

HISTORY OF A CONTRACT.

About twelve days ago, certain papers, referring to the award of a contract on the Canadian Pacific line, published an Ottawa despatch worded somewhat as follows : The contract for the section from Emory Bar to Port Moody has been awarded to Mr. A. Onderdonk, Yale, B. C., Messrs. Charlebois and McDonald, although they were the lowest tenderers, being set aside on account of an irregularity in their attached cheque.

This short despatch contained a fact and nothing more. But the results were none the less disastrous for two highly honorable contractors, whose reputation with specialists and the general public is attested by the important works they have executed.

Brief and vague as it was, the despatch further signified that the tax-payers of Canada would be called upon to pay \$200,000 more for this little transaction, than if the section had been awarded to Messrs. Charlebois and McDonald.

This dead loss, for which there is no compensation to the country, this kind of denial of justice through the fickleness of a Minister, who is a greater stickler for the letter than for the spirit of the law, is one of those strokes of authority which carry with them their own lesson : My turn, yesterday ; yours, to-morrow.

In consideration of the large interests involved in this case, it has been thought proper to lay the facts before the public, with the documents relative thereto.

On the 21st of October, 1881, the usual advertisements were published in the *Canada Gazette*, and other papers, for the tender of one of the sections of the Canadian Pacific Railway.