

The Rochester "Water Works" Again.

Ups. U. & A.—Having noticed for the last few weeks several articles in the Rochester papers as to the best source of supplying Rochester with water, permit me to make some suggestions through your columns for the benefit of those interested. In the articles referred to propositions have been made to take water from the Genesee River, Lake Ontario and Hemlock Lake. It is to the last named source that I wish to call your attention. To convince you that I know what I am writing about, I will state for the benefit of all concerned that I have resided twenty-nine years within twenty-five rods of Honeoye Creek. During that time I have been more or less interested in water privileges of this stream, and have observed the gradual decrease of water, examined into the causes thereof, and have traveled every year more or less through the towns of Canadice and Springwater. I will first call your attention to the inlets of Hemlock Lake. Springwater village is situated at the head of this lake, it being twenty-eight years ago a large depot for pine and hemlock timber with three or four saw mills running night and day, and I well remember when traveling on the lower road every few rods we had to cross a spring brook that rushed down the hillside both summer and winter; but it is not so now, there being but a few small springs left, and they are becoming "beautifully less" every year. (It would be natural to ask why these changes have been brought about; this is easily explained.)

Thirty years ago there were extensive pine and hemlock forests in the towns of Canadice and Springwater, and now they are nearly all cut off and in their stead cultivated fields. About four or five miles south of Springwater valley is a large tract of land formerly known as Wayland Swamp, which was perpetually covered with water, forming a large reservoir which supplied the streams and springs that eventually found their way into Hemlock Lake. This swamp was situated on what is now called Summit Level, and the building of the Corning & Avon railroad drained the swamp so that the owners thereof are cutting it up into farms, and from this cause the greatest portion of water which once flowed northward, finding its way into Hemlock Lake, now runs in a southern direction. It is a fact which needs no demonstration from me to prove that when land is cleared of its timber, exposing it to the wind and sun's rays, the process of drying and evaporation must follow, and the beds of streams and rivulets which once supplied large quantities of water for this Lake are at nearly all seasons of the year as dry and arid as the "Desert of Sahara." Canadice and Hemlock Lakes are surrounded with hills which are cultivated nearly to the water's edge. The soil about these Lakes is a mixture of yellow clay and sand, the clay being largely predominant, and when washed by heavy rains the surplus water carries with it all the movable dirt and filth, depositing them into the beds of these Lakes, making the water dirty and filthy and totally unfit for use for a long time. Underlying and intermingled with the

and filthy and totally unfit for use for a long time. Underlying and intermingled with the soil which covers the whole range of hills in that region are species of slate and shale rock more or less saturated with petroleum, and should anyone doubt this I would recommend a visit to the gas well in West Bloomfield for further information on the subject. It has been truly said that the perfume clings to a withered rose, and it is quite possible that the *sweet-scented petroleum* which this water must contain may not make its presence known to the olfactories, yet a perfect analyzation might prove its presence.

Prominent capes, formed of sand clay and shale rock "washed from the hillsides," are continually extending themselves into these lakes and gradually but surely filling them up. As the supply of water becomes reduced by evaporation and discharge through the outlet, a vegetable growth may be seen in many places reaching far out into the lake. Allow me to refer you to one circumstance. During the dry season, three years ago, the water became so poisoned from the decay of this vegetation that the fish in large numbers died and floated down the outlets, and I am credibly informed that cattle even died from drinking the water at that time. Other striking and disagreeable instances might be cited. Sickness among the inhabitants around the foot of the lakes and along the outlets was attributed to the same poisoned condition of the water.

As to the supply of water, permit me to say that for the last eight months there has not been water enough in the outlet of these lakes at all times to run the machinery to near their capacity, and when there is a surplus it is generally of that character which renders it unfit for domestic or culinary purposes. I wish now to call your attention to the amount of capital on the outlet in improved privileges and the aggregate of business done which will be materially affected by the proposed diversion of the water. The amount of capital invested is over \$200,000, consisting of nine custom and merchant mills with thirty-three runs of stone, and five saw mills, five furnaces and machine shops, two woolen factories, one planing mill, one sash and blind factory, one spoke and fellow factory, two barrel, stave and heading factories, two wood turning shops, one millwright and turning shop—employing in all nearly one hundred and fifty hands, with an aggregate product of about \$800,000 annually. The amount of horse power employed is 928. This is for the water power now improved and in use on the outlet below Frost Hollow.

In addition to the above interests directly hazarded, a large community is to be substantially damaged; and perhaps it would not be overstating the situation to say that that community propose to look watchfully to its interests.