

with an aggregate area of 1,808,951 square feet, which have been laid since 1863, at a cost to the property holders of \$470,412 50-100, or 26 cents per foot.

The repairs during the past fiscal year amounted to only \$9,526 35-100, and the total cost to the city for repairs since their acceptance amounts to \$16,902 97-100, or a trifle less than one cent per foot; thereby making the total cost of the wooden block pavements, as they stand to-day, \$487,315 47-100, or a fraction less than 27 cents per foot on the average.

This shows a difference, within the same time, of \$175,271 72-100 in favor of the wooden block pavements, over about an equal area of cobble—an amount, we think, sufficient to put all the wooden block pavements in the city in thorough repair; at any rate, our company will enter into such a contract with the city, and will furnish satisfactory bonds for the faithful performance of the same. And when once put in repair, we will contract to keep them in order, by replacing new wood for old, whenever necessary, at the average cost for repairing cobble pavements the past fiscal year. In other words, for the cost of rough cobble stones, the city may have permanently the smooth and even wooden block pavement.

It is not denied, by those now engaged in laying wooden block pavements, that many of the early samples were laid with Oregon fir—a quality of lumber which has proved almost valueless for the purpose; but the material now used—black heart redwood—is known to be durable, and the samples referred to in our advertisements, as seen in front of the City Hall and elsewhere, are certainly fine specimens of pavement.

After a careful examination into the municipal reports to ascertain the cost thus far incurred for street paving in this city, we are unable to discover any just cause for the alarm sounded by the late Mayor in his valedictory; but, on the contrary, we find cause for congratulation in reviewing the exact state of facts. If contrasted with other cities, the sum thus far expended by San Francisco upon paved streets is certainly very small.

Upon page 242 of the last municipal reports, there is a summary of all expenditures for street work of every kind since 1856; and it is there shown that the entire sum thus far expended on paved streets amounts to \$1,091,214 31-100, which is only about one-third of the *annual* expenditure for the same purpose in Chicago, and is less than the amount expended *last year* in the city of Detroit on wooden block pavements alone.

Of the \$2,798,389 37-100 paid into the city treasury last year for taxes, the insignificant sum of \$196,000 only was expended upon the streets for repairs, cleaning, etc.

The truth is, San Francisco is behind the age in street improvements, and a more liberal policy should at once be inaugurated. There is not a street in the city well paved for three blocks consecutively. If you find one block well paved, the chances are the adjoining one will be in a dilapidated condition.

The sooner our people learn that it is true economy to have their streets thoroughly and uniformly paved with the most comfortable and approved pavement, the sooner they will give evidence of the fact that they are trying to keep pace with the spirit of the age in which they live; and when thus prepared the city should not hesitate to accept and maintain them in the same good condition in which they are delivered to her, because the aggregate amount required for said purpose will be found a small proportion of the annual tax receipts; and certainly there can be no more deserving call upon the public purse, to benefit the tax payer, than that which goes to the maintenance of good thoroughfares, for the convenience and comfort of an active, busy population who are required to pass to and fro in the pursuit of their daily vocations.

CITY PAVING COMPANY.

Insurance Companies.

There are seven insurance companies devoted to fire and marine risks, organized in this city, one of which, the Merchants Mutual Marine, attends to marine business only. The aggregate paid up capital is \$3,152,250. During the past year three companies, the Pacific, Occidental, and Peoples, have gone into liquidation in consequence of the losses sustained by the Chicago conflagration, and two new companies, the State Investment and the Commercial, have commenced operations. In addition to the home companies, there are twelve Eastern and seventeen foreign companies represented in this city by agents. There are thirty-six life insurance companies transacting business in California, with agencies in this city, of which only two are home institutions—the California Mutual of this city, and the Pacific Mutual of Sacramento.