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**An historical account of sub-ways in the british metropolis, for the flow
of pure water and gas into the hoses of the inhabitants...**

Williams, John

London, 1828

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In parliament, session 1823-Feb. 25th.

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Mr. Harrison and Mr. Williams reported that they had obtained the brief statement of the City Cash by the Chamberlain of London, containing the receipts and expenditure for opening and repairing the streets of the City of London; from which they had extracted as much as referred to the probable income, for the Sub-way Company: and also that they had obtained the Reports presented to Parliament from the Water Companies in 1821, containing their expences for the same purposes.

IN PARLIAMENT, *Session 1823—Feb. 25th.*

Mr. Peter Moore, the Member for Coventry, having moved for a Committee of the House of Commons, to enquire into the powers vested in, and exercised by, the Commissioners of Sewers in the Metropolis, &c., the following Gentlemen were appointed.

Lord Duncannon.	J. H. Calcraft, Esq.
Sir Francis Burdett,	Edward Ellice, Esq.
Sir James Graham.	Thomas Wilson, Esq.
Sir Robert Wilson.	Samuel Barrett, Esq.
Alderman Wood.	James Brogden, Esq.
W. Smith, Esq.	D. Ricardo, Esq.
T. B. Lennard, Esq.	W. Astell, Esq.
Honourable C. Hutchinson.	John Smith, Esq.
P. Grenfell, Esq.	John Fane, Esq.
W. Dickinson, Esq.	S. Marjoribanks, Esq.
J. C. Hobhouse. Esq.	R. Bernal, Esq.

*The following Gentlemen
were added, 13th March.*

Alderman Bridges.

Joseph Pitt, Esq.

Saville Onley, Esq.

Lord William Stanley.

Sir Robert Heron.

Davies Gilbert, Esq.

Stuart Wortley, Esq.

Vere Fane, Esq.

E. J. Curteis, Esq.

G. Holme Sumner, Esq.

John Mansfield, Esq.

*The following were subse-
quently added.*

Lord Viscount Belgrave.

Lord William Bentinck.

Peter Moore, Esq. *Chairman.*

Mr. Williams was in attendance on this Committee; but as they seldom met, a Letter was addressed to each of the Members of the House of Commons on the Sewer Committee.

Cornhill, Feb. 28th, 1823.

SIR,

As a member of the Committee for enquiring into the powers of the Commissioners of Sewers, &c., I respectfully solicit the pleasure of an interview, respecting the possibility of rendering the opening of the pavement for their works unnecessary in future.

Although this is not the immediate object of the Committee, yet as the public have been much annoyed by the taking up of the stones in the streets, and the stoppage of the carriage ways, for the formation and reparation of the sewers, it may possibly be considered by you, Sir, and by

the Committee, not altogether foreign to this enquiry. Waiting your commands,

I have the honour to remain

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN WILLIAMS.

The following was contained in the envelope of the circular sent to all the Peers and Members of Parliament.

The Committee of the House of Commons, now sitting to enquire into the powers of the Commissioners of Sewers in the Metropolis, having individually received one of the enclosed papers on the subject of public Sub-ways, which will probably be referred to in Parliament upon the Report of that Committee ; the Patentee, with the view of inviting a candid and liberal consideration of the subject, respectfully presents to you, Sir, a similar brief statement of the proposed Sub-ways.

Cornhill, March, 1823.

Circular sent to all the Peers, and to the Members of Parliament, March 3d, 1823.

In the month of October last, a Patent was obtained by John Williams, of Cornhill, in the City of London, "for a method to prevent the frequent removal of the Pavement and Carriage Paths, for laying down and taking up Pipes, and for other purposes, in Streets, Roads, and Public Ways, &c. &c."—See page 43, for Specification.

The nature of this Patent being of a public and universal character, not to be worked by any individual, but by public Bodies—either by subscriptions, or by the appointment of Government—but in neither case without the authority of Parliament; a meeting was convened at the City of London Tavern, on the 4th of November, 1822, for the purpose of stating the object, and announcing Sub-ways in the daily Papers, for the discussion of public opinion; submitting that a City of London Sub-way Company should be established upon the plan as stated in a Prospectus then issued, which meeting was adjourned to the 4th December, at the same place; when a Committee was appointed to report to the next meeting the number of miles in the City of London capable of receiving Sub-ways—the expence per mile of making the same in brick and in iron—and the probable amount of income to be derived from the proposed undertaking. This Committee is now sitting, and will report the result of their enquiries in the course of the Spring, which, from the large sums now expended in disturbing the Pavements, and the general advantage to the public by preventing a nuisance of such long standing, and daily notoriety, there is great expectation will be favourable to its adoption.

