

In view of three recent disastrous fires in New York and Brooklyn, all of which originated from furnaces in the buildings, as many if not a majority of fires in the winter season usually do, the *Tribune* remarks: "Possibly after a long time these repeated conflagrations will suggest to some innovating architect the notion of erecting blocks of houses heated from a single furnace built in a broad court-yard remote from any combustible matter."

The *Tribune* does not seem to know that its suggestion is not new but that buildings have been heated in that manner in greater or less numbers, for years past. Hungerford and Cone's large building in Hartford, erected ten or fifteen years ago, is heated by steam generated in a large boiler situated in a little building in the yard, from whence the steam pipes run to every room and also to numerous radiators in the halls, so that for warming purposes there is no need of ever having a fire in any part of the building.

Yale College has also resorted to this mode of heating several of the largest buildings on the college grounds. A deep excavation was made on the corner of Elm and High streets and covered with a roof, the eaves of which are just above the surface of the ground, like an ice house. In this pit they generate the steam which rushes through large pipes, under ground, like gas pipes, to the several buildings, and is distributed through the rooms designed to be heated and thus the necessity of building fires in those buildings is avoided.

Prof. Silliman, Sen., used to say that the time would come when buildings would be heated by hot air, or steam, carried underground as they are now lighted by gas obtained in the same manner and possibly his prediction may have suggested to the corporation the idea of testing its feasibility on a small scale. Such a system might easily be tried by any number of householders at no very great expense. Steam could also be used for most culinary operations in any household and thus comfort be secured, danger of fire avoided, the nuisance of coal houses, getting in coal, coal scoops, shaking stoves, building fires, replenishing them, the dust from the stoves, the noxious gases, sifting ashes, and the whole train of disagreeable duties connected with the present system, would disappear and leave in place thereof houses evenly warmed, cleaner and neater than in summer time, when the windows are open and the dust blows in from the streets. With this steam, water could be boiled and the present system of hot and cold water, or a great improvement thereon, could be used as now, while steam would answer not only as well, but a great deal better than coal fires for cooking and almost all, if not all kinds of kitchen work. The price charged for this steam would be fixed in proportion to the number of cubic feet to be warmed, while for the kitchen it would vary as the whole number of persons in the family from which the amount of cooking, washing, ironing, &c., could be approximately determined, also with reference to the presence or absence of hot water apparatus in the house.

We think that such a system could be inaugurated which would be very agreeable, much more healthy than coal stoves, or these abominable furnaces, with their dust and gases, and enable people to entirely dispense with fires in their houses, and yet perhaps be economical.

Take Beaver street for instance, from Main street to West street. Place a large steam boiler in some out of the way place, and run pipes from it to all the houses, churches, and other buildings on both sides of the street. The coal could be bought cheap by the cargo, one man only by day and another by night would be sufficient to care for the works, and then whenever any occupant of any building desired heat he would only have to turn on the steam and the heat would come instantly. He could then graduate the heat just exactly to his liking and have it at whatever points he preferred. This plan is feasible. It would be necessary to lay the underground steam pipes in some non-conducting substances of which there are several, and then the waste from underground condensation would be nearly if not altogether prevented. As Bridgeport is a wide-awake place, ready for any new thing which is also a good thing, why will not the Beaver streeters, or some other aggregation of families, or the Main street merchants, look favorably at this matter and put in the works next summer?