

MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT

DRESSED GRANITE FOR PAVING.

The Department of Public Works in Chicago has decided that in issuing contracts for the paving of streets with granite, only the so-called "dressed" granite will be permitted by the specifications in future. This granite is quarried in Wisconsin, and consists of blocks about four inches wide, eight inches long, and with an unvarying depth of six inches. These are dressed very smoothly on all sides, like brick, so that when embedded in the sand they will settle to a uniform depth and be perfectly even on top. The space between the blocks is never more than one-fourth of an inch in width. The crevices are filled in with sand and asphaltic paving pitch, which when hardened firmly holds the blocks on all sides. The work, as being done, consists of a foundation of cement concrete eight inches thick covered with a layer of sand, in which the granite blocks are imbedded, and it is as smooth and even as asphalt or brick pavement, and yet it has sufficient roughness to prevent horses from slipping in wet weather. The cost of constructing streets with the new granite is greater, but it is said that the durability of the paving will make up for the excess in cost.

LEGAL DECISIONS AFFECTING MUNICIPALITIES.

In the Court of Appeal at Toronto last week, the Stratford Gas Co. appealed against a decision of Judge Street, a dismissal action, against the city of Stratford. In 1891 the Reliance Co. established a gas plant in Stratford, which, a couple of months later, was bought out by the Stratford Gas Co. The latter made a contract with the city by which 275 lights were to be used. It had the staff, machinery, coal, etc., to produce that number of lights, but the city only made use of 250. Consequently the company sued for the difference between the revenue the contract warranted and that actually received. The trial judge decided the claim could not be entertained, as, the city, not requiring 275 lights, the contract was impossible of accomplishment.

Judgment has been given in the Drainage Court at Chatham, Ont., in the case Orford vs. Howard. This case arose by Orford appealing from the assessment made by the engineer of Howard, for improvements in the Cranberry Marsh drain in Howard, about four miles from Orford. There is a natural waterfall running across the town line into Howard and shedding water into the territory drained by the Cranberry Marsh drain. The watercourse in both townships had been cleaned out by farmers, and a question arose as to whether the effect

was to increase or diminish the flow of water in Howard. Many prominent men in Orford and one in Howard stated that the flow into Howard was decreased by absorption which took place in Orford in tilling the soil. This evidence was contradicted by some residents of Howard. Orford was never before assessed for work under similar circumstances, when the work is several miles from the land assessed. In this case the assessment was 13 cents per acre for all land shedding water into the watercourse in Orford. The referee delivered judgment at the close of argument, and held that the law had been so changed since a decision in Orford vs. Howard, given several years ago, as to enable Howard to assess Orford for the full 13 cents per acre, and for the full number of acres from which water may come into the watercourse. The referee found, however, that Howard's engineer had computed an excess of acreage to the extent of 120 acres, and had disallowed that much of assessment, representing \$120. Otherwise the appeal was dismissed, each township to pay its own costs.

SHELL CONCRETE FOR PAVEMENTS.

The shell concrete pavements of Mancon, Ga., are attracting considerable attention at present, and the following particulars concerning them appear in an engineering exchange: The material used is a shell limestone similar to the coquina of which buildings were constructed in St. Augustine while it was a Spanish colony. There is a bed of this stone about thirty miles from Mancon, which was discovered during the construction of the Georgia Southern and Florida railroad, some years ago. Part of the roadbed of that railway was made of it, and it hardened into such a durable form that several carloads were brought to Mancon and laid about the freight station, where it resisted the wear of the heavy traffic unusually well. After it had been in service for four or five years, the city paved a street with it having one of the heaviest grades in Mancon, and this first street gave such satisfaction that several more have since been paved in the same manner. About 35,000 square yards are now in use, and petitions for 10,000 yards more are on file. The stone is crushed and laid on the sub-grade excavated to receive it. The layer is about seven inches deep at first, and is consolidated by a 15-ton steam roller to a thick-

ness of six inches, being sprinkled at intervals. On heavy grades a gutter is formed by mixing cement with the stone. The pavement costs from fifty to sixty cents a square yard, which includes crushing and labor, and is reported to last well and remain unusually free from ruts. It has been found to require comparatively little sprinkling and to sweep well, although a softer broom than is generally employed for street sweeping must be used on.

DOMESTIC FILTERS.

Domestic filters may or may not be sufficient to safeguard a household against water-borne diseases. Sometimes they are simply culture beds for bacteria, as is proved by the investigation of the Maryland State board of health. One example reported by that body is worth quoting—that of a citizen of Baltimore. This man first sends the whole water supply of his house through a large filter, and then filters the drinking water in a small domestic filter. A test showed that on a day when the city taps were running to bacteria to the cubic centimetre, the large filter was delivering 9,900 bacteria in the same quantity of water. When the large filter was repacked, only nine bacteria per centimetre got through it, but this water, when passed through the small filter, came out with 71 bacteria per centimetre. Another Baltimorean made use of a filter of high reputation; but its effectiveness was so doubtful that its owner continued to observe the precaution of boiling the water after it had been filtered. The State board report, however, does not say whether or not the owners of the filters had exercised a proper amount of care in keeping them cleansed from accumulation of impurities which collect after a certain length of time, especially when the filters are in constant use and the water is by no means free from suspicious elements. As a rule the use of domestic filters is to be encouraged unless the water supply has been filtered by some reliable process.

The county council of Pontiac has decided to take action against the town of Clarendon for an account involving \$800,000. The suit arises out of a question of valuation. It will be remembered when the council passed a bonus of \$1,000,000 towards the Pontiac and Pacific Railway some years ago, each municipality throughout the county was upon to give their share according to valuation. The township of Clarendon was to have only a valuation of \$200,000, the county contended that this amount was very much below the mark, \$800,000 being a more correct figure. Clarendon's refusal to pay its share of the bonus unless upon a \$200,000 valuation, has been leaving the matter in abeyance for some time the county has finally decided that a proper valuation may be determined. Mr. J. M. McDougall has been engaged, as counsel for the county.

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