Whether a Public Company of individual interests, or Trustees under Government, will be the best for the general welfare, is a question for

consideration? In the first, their property, being their own, is likely to be well done, and properly attended to for their own advantage; in the second, the annual taxes for Paving, &c. may be taken off, and the income derived from the Water and Gas Companies, who make use of the convenience of these public Sub-ways.

The extent of this project is so considerable, and the utility of it, not to say the necessity of it, is so manifest, that several sets of Commissioners, or Directors, will be necessary to carry the whole into immediate effect. The magnitude of the metropolis will require, in addition to the one in the City, a north, east, west, and south Sub-way Company; and those large provincial Towns, where sewers are constructed, and pipes laid in the streets, will each of them require a Sub-way Company.

Sub-ways connecting themselves so intimately with the public sewers, this brief narrative of the early proceedings respecting them is very respectfully laid before the Parliamentary Committee of the Honourable House of Commons, appointed to enquire into the powers of the Commissioners of Sewers in the Metropolis, and to report their observations and opinion thereupon to the House,

By their obedient Servant,

THE PATENTEE.

No. 78, Cornhill, London.

*Circular sent to each Member of the House of Commons
on the Sewer Committee, April 12th, 1823.*

SIR,

Having had the pleasure of communicating to you my project for forming Sub-ways, to prevent the opening of the ground for the water and gas pipes, or for disturbing the pavement for any purpose whatever; I now beg leave very respectfully to acquaint you, Sir, as a Member of the Parliamentary Committee appointed to enquire into the powers of the Commissioners of Sewers, &c., that, in addition to any information I can give, an Engineer of eminence is willing to attend the Committee, to explain any points that, in their opinion, require elucidation, as to the practicability of constructing Sub-ways in the metropolis; more particularly as to their connection with the Sewers.

Waiting your order, I remain, SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN WILLIAMS.

No. 78, Cornhill, London.

The following observations respecting the proceedings of this Committee, and the subject, appeared shortly after, in one of the Public Journals:—

PUBLIC SEWERS.

This subject, so important to the cleanliness and health of the metropolis, and upon which we believe little more is generally known by the public, than the fact that a collector makes his periodical application for "the sewers rate," was brought under the consideration of the House of Commons in the course of last Session. Soon after the meeting of Parliament, a Select Committee was appointed "to enquire into the powers vested in, and exercised by, the Commissioners of Sewers in the metropolis, and to report their observations and opinions thereupon to the House." This enquiry was, we believe, intended as preliminary to the introduction of some general legislative measure on the subject. If this was the object, the labours of the Committee went just far enough to shew its necessity, but not "a jot" farther. We never saw another instance where a Select Committee so completely mismanaged their time, or so entirely lost sight of that which the examination of their first witness had clearly established, namely, the necessity of some *immediate* legislative measure by which the powers and duties of Commissioners of Sewers might be more clearly defined, and an authority to exercise an efficient controul over their proceedings vested in some public and responsible officer. The Committee met first on the 5th of March (Peter Moore, Esq. Chairman); next on the 11th; again on the 25th;

from which time the subject appears to have been *sent to Coventry* until the 11th of June. The enquiry was then resumed, and continued on the 12th, 17th, and 19th of that month, when it ceased. From this period to the 10th of July (the date of the Report), one would imagine that there was sufficient time for the Committee to put together in regular form their "observations and opinions" (as they were directed to do by the House) upon the evidence before them. Instead of this, we find them, on the 10th of July, making the following report, or rather apology for not making one:—

