

The Water Commissioners and the Croton

Aqueduct.

Again and again are the commissioners blundering in regard to the Croton water works; and the result of all this wretched mismanagement is, that the whole of the works on the line of the aqueduct are to be suspended in less than one month from this date. This noble work is to stand still for, heaven knows how long a period of time. Let this fact not be forgotten at the next November election. All along the line, the laborers are in a state of savage indignation, because they cannot get their pay; and they will feel still more bitter when they are all discharged in three weeks. The locofoco leaders will not bring them into the city this fall, because they would vote the whig ticket: and this state of things has been produced by the gross mismanagement of the commissioners.

The most insolent locofocos, and the warmest friends that the commissioners have, all concur in admitting that they have doubled the expense of the Croton Aqueduct by their repeated blunders, and also caused a delay of three years in its completion. Instead of putting under contract the dam and the Harlem bridge before any other portions of the work, on account of their requiring longer time to complete, these important points of the work were contracted for last of all. The consequence is, that the bridge is scarcely commenced on, and it will take five years to finish it; and the dam is in such a state that it cannot be finished under four years at the least calculation. The commissioners are eternally making alterations and gross blunders in this part of the work. At the original estimate \$70,000 was to complete the dam; there has already been over \$100,000 expended on it, and last July an estimate was made, and it was ascertained that \$108,000 more would be required to complete it, according to the commissioners' present notions. Probably before it is finished they will alter it so as to make it cost \$200,000 more.

We went again all along the line of the aqueduct last week, and saw the sad state in which it will be left this winter. The masonry and brick work on every section unfinished, and exposed to the frost, will all have to be taken down and rebuilt next spring; and all this is paid for by the square yard, so that the expense falls on the people. At the dam, the Commissioners have had a little narrow, ridiculous culvert made, through which they intend to drive all the waters of the Croton River this winter, and build up the dam across the present bed of the stream. The result of this will be that the first great freshet will carry away all the work of this summer, dam, culvert, and every thing else, and sweep all before it. The whole will have to be built again and paid for again.

There is another gross blunder that they have made. In the early lettings of the sections, they ordered a brick facing eight inches thick on the stone masonry; this was very proper. But on all the last lettings, they have reduced the side brick facing to four inches, and continued the thickness of the arch at eight inches. The result of this, is that before the facing can have time to set with the cement to the stone masonry, the weight of the arch forces it from the side stone work, and in course of time it will fall in. We took a stick and beat along this brick facing for miles, and it sounded hollow; thus proving that it had sprung from the stone work, and the whole of this ought therefore to be pulled down and rebuilt.

We might, in short, go along the line of the aqueduct, from one end to the other, and find matter for deep censure at every hundred yards. The brick wall is badly constructed, as we have thus shown; the manner of excavating, as directed by the commissioners, is very bad; they will not allow a sufficient slope in the deep cuttings, and the consequence is that most of the excavations cave in and fill up, just as the lowest part is levelled and graded, ready to receive the concrete. All this excavation is paid for by the square yard, and consequently the people are made to pay treble the necessary price for every yard of excavation. Again, in digging out a very hard kind of material, in which sand and gravel are cemented together, the commissioners refuse to pay for it according to the original contract, and thus every contractor will bring law suits against them; they will be sure to recover, and the increase of expense thus occasioned by the ignorance and obstinacy of the commissioners will be enormous.

In short, the blunders made by the commissioners from the commencement, have been enormous; by their ignorance and folly they have had law suits about all the land purchased, and have been compelled to pay treble its value for every acre. By sinking the aqueduct two feet lower, with no additional expense, they might have had a beautiful carriage road over it, the whole forty-two miles. But their line has been broken up by their bad arrangements; the high bridge will be spoiled in its appearance by a descent in the line before spoken of; the pipes will be too small, and must be taken up in a year; and now the works will have to stop for want of money. The injury to the city will be enormous; again, therefore, we say, let the rallying cry be at the next election, "The Removal of the Water Commissioners."