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[For the Public Ledger] Fairmount Park.

Messrs. Editors:—The views and wishes of the tax-payers of Philadelphia have been fully made known by their recent liberal contributions towards the introduction of public grounds for the people.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 12, 1857.

To THEODORE CUYLER, Esq., Chairman Committee on City Property.

DEAR SIR:—In view of the present and future purity of the Schuylkill water supplied to our citizens from Fairmount, I certainly consider it of vital importance that the city should retain the entire control by ownership of the shores immediately bordering upon the pool formed by the dam.

The impurities thrown out from the shores upon the south side have at present a pretty good chance of finding their way into the thread of the stream, and being carried over the dam, or of passing through the canal to the river below.

The very judicious purchase of the property on that shore exhibited commendable foresight, and I much regret to hear any doubt expressed of its remaining entire in the hands of the city corporation forever.

I consider the retention of the Sedgely Park portion of it to be of the utmost consequence; inspection of the whole river front of that estate, from Girard Avenue Bridge to Pratt's Point, will show that it forms a deeply indented cove, the river thereby becoming much wider at that spot causes a sluggish retardation of the current at the shores, by no means calculated to carry off such impure matter as would be discharged from dwellings, breweries, slaughter-houses, or similar establishments, such as may be built upon the property should the city be induced to abandon its ownership.

Such a cove as is here formed will retain these impurities for a longer or shorter time, according to the height of the water upon the dam, and will in fact form a natural receiving reservoir from which a new supply of impure matter would be constantly, slowly but surely, distributed and conducted to the forebay of the Water Works.

That this would be the natural result, I think any one can convince himself by an inspection of the formation of the shores at this place.

It is to be hoped that the city will allow no consideration to deprive them of the ownership of any part of the shores which they now possess as high up as the upper line of the late Spring Garden Water Works; and that every exertion will be made to strictly guard it from tenants whose business would cause any contamination whatever of the water supply; also, that the sewers and natural water courses which are already permitted to discharge their filth upon parts of the river front above designated be suppressed as early as possible. For if the shores be guarded there is no difficulty in carrying all such objectionable drainage to a point below the dam.

FREDERIC GRAFF, Consulting Engineer.

Entered Bail—George Esher, one of the Inspectors of Election last Fall, in the Eighth Division of the Twentieth Ward, was brought into Court yesterday upon a bench warrant. Mr. Mann, the District Attorney, stated the fact to the Court, and said that the other election officers had entered bail in \$1000. The Court fixed the bail in Esher's case at the same amount. Mr. Samuel Ogden, Chief Engineer, was offered for bail. He was sworn when Mr. Mann asked him if Esher did not hold an office in the Water Department last fall.

Mr. Ogden said he did. Mr. Mann then asked if he resigned his office in order to act as an election officer—went in, and acted as Inspector of the Election—and was not immediately after re-appointed? Mr. Ogden admitted that Esher resigned, acted as an election officer, and was re-appointed immediately after the election, but that he did not know that he resigned for the purpose of acting as an election officer. Mr. Mann said—“You know it now, and such conduct is a conspiracy to defeat the object of the law, which excludes persons holding office like Esher, from acting as election officers. It can be punished by indictment, and that it would not be safe for Mr. Esher and Mr. Ogden to repeat it. It is not only contrary to law, but disgraceful to those engaged in it.” Mr. Ogden then justified in the sum named, and entered the bail.

Eric. This ingenious machine is now on exhibition at Bradford's Emporium, Fifth and Chesnut streets.

Fairmount Dam—Mr. Ogden, the Chief Engineer of the Water-works, states that the settling of the dam at Fairmount is about 3 inches, for about the length or distance of three hundred feet from the eastern side. The repairs contemplated to be done will be the sheathing the top, and what is called rip-rapping the base. From all the statements made in reference to the necessity of repairs at the dam, there is no cause for serious apprehensions of a sudden breach, yet Councils deem it prudent, and absolutely required, of them to secure the citizens against the liabilities of inconvenience and detriment by adopting early precautionary measures. Some of the stones of the base of the dam, it appears, have been washed out, and here the greatest cause of apprehension exists. To secure this part of the work, and to make the elevation of the dam equal to its original height, an ordinance appropriating \$5000 passed Common Council. It was postponed until Thursday next in Select Council, for want of a quorum of the members of that body.

Proposals are invited for the completion of the Washington Aqueduct, according to plans and specifications which will be on exhibition in this office on and after the 10th of April.

Bids will be received for the completion of the whole work in gross, or for the separate works described in the specifications, the United States reserving the right to make a contract for the whole, or for the separate works, as may seem most advantageous upon comparison of the bids.