"The Select Committee appointed to enquire, &c., have, pursuant to the order of the House, examined into the several matters to them referred, and have examined several witnesses" (four in four months!), "but from the *advanced stage* of the Session"—(what were they doing during the four months? one of which, if well employed, would have been time fully sufficient for all the purposes of the enquiry)—"they do not deem it expedient to offer any opinion on the subject to the House at the present time, *except*" (which, in fact, is no *exception*) "to *report* the evidence taken before them."—Had the Committee made this or any other report two months earlier, as they well might have done, full time would have remained for the introduction and completion of some legislative measure on a subject so important to the health of the metropolis. We do not think that

the sewers will be worse attended without such Act; but we know that, under the present system, the public are called upon to pay for sewers rates immense sums annually, upon the application of which there is, in our opinion, a very inefficient controul. This will be best proved by giving an abstract of the evidence as far as it relates to the powers of the Commissioners, and the manner in which they act.—There are three Courts or Boards of Commissioners in the metropolis (at the north side of the Thames.) The first superintends the district of the Tower Hamlets, extending to the sewers in Spitalfields, Hackney, Mile End Old Town, Mile End New Town, and part of Limehouse, all the parts in the vicinity of the Tower, the Commercial Road, Ratcliffe, &c. The second Board is for the Holborn and Finsbury division, extending to the Parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, and the Liberty of Norton Falgate, (this is for the Finsbury district). The Holborn district comprises the parishes of Hampstead, St. Pancras, St. Andrew, Holborn; St. George the Martyr, part of St. George, Bloomsbury; part of St. Giles, and the Liberty of the Rolls. The third Board is for “the City and Liberties of Westminster, and part of the County of Middlesex.” The jurisdiction of this Board extends to Hampton, Teddington, Twickenham, Isleworth, Hanwell, Brentford, Acton, Ealing, Hammersmith, Fulham, Kensington, and Chelsea; and to and within the City and Liberty of Westminster, to Temple Bar, and to parts of

St. Pancras, Marylebone, Hampstead, Wilsdon, and Paddington. In the Tower Hamlets division, the Commissioners are appointed by the Commission of the Lord Chancellor, which is renewed at intervals. The last Commission is dated February, 1821, and contains 150 names. The original Act under which the appointment was made, was the 23d of Henry VIII., c. 5. By this Act it appears that the qualifications necessary for a Commissioner of Sewers were, "that the Commissioner shall be an *utter* Barrister in one of the four Inns of Court, which is a gentleman practising in the Courts, not a Chamber Barrister; that he have lands of the yearly value of forty marks; that he be free of some City or Corporate Town; and that he have moveable substance (personal estate) to the clear yearly value of £100, and that he take an oath prescribed, to discharge his duty impartially, and without fear, favour, affection, &c." These were formerly the qualifications; but we presume that most of them have long since been dispensed with. It would be very difficult for the Lord Chancellor to find 150 practising Barristers who would undertake so troublesome a task, particularly for the kind of remuneration hereafter mentioned. In the evidence of J. W. Unwin, Clerk to the Commissioners, it appears that "they have no remuneration, excepting *a dinner* on the Court-days, which happen *four times* a year." The average number of Commissioners who assemble on Court-days is from 35 to 40. The principal business of

the Commission is performed by a standing Committee, consisting of 12, who are appointed at the first meeting of the Court, under a Commission. The Committee meet once in every month (except the month of August), and are also remunerated by *a dinner* on each day of meeting. The duties of the Committee are to give directions for doing the necessary works in the interval between the quarterly Courts; and to receive and decide upon petitions for leave to use the public sewers. They report their proceedings to the full Court, by which they are ratified or reversed. Under the orders of the Committee are the clerk, surveyor, inspectors, and messengers, who have fixed salaries. The business of the Board is conducted at No. 15, Great Alie Street, Goodman's Fields.—The nature of the proceedings of the Board is thus explained by Mr. Unwin:—"Upon the declaration of a new Commission, this Court issues a precept to the Sheriff of Middlesex, to summon from the body of the County 48 good and lawful men, of whom 23 are sworn;—this the Court has power to do, under 23d Hen. VIII., cap. 5, before alluded to: this Jury are sworn in Court, and charged by the Chairman, who directs them to present, upon oath, the state of the embankments and of the sewers. On this presentment, which is chiefly formed on views taken, and which also comprehends the persons and property liable to be rated, the Court proceeds to nominate assessors, who state the apparent value of each man's estate

