

General Notices.

Sacramento City Water Works.

TO THE CITIZENS OF SACRAMENTO:

Upon visiting your city for the first time since the fire, for the purpose of arranging the details of the contract for the City Water Works, I regret to find that my name and proposal have been entangled somewhat in party strife—and that notwithstanding the clear manner in which the subject of Public Water Works was explained in the Report of the Fire and Water Committee, that proposal which has been accepted by the Council and ratified by a popular vote, is not very generally understood.

I beg briefly to explain the matter, and how it has assumed its present form. Last summer I asked for a charter for myself and friends, to erect at our own cost water works in the City of Sacramento, with privilege of charging a water rate. I found, however, that a highly respectable and influential company in Sacramento wished to ask for the same privilege. I resigned my pretensions to them, and handed my plans and estimates to Col. H. B. Robinson, who represented them.

At this time, knowing that Water Works of some kind would certainly be adopted in Sacramento, I sent to Glasgow for four to five miles of water pipes, adapted for this place. And fortunately had the contract for them made prior to the enormous advance (100 per cent.) which has taken place in iron.

Finding from many citizens in Sacramento, a determination not to grant a charter to a private company for the City Water Works, I prepared, at the suggestion of the Chief Engineer and the Chairman of the Fire and Water Committee, an offer to construct these works *for and on behalf of the City*.

The offer that was approved, and I presume will be accepted, is as follows:

1st. That I should erect a massive brick building, 40 feet in height, strong enough to sustain on its roof a reservoir and 100,000 gallons of water.

2d. That I should furnish two sets of pumps, each of them capable of pumping 400,000 gallons per day; one for use, the other as a duplicate in case of accident.

In like manner, two steam engines, one of 60; the other of 25 horse power; the one for regular use, the other for use in case of repairs, &c.

To occupy profitably the 3-story brick building which sustains the reservoir, I should supply a flouring mill, of 4 run of stones. The object of this flouring mill being to obtain the pumping of the water free of cost to the city; many persons being willing to take the flouring mill, and as *rent therefor*, to pump all the water required, and keep the machinery in efficient repair, free of all cost to the city; the same engine needful to run the flouring mill, with little additional expense for fuel, being sufficient to do all the pumping.

3d. That I should lay down about four miles of cast iron water pipes throughout the city, and at every corner erect a fire hydrant, (the effect of which will be equal to placing a reservoir of 100,000 gallons of water at an elevation of 40 feet, at every street corner, ready, *without pumping*, to put out a fire on its first outbreak. Also, to erect a filtering apparatus for purifying the water.

The price at which I offered to erect and supply all these works, was \$125,000, to be paid to me in the bonds of the City, specially secured upon the Water Works themselves, having 10 years to run, and bearing 10 per cent. per annum interest. The bonds are taken at 100 cents on the dollar.

The cost now, owing to the enormous advance in freight on the water pipes from Scotland, and the augmented cost of building materials since the fire here, will probably be \$10,000 more than that sum.

Such was my proposal. The benefits to the city to be derived from it are—1st. A supply of filtered water sufficient for 20,000 inhabitants, at 20 gallons daily for each person; elevated to the 3d story of any house in the city. 2d. Protection from fire. 3d. A reduction in the price of water to each house of about two-thirds from present cost. And, 4th, a net annual income to the city, after paying all expenses and the interest on the Water Works bonds, of between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per annum.

People have asked me why I take so much trouble to bring forward this measure. My first object is *business*. I submitted this proposal as a plain matter of business, with a view to profit; but I trust the plan will not be found wanting in the higher recommendation of utility. The price at which the work is taken, however, affords so small a margin of profit for the employment of thought, time and capital required, that I am quite willing to surrender the contract to any gentlemen in Sacramento, who will carry out my plans. I will give them the designs and estimates free of cost, and sell them the cargo of water pipes now on the way, at 30 per cent. below the price at which they can be had to-day in any iron market in the world.

It generally happens that public works cost much more than private enterprises. In this case, however, no Engineer would venture to take this contract to-day, for the sum I have named, even if he were paid in hard cash and in advance.

I trust that the citizens of Sacramento will remember that I have here offered to surrender my contract to any person who will faithfully carry it out. And should I still be called upon to erect these works, that they will give me a hearty and kindly concurrence. It is mortifying to me to hear my name connected with such words as "scheming, log-rolling, and wire-pulling," for positively I have never stooped to ask a single vote, or the assistance of one citizen of Sacramento in support of my proposal. Except the Engineer and Chairman of the Fire and Water Committee, I do not, to this day, know even by sight, a single member of the City Government. My offer and proposal stood upon their naked merits, unsupported by a single solicitation from me. And I claim now for it nothing but the consideration which a plain, frank, open-handed proposal is entitled to.

GEO. GORDON, Engineer.

VULCAN IRON WORKS.

San Francisco, February 28, 1853.

ml-4