A portion only of the work can be completed with the appropriations now available, and the contracts will be subject to the contingency of future appropriations by Congress.

The engineer reserves the right to prescribe the amount of work to be done and the rate of progress under each contract and for each work.

Payments will be made in checks upon the United States Treasury upon the monthly estimates of the engineer, reserving 10 per cent on all payments until the completion of the contracts, and it will be a condition of all contracts that the workmen shall be paid their full wages monthly, and in specie.

Proposals should be sealed and endorsed "Proposals for work and materials for the Washington Aqueduct."

The United States reserves the right to reject any or all bids for the whole or for any part of the work, if not deemed advantageous; but the work will be awarded to the lowest bidder for the whole or for parts of the work, who gives security for the completion of their contracts, if at reasonable prices.

Every offer must be accompanied by a written guarantee, signed by one or more responsible persons, to the effect that he or they undertake that the bidder or bidders will, if his or their bids are accepted, enter into an obligation within ten days, with good and sufficient securities, for the completion of the work undertaken; said guarantee to be accompanied by the certificate of the United States District Judge, United States District Attorney, Navy Agent, or some officer of the general government, or individual known to the engineer or Department of War, that the guarantors are able to make good their guarantee.

Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders at noon of the 11th May; none will be received after that hour.

The work to be let comprises—completion of the dam across the Potomac at the Great Falls; building of gate houses; completion of masonry bridges; waste weirs; building distributing reservoir; completion of one city furnishing cast iron pipe; building of two iron pipe bridges; laying pipes from the distributing reservoir to the Navy Yard, and other principal public establishments of Washington; building of high service reservoir in Georgetown, and supply of cement, sand, bricks, stone and all other materials; for all of which reference is to be made to the detailed descriptions and specifications to be exhibited in this office.

The comparison of the bids will be made upon the quantities noted in the specifications and plans exhibited at the time of letting, and should a bid in gross be accepted, the monthly payments upon the contracts will be made upon the estimate of the Engineer, at prices to be fixed by him, with the usual retention of ten per cent until the entire completion of the contract according to the specifications and plans.

Proposals should state the time within which each work will be completed, provided Congress appropriates the necessary funds.

By order of the Secretary of War, M. C. MEIGS, Captain of Engineers in charge of Washington Aqueduct.

FORM OF GUARANTEE

To CAPT. M. C. MEIGS, U. S. ENGINEERS:— We, the undersigned, residents of _____ in the State of _____ hereby jointly and severally covenant with the United States, and guaranty to the said Captain of Engineers, that if he accepted the bid of _____ within ten days after the acceptance of the said bid, execute the contract for the same, with good and sufficient securities, to perform the work or furnish the articles proposed, in conformity to the terms of the advertisement under which it was made. And in case the said _____ shall fail to enter into contract as aforesaid, we guaranty to make good the difference between the offer by the said _____ and the next lowest bidder.

Signed, _____ A. B. C. D. E. F. Thereby certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the abovesigned guarantors are good and sufficient. Signed, _____ S. F.

[For the Public Ledger] 1074 Kensington Water Works.

Messrs. Editors—I observe by the papers that some speculation is going on about building new Water Works at Tacony, or some other point higher up the river. We have no idea that anything of the kind is contemplated by the Committee on Water Works, or would be sanctioned by the City Councils. The water taken from the Kensington Water Works and exhibited by Mr. Neal, in Select Council, was in that condition that stagnant water always assumes. No matter how pure it may have been when pumped into the basin, if allowed to remain during the hot weather, unagitated, it will, of course, become stagnant. With regard to the Schuylkill basins, the water pumped to-day will be used to-morrow, and hence it is always fresh. An idea having obtained in Kensington that the basin was full of the skins and entrails of cat-fish, (a ridiculous story,) the people resorted to the pump-water, and in this way allowed the water in the basin to become stagnant. If proper attention had been paid to the condition of the water, the fire-plugs through the District should have been opened every few days, and thus changed the water, and kept it as pure as the water in the river. The Delaware water is as pure as any water that flows. It is preferred for long voyages to the Schuylkill water, or any other water. But if it should be thought advisable to substitute the Schuylkill water in Kensington for that of the Delaware, it can be very easily accomplished. Before the Kensington Works were built, that district was supplied from the Schuylkill Works. When her works were put in successful operation, her citizens boasted of the purity of their water, and for years no complaint was heard. What has made the Delaware water more impure than it was at that time? But if they must have the Schuylkill water again, the Councils have only to erect another basin or two on the ground which the foresight of the Northern Liberties and Spring Garden provided for that purpose, adjoining the present basin. However, we have no doubt that the Kensington water will be, in a few days, rendered as pure as it once was, and by proper attention, may be kept equally as good as that from any of the other basins. Indeed, we have no hesitation in believing that the Schuylkill water would be purer if the tide could ebb and flow in the river where it is thrown into the reservoir.