which the Jury find liable to be assessed, and which, upon proper evidence, is adopted; an estimate is then made by the surveyor of the necessary expences of these works, upon which the rate is founded, at so much in the pound. Collectors are then appointed in open Court, who enter into bond in a sufficient penalty; defaulters, or persons aggrieved, are summoned, and may be heard by the Court before any distress warrant issues against their property. If they are over-rated, or rated higher than the poor-rate, they are relieved. If they are desirous of trying the question, whether the rate is legally assessed or not upon them, and whether they receive benefit, or avoid damage, they may bring an action of trespass against the Collector, when the Commissioners of Sewers are bound to shew that all their proceedings are legal, and that the parties do actually receive a benefit, or avoid a damage (by the sewers): otherwise they cannot make out their defence."—The assessment is made by a poundage on the rental, the same as the poor-rates. The rate is in all cases paid by the landlord, except where an agreement to the contrary is made between him and the tenant. It appears that the Jury are remunerated for their trouble in inspecting the sewers, by *a dinner* every day they are out. The inspection generally occupies five or six days. They are always attended by the Surveyor and Clerk of the Board. The authority under which the Commissioners of the Tower Hamlets act, seems doubtful; and they

may be put to the defence of an action for trespass by every person on whom they levy. In this and other respects, some legislative measure seems necessary. The Board of Commissioners for the Finsbury and Holborn districts are appointed by the Lord Chancellor; but their proceedings are regulated by local Acts, (the 18th and 54th Geo. III.) The Commissioners are remunerated by dinners, for which the sum of £450 is allowed. The difference between their powers, and those of the Commissioners of the Tower Hamlets is thus stated by Mr. J. W. Lush:—"Under the new Act we do not empanel any Jury: when a rate is necessary to be made, we call upon the Vestry Clerks to furnish copies of the poor-rates; these are transcribed, and a rate made adequate to the supposed expence of the ordinary repairs of the sewers, and the contingent expences of the Commission, upon the rentals returned by the Vestry Clerks. Two copies are signed by the Commissioners in Court, and one part delivered to the collectors. Immediately after the expiration of three months from the time of making the rate, the persons who have not paid are summoned; and at the ensuing Court, unless the parties have been relieved, or their rates mitigated, distress-warrants are issued. By those Acts the tenant is liable to be distrained for the rate; but it is to be allowed him by the landlord, except in cases where there is an agreement to the contrary. Here, also, as in the Tower Hamlets, actual benefit, or avoidance of injury, must be

the ground of the demand for any rate; but the Commissioners are empowered to decide who does or does not receive a benefit from the sewers. The number of Commissioners appointed for this district by the Commission of 1816 was 179, of whom many have since died. In the Westminster district there are 196 Commissioners, upwards of 40 of whom are "Peers, and other Right Honourables;" the remainder are for the greater part gentlemen of rank and fortune. They act under some local Acts (47th Geo. III.) There is a small remuneration allowed them for attendance (4s. each day), but it is never claimed. The Court is formed by from 12 to 18 Commissioners; but there must be six at least to render their proceedings legal. A Jury here, as in the Tower Hamlets, is sworn to present for the works and repairs, and also the parties liable to pay; but with this difference—that the Westminster Juries *do not proceed to view the several places respecting which they present*. According to the evidence of Mr. Houseman, the Clerk to the Commissioners, it is *ten years since a Jury went out to inspect*. Maps and plans of the several places are drawn up, and estimates of the expences are submitted to them by the officers of the Commission, who are sworn to answer all questions which the Jury may think proper to ask. Upon the information thus afforded, they form their opinion, and return their presentments."—We do not pretend to say that any unfair advantage is taken of the public by this mode of

presenting public works; but undoubtedly it is liable to abuse, and we think ought to be remedied. The average amount of the expences under the Westminster Commissioners is from £20,000 to £25,000 a year. The expences of the Finsbury and Holborn divisions are about £10,000 a year. In the Tower Hamlets division no regular annual rate is made. There have been four rates made within the last 20 years, amounting to £49,565; but the amount actually collected was only £38,365. Of this £22,293 were expended in works; the remainder in contingent expences. The only controul over the extent of the rate, or the mode of its application, is the discretion of the acting Commissioners. Would it not tend to diminish the chances of abuse if each Board of Commissioners were obliged to make an annual return to Parliament of their receipts and disbursements for the preceding year?—If the “Select Committee” should ever resume their labours, we trust they may turn their attention to the public sewers at the Surrey side of the Thames:—they will find much matter on which to exercise their legislative functions, provided they shall be of opinion that the sewers of Southwark and its vicinity ought to be considered as belonging to “the metropolis.” The following are the levels or altitudes of certain streets above the highest high-water-mark of the River Thames, measured from the surface of the carriage-roads:—

