no injustice would have been done, while under the present contract the citizens must pay some \$20,000 more than its fair value.

10. The displacing of Mr. SLADE, under all the circumstances, may be a master stroke in Engineering *tactics*, but it certainly needs explanation.

11. If the gross injustice developed in this report, be done in the city, in the very presence of those who are wronged, what may not be expected in those contracts which embrace the principal portions of the work—and which are miles from the improved portions of the city?