107-5 OBSERVER.

ing machines, &c., by those using the silver purses, purses of money, &c.

Repairs of Fairmount Dam.—The work of repairing the dam at Fairmount has been commenced, according to the recommendation of the Chief Engineer of Water, and the authority given by action of City Councils. The water in the river is rather high at present, and as good an opportunity to prosecute the work is not afforded as there was a few weeks ago.

Children's Excursion.—About thirty children, accompanied by their parents, went for a day to the Fairmount Park.

of the man next in front. The chest full, and prominent; the back slightly arched forward, easily, and gently; the shoulders playing freely forwards; and the hands reaching well over the toes. If all these evolutions can be carried out in the first lesson the pupil is a very apt one, but the teacher need not be disappointed if he fails in inculcating more than the mere power of swinging, and of avoiding "crabs," which are the result of the water catching the oar when there is considerable way on the boat, and turning its blade flat, as that the rower cannot bring it out, and by the impetus of the boat is driven backward over his thwart. These are the fundamental principles of rowing, but the delicacies or the art consist in rowing straight through the water exactly at the proper depth, laying out the strength in the right way and at the right time, and feathering neatly, and at the proper distance from the water. The depth at which the oar should be brought through the water, should be such as just to cover the blade, and the stroke-oar should always keep to this depth, in which respect he should be imitated by his pupil, as far as his strength will allow, but if he is too weak to do so, he had far better not dip his oar as deep as his stroke, so that he pulls it through as much water, rather than to dig deep at first and then be compelled to finish his stroke in the air in order to keep time. Both the oars ought to take in the same length of water, and to enter and come out at the same moment; now, granting this, if both are pulling at their best, the stronger must dip deeper than the weaker, and by consequence the above rule will necessarily apply. The chief faults in rowing are—first, the bending forward over the oar as the end of the stroke, called "meeting the oar," and which is attended by the taking in too small an extent of water; secondly, making the latter part the stroke in the air, which is the usual expedient in "shirking," often also accompanying the first fault; thirdly, rowing round—that is, not dropping the blade at once to its proper depth, but describing a segment of a circle, and thus having to bring the oar up out of the water to feather, by which the boat is dragged under, and her way impelled; fourthly, rowing with the elbows bent, either when on the stroke, or the feather, or both; fifthly, keeping the elbows out from the sides, which is only bad in appearance, and most of our best watermen have been addicted to it; sixthly, looking at the oar to avoid crabs, which only leads to uneven swinging, and often to the very thing which is intended to be avoided; and, seventhly, looking out of the boat at passing objects, or at the competitors in a race. There are other faults in appearance, such as dropping the chin upon the breast, rounding the shoulders or back, &c.; but they do not so much affect the real work done as the above, and are often seen in a good workman, whose oar itself, if watched, would be pronounced to be that of a finished oarsman.

107-1 PUBLIC PARKS.—The City Councils are getting into another controversy about the Sedgely Park.

We think they had better give their earnest attention to the more important subject of meeting the city's liabilities promptly, and reducing its expenses and its debt. High taxes are greatly increasing the rents of houses, and fast driving the laboring population into smaller rooms and narrower alleys, where ventilation is bad, and physical and moral health is greatly impaired. You may make as many grand parks as you choose to add to the salubrity of the city, but if the inordinate expenses of them, by increasing taxation, compel people to live in close corners, and places deprived of all the comforts which are necessary to health, where is the public advantage of parks? Our present difficulties call for economy in every branch of the city government. The city credit has been impaired for years, and warrants now drawn for the ordinary expenses of government can be paid with difficulty. Is this a time to add needlessly to the city's liabilities? There is more ground now, in the neighborhood of Fairmount and Lemon Hill, devoted to public parks, than the city has ever used in that way, or probably will use for the next half-century. There is enough to accommodate all the persons who may desire to use it at any one time, had the city five times its present population, and more than can ever find time to visit it once a year, if taxes increase upon us as fast as they have done since these and other grand schemes of public improvement have been suggested. As to the pretext that the park is necessary to keep the Schuylkill water pure, that is all moonshine. The Schuylkill water is as pure as any water in the world, and the scheme for keeping it pure by preventing any other improvements upon its banks than public parks, would involve the purchase of both sides of the river up to Manayunk.