	Above the highest high-water-level.	
	Fect.	In.
North end of Northumberland-street, (Strand)	19	7
North end of Wellington-street, (Strand)	35	6
North end of Essex-street, (Strand)	27	0
West end of Coventry-street, (Haymarket)	52	0
Pall-mall, (opposite the south end of St. James's-street)	13	3
Piccadilly, (at the south end of Air-street)	49	8
Piccadilly, (at the north end of St. James's-street) ..	46	7
Ditto, (at the south end of White Horse-street).	24	6
Prince's-street, (at the west end of Gerrard-street, Soho)	61	4
Broad-street, Bloomsbury, (at the west end of Drury- lane)	65	0
Oxford-street, (at the south end of Berners-street) ..	74	3
Ditto, (near to Stratford-place)	59	4
Ditto, (crossing Regent-street).	76	0
Ditto, (at the south end of Orchard-street).	70	4
New-road, St. Marylebone, (opposite the north end of Cleveland-street)	80	10
Ditto, (at the centre of the Regent Circus).	77	2
Ditto, (at the north end of Gloucester-place).	72	3
Regent's-park, (at the road on the north side of the aqueduct crossing the Regent's-canal).	102	6
Great George-street, Westminster, (opposite the south end of King-street)	5	6

Westminster.—The whole surface of Westminster, excepting a small part surrounding the Abbey, and a very small part of the Horseferry-road, is below the level of the highest tide.

In April, 1823, the Sheriffs of London presented a Petition to the House of Commons from the Corporation of the City of London, praying for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Acts relative to the Sewers in the City of London; which was referred

to a Committee, consisting of the Members for the City and others—Alderman Wood, Chairman.

On the 11th of April, Mr. Alderman Wood, Member of Parliament for the City of London, presented a Petition on the subject of the Subways of the Metropolis:—Ordered to be printed, and referred to the Committee on the London Sewers Bill.

*TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND IRELAND, IN PARLIAMENT
ASSEMBLED.*

The PETITION of JOHN WILLIAMS, of Cornhill, in the City of London, most respectfully sheweth—

That your Petitioner in the month of October last obtained His Majesty's Royal Letters Patent, for preventing the opening of the Pavements in Streets, Roads, and public Ways, for laying down and taking up pipes, and for other purposes; which Patent promises to be of great public utility;—that your Petitioner has seen a Bill lately presented to your Honourable House, for amending the Acts relative to the Sewers in the City of London;—that your Petitioner by his said invention can importantly aid the objects of that Bill, and prevent the annoyance of frequently opening the Pavement for forming and repairing

the Sewers ;—that he is willing to surrender his Patent for that general purpose, upon such terms as Parliament shall deem meet ;—and prays that a clause or clauses shall be introduced into the said Bill, to prevent the frequent opening of the Pavements in the City of London, by connecting Subways with the public Sewers.

This gratuitous offer to the Corporation of London was intended to give the power for commencing the work whenever and wherever it should be thought proper. By inserting this clause, the full authority would be possessed, without its being obligatory on the Commissioners to build Subways; and the money would be raised for this purpose under the authority of the Sewer Act. But it is not very easy to drive new matter into old heads, or change the habits of ancient Bodies:—this was particularly evident in this instance; for the Commissioners of Sewers having had great power for centuries, all improvement seemed innovation, and could not be thought of even at the threshold of Parliament itself, from whom they derived their authority. It should, however, be observed here, that in conversation with several Members of the House on this subject, it was their opinion that Subways were of sufficient importance to claim a separate Act of Parliament.

This Committee on the London Sewers Bill consisted chiefly of the City Members, who were

attended by the Chairman, Mr. Deputy Greenaway, and some of the Commissioners of Sewers from Guildhall.

Mr. Williams attended this Committee constantly; but they avoided the enquiry with peculiar jealousy, and at length filled up their new Bill to advance the City Rates, from one shilling to eighteen pence in the pound; the preamble and particulars of which are inserted in pages 27 to 31, without hearing him, or investigating the subject. In consequence of which, the following letter was sent to Mr. Alderman Wood.

To Mr. Alderman Wood, South Audley Street.

May 8th, 1823.

