

THE COMING AGE OF STEAM.

It has been somewhat more than a year since the **EVENING POST** first suggested the propriety of heating towns and cities by steam, the steam to be furnished to householders by a company, precisely as gas is already furnished. When we made this suggestion and pointed out the desirability of its adoption we had little doubt that in due time some company would act upon it, but we had little reason to expect that practical measures would follow as speedily as they have done.

The company which is about to undertake the work of supplying heat to the houses, churches, factories, shops and offices of Lockport, N. Y., has adopted precisely the plan which the **EVENING POST** suggested, and the men who are engaged in the enterprise have so little doubt of their success that they will begin by building an adequate set of works at considerable cost. There is really no problem to be solved in the matter, no experiment to be made. The problems were long ago wrought out in the heating of large public buildings, inns and factories by steam, and the new application of the principle differs from the old only in ways which favor its success. One set of workmen is required for each battery of boilers, whether the work of the battery is to heat a single building or a dozen blocks; and if steam heat is cheaper than any other, when applied by individual effort to single buildings of considerable size, the saving must be much greater when a single set of workmen attend the boilers that furnish heat to all the houses within an area of half a mile square.

There is room for the adoption of this plan, profitably, here in New York and Brooklyn, and the time is propitious for beginning now, while labor is cheap, while the weather is cold, and while householders are keenly alive to the annoyances of fire-making and fire-maintenance in their dwellings. There is no good reason for postponing the matter to await the result of the Lockport undertaking, as the use of steam in this way is in no proper sense an experiment. Once introduced in these cities, steam will soon become as much a matter of course as water is now. The Bridgets and Gretchens, whose first question now at the preliminary conference which precedes their engagement has reference to stationary tubs and other modern improvements, may soon insist also upon having steam heat, and landlords may find it impossible to let houses into which this latest modern improvement has not been introduced. We shall then live in a real age of steam.