

# LOCAL MATTERS.

## The Water Works.

The question is now often put "How goes the Water Works?" betraying an anxiety to see them completed and the water introduced to our city. It is not strange that there should be anxiety in this respect,—for our people have suffered more this year than ever before for want of water. Drouth has been the rule since spring. The streams, wells, cisterns,—all are now lower than ever known before at this time of the year, and if the ground should immediately freeze it is difficult to see how the public want for water can be supplied the coming winter. The Genesee River was never so low in October before in the memory of the living. The mills on the upper races are doing next to nothing, and some are wholly stopped. Many attribute the prevalence of fever to the absence of water. However this may be, it is probable that if soft water were plenty in Rochester and the people bathed freely, there would be less fever and less of other diseases.

Water is indispensable to the future prosperity of Rochester—not to say to its existence—and water we want, and that with a little delay as possible. While a large majority of our citizens who are poor, or in moderate circumstances—still those who aggregate a large proportion of the taxes—favor the construction of water works and are willing to be taxed for their construction, too many of the rich—who do not feel the pressing want of water for daily use—are thrown into spasms at the bare mention of water works. As a consequence of this state of feeling, those engaged in the construction of the works do not invite public attention to what they are doing, and perhaps do not care about what the public may think. They are non-residents of our city—have already invested a large sum of money, and hope ere long to introduce water and get some return. They have had so little favor from the public that they are free from obligation, and if by and by they should, like the Gas Company, make enormous profits, citizens who did not give their aid to the undertaking will have no cause to grumble.

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We have made some inquiry as to what the Water Works Company is doing and has done, though of its intentions for the future we know nothing as we have not sought information at headquarters. We find that about fifteen miles of distributing pipe have been laid in the streets of this city. All this is covered up and out of sight, but it is ready for use when the water shall be brought in. We notice that the work of laying the large main across the Genesee above Clarissa street is nearly completed. This is an important piece of work, as that is the conduit upon which all that part of the city lying west of the river must depend.

The great reservoir for the storage of water is located in Henrietta, seven miles from the city. That is indeed a fine piece of work, and is fast approaching completion. It has a surface of twenty acres. The banks are ninety feet in thickness at the base and twenty-four feet high. This large depository will hold water sufficient to supply the city for three months and so wholly cover that period in summer when the mills fed from Hemlock Lake might be affected by the drawing of water for the city. This is the largest artificial reservoir in the United States, we think. The work of making the trenches between this reservoir and the city is going on we are told, but how far that has gone we are not advised.

The farmers now begin to realize the advantages they are to enjoy from the laying of the mains across their lands. They can for a moderate sum secure all the water they desire, and many of them the past summer would have cheerfully paid five times a fair water tariff for an abundance of this indispensable element. Cattle have suffered for water on many farms the past summer. To a good stock farm water from the water works will be worth even more than to a manufacturing establishment in the city.

It is hoped that the day is not far distant when we may celebrate the introduction of pure water to Rochester. It will be one of the great events in our local history.