SIR,

On attending you this morning in the Committee Room of the House of Commons, on the London Sewers Bill, respecting the Petition you presented from me to the House on the 11th of April, on the subject of Sub-ways, which was referred to that Committee, you informed me it was not before them, and referred me, with the Clerk of the Committee, to inspect the minutes of the House. In those minutes we found the reference *to the Committee on that Bill*, which Committee has not received it. Blame therefore must attach itself somewhere, either in non-compliance with the forms of Parliament, or in disobedience to its orders.

Why it was not before that Committee, you, Sir, have the best knowledge; but Mr. Gunnell considers there has been some mistake.

It was fully my intention to obtain from Parliament a clause in the London Sewers Bill, for power to construct Sub-ways, which would have greatly increased the comforts of every individual, and enlarged the authority of the Commissioners of Sewers; which I lament this mistake has prevented at present.

I am more concerned for this circumstance, because the sections and drawings of the Sub-ways, which the Engineer, Mr. Reveley, had to shew to the Committee to-day, would have removed any prejudice from every candid mind, of the facility and safety of the construction of Sub-ways in the City of London.

I have now therefore to request the favour that, as a Member for the City, you will advise me, either to present another Petition to the House—to refer my Petition back to the Committee on the London Sewers—or to receive the order of the House to refer it to Mr. Moore's Committee, who at present have no authority from the House to enquire into it.

I remain, Sir, your obedient Servant,

JOHN WILLIAMS.

No. 78, Cornhill.

A second Petition was then presented.

*TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND IRELAND, IN PARLIAMENT
ASSEMBLED.*

The PETITION of JOHN WILLIAMS of Cornhill,
in the City of London, most respectfully sheweth,

That your Petitioner, on the 11th day of last month, presented a Petition to your Honourable House on the subject of Sub-ways, to prevent the opening of the Pavements in Streets, Roads, and public Ways, for laying down and taking up pipes, and for other purposes ; praying that a clause or clauses might be introduced into the London Sewers Bill, then and now in progress through your Honourable House ; which Petition was referred to the Committee on that Bill.

That your Petitioner, in consequence, and with the importance of your order, attended that Committee, accompanied by an Engineer, with sections and drawings of the said Sub-ways ; when he was informed by the Chairman that his said Petition was not before them, and they had no authority to enquire into it ; which refusal appears to have originated in some mistake on the part of the Member who presented the said Petition.

Your Petitioner therefore most humbly prays that the said Petition, presented by him on the

11th of April, 1823, on the subject of Sub-ways, be referred back to the Committee on the London Sewers, or that it be referred to the Committee of your Honourable House now sitting, to enquire into the powers of the Commissioners of Sewers, &c. in the Metropolis, and to report thereon to the House.

May 28th, 1823.

The City Members and the Commissioners of Sewers now found themselves in a very awkward dilemma, as the Bill was evidently in the hands of Mr. Williams; for had he got any Member of the House to move that the Bill should be recommitted, to consider of his Petition, in obedience to their own order, the Session would have closed before the Bill could have been passed, and it would consequently have been lost.

The City Remembrancer accordingly called upon him, to request, as a favour to the Corporation, that he would suffer the Bill to pass without opposition; as the new rates could not be collected if he persisted in having it recommitted.

Had he shewn the same temper which the City Authorities displayed towards him, he might have delayed this enormous increase of taxes for twelve months at least, and in the meantime have awakened the attention of the Citizens to resist it, or at any rate to enquire into the necessity of the Bill altogether; but that not being his object, he

consented to Mr. Remembrancer's request, to oblige the Corporation of the City of London.

Having thus closed the proceedings with the two Sewer Committees in the House of Commons, the subject will come forward with considerable interest, by the addition of the drawings for the elucidation of Sub-ways, presented to the Patentee by Mr. Reveley, Civil Engineer.

The following letter was received from Mr. Reveley, April 30th.

Dear Sir,

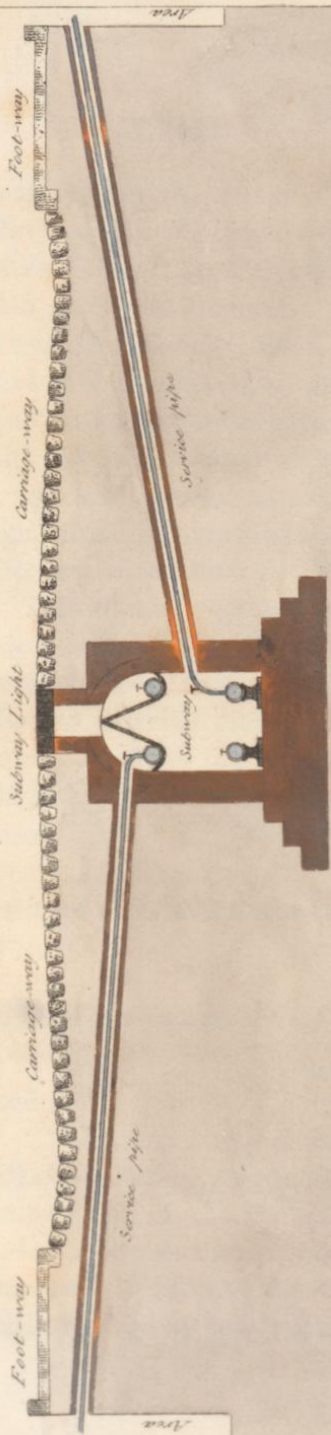
In reply to your favour of the 29th instant, I have the pleasure to acquaint you that the drawings are ready. They are four in number, *viz.*—1st, A transverse section of a Street provided with a Sub-way or Tunnel, for the reception of the Water and Gas Pipes ; in this drawing are also represented the lateral openings for the service-pipes.—2d, A transverse section of a Sub-way, including the common sewer; the lateral communications are also shewn.—3d, A longitudinal section of a Street with its Pipes.—4th, A Plan of the same.—Whenever you can make it convenient to call, I shall be happy to shew you these drawings. I shall generally be at home in the forenoon of every day, except Friday next.

Dear Sir, your's very truly,

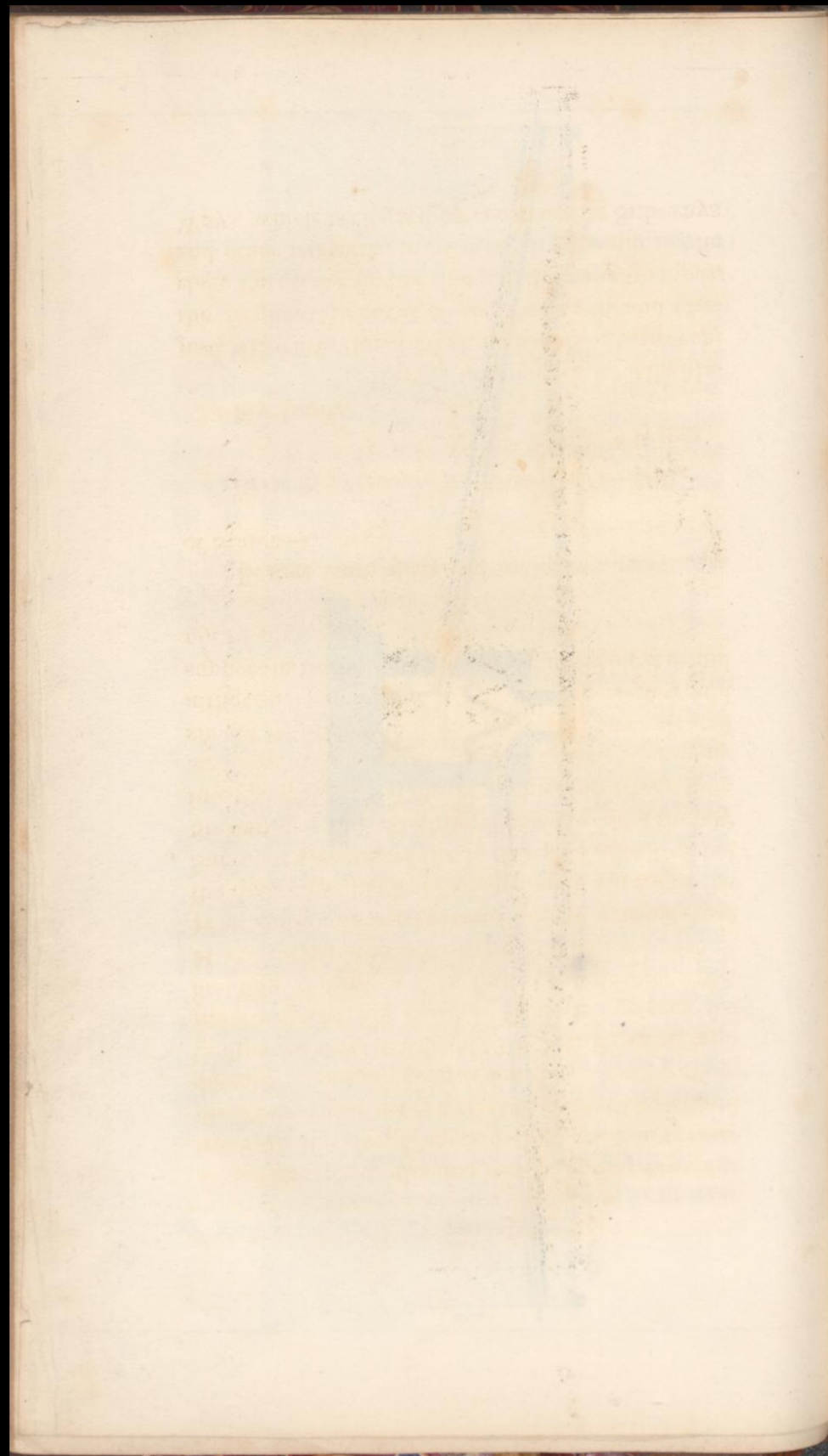
HENRY W. REVELEY.

33, King Street, West, Bryanstone Square.

A Subway with Service pipes



No 2. 3. 4. half the size of No 1.



A few days after the receipt of the drawings from Mr. Reveley, Mr. Williams waited on several Members of Parliament, to exhibit the Plans as laid down by this competent Engineer. Among these Gentlemen was Mr. Davies Gilbert, F. R. S., who frankly gave his opinion that the project for building Sub-ways was quite practicable. Mr. M. A. Taylor was also waited on at his house at Whitehall, who was pleased to recommend that the drawings should be immediately shewn to the Surveyor General of the Board of Works, Colonel Stevenson. This attentive officer entered minutely into the subject; and during an hour's conversation, strongly recommended that a Public Company should be formed to bring the work forward; and although he could not say that Government would support it, he thought it was very probable it would not be opposed.

Letters were then sent to the two Secretaries of State:—

To the Right Honourable the Earl of Liverpool.

May 13th, 1823.

My Lord,

Having lately obtained His Majesty's Royal Letters Patent, for a method to prevent the frequent removal of the Pavement and Carriage Paths, for laying down and taking up pipes, and other purposes, in Streets, Roads, and public Ways, which is effected by constructing Sub-ways

in the manner specified, and enrolled according to the terms of the said Letters Patent ; and having petitioned the Honourable House of Commons, offering to surrender the said Patent, as therein stated, which Petition has been referred to the Committee now sitting upon the subject of the Sewers of the Metropolis ; I beg, with the greatest respect, to address you, my Lord, as the Prime Minister for the Crown, to permit me to introduce the subject to your notice, as a national object of great magnitude and public importance, for the improvement of every City and Town in this great empire, and of the metropolis in particular ; and request the honour of an interview, to exhibit the Sections and Drawings of the said Sub-ways, now first brought forward, before they are presented to the Committee of the House of Commons.

I have the honour to remain,

With the greatest respect,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN WILLIAMS.

Cornhill, London.

To the Right Honourable Robert Peel.

May 13th, 1823.

Sir, Having lately obtained His Majesty's Royal Letters Patent, for a method to prevent the frequent removal of the Pavement and Carriage Paths, for laying down and taking up pipes, and other purposes, in Streets, Roads, and public

Ways, which is effected by constructing Sub-ways in the manner specified, and enrolled according to the terms of the said Letters Patent; and having petitioned the Honourable House of Commons, offering to surrender the said Patent, as therein stated, which Petition has been referred to the Committee now sitting upon the subject of the Sewers of the Metropolis; I beg, with the greatest respect, to address you, Sir, as the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to permit me to introduce the subject to your notice, as a national object of great magnitude and public importance, for the improvement of every City and Town in this great empire, and of the metropolis in particular; and request the honour of an interview, to exhibit the Sections and Drawings of the said Sub-ways, now first brought forward, before they are presented to the Committee of the House of Commons.

I have the honour to remain,

With the greatest respect,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN WILLIAMS.
Cornhill, London.

The paving being up in various parts of the metropolis, the following Placards (one on each side of the boards), by two men, were carried through the streets daily, from June 30th to August 12th:—