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IN ASSEMBLY,

January 19, 1832.

REPORT

Of the select committee to whom was referred the memorial of the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and Commonalty of the city of Troy, for leave to purchase the charter of the Troy Water-Works company, and for certain amendments thereto.

Mr. Kemble, from the select committee to whom was referred the memorial of the mayor, recorder, aldermen and commonalty of the city of Troy, for authority to purchase the charter of the Troy water-works company, and for such further powers as are necessary to supply the city of Troy with pure and wholesome water,

REPORTED—

In order to furnish to the inhabitants of the city of Troy a plenary supply of pure and wholesome water, as well for the extinguishing of fires as for all domestic purposes, the common council of that city have negotiated with the "Troy Water-Works company," for the rights and privileges granted to them, by their act of incorporation: and the said "Troy Water-Works company" having determined to accede to the terms and disposition of their charter, proposed on the part of the common council, the petitioners pray that a law may be passed, authorising them to take possession of the rights, privileges and immunities belonging to the "Troy Water-Works company," and investing them with such further powers as shall be necessary to carry into effect the object which they have in view.

The act incorporating the "Troy Water-Works company," passed April 18, 1829. It was not the intention of that company to supply the city of Troy with water for any other than domestic purposes. But the great utility which may be found in a supply of water ap-
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plicable at all times to the extinguishment of fires, and the facility with which water, in sufficient quantities for such a purpose, may be introduced into every part of that city, by means of conduits, reservoirs and hydrants, have induced the people of that city to take the whole business of furnishing it with water for the uses before mentioned, into their own hands, by the agency of their common council. The Troy Water-Works company have delayed the prosecution of their works to give time for the passage of the law now asked by the petitioners.

It is evident to the committee, that the "Troy Water-Works company" can not enlarge their reservoirs, aqueducts, conduits and other works, and prepare and keep in order and readiness the hydrants and other apparatus, so as to render them efficient in the extinguishment of fires, without a much larger compensation than would be required for the privilege of using the water for family purposes. To fix a just and equitable sum as a compensation for the water, which may from time to time be required in extinguishing fires, in the city of Troy, is no easy matter. During one year very little water, for such a purpose, might be required. During another, negligence or incendiary efforts might require a constant and repeated use of it. Hence it seems to be an exceedingly difficult question to decide, upon what terms a corporate company should be required to furnish that city, at all seasons and upon all occasions with a plenary supply of water for the extinguishment of fires. The law prayed for by the petitioners obviates this difficulty, by giving the corporation the power to supply this water, at its own expense, subject to its own regulations.

The introduction and circulation of water over every part of such a city as Troy, by the aid of conduits and hydrants, is certainly an object of great importance. And when the fact is considered, that from a fountain sufficiently elevated, which has been placed by nature within a short distance, water may be taken into that city through viaducts, and by the force of gravity thrown into or over its highest buildings, the propriety of granting the prayer of the petitioners, will be most apparent.

The health of the inhabitants of every densely populated place, mainly depends upon the purity and salubrity of its waters. Indeed, the axiom that pure water is the *most* necessary amongst all the necessaries for the sustenance of human life, has stood for cen-

turies far beyond the reach of controversy. The city of Troy is dependent upon wells, cisterns and the Hudson river for all its water for domestic use, and for the extinguishment of fires. The water derived from the wells, is seldom of a good quality for culinary purposes, and in no instance has been found sufficiently soft for the uses of washing. It is also well known that as the population of the city becomes more and more dense, the water in the wells becomes more impure, arising, it is believed, from the fact, that these waters in the earth, are necessarily impregnated with the impurities which unavoidably accumulate upon its surface. The supply of water which cisterns are calculated to afford, is both limited and contingent, either for domestic use or other purposes. And, as neither wells or cisterns have hitherto been adequate to supply engines in case of fire, recourse has been had to the Hudson river; from whence water has usually been taken and conveyed through suction hose to the place where it was needed. In many cases water has been thus carried, full half a mile. But this resort for water and this method to convey it for the extinguishing of fires, have been found quite inadequate. The time occupied in preparing the hose and stationing the engines is so great, that the fire frequently spreads so far before water can be obtained, that its progress is with difficulty arrested, if arrested at all.

The committee, from the foregoing, and other considerations, are of the opinion that the public interests, and especially, the interest, convenience, health, and security against fire, of the citizens of Troy, will be greatly promoted, by granting the prayer of the petitioners. They have, therefore, directed their chairman to bring in a bill, the provisions of which, in regard to the lands and waters to be occupied by the petitioners for the purposes before mentioned, are the same as were granted to, and are now held by the "Troy Water Works Company." In addition to these, the bill provides for giving to the petitioners authority to hire money on behalf of the city of Troy, for the construction of the contemplated water works, and likewise authorises all incorporated companies having power to loan money, and also, the Comptroller of the State on account of the Canal Fund, to loan such money to the city of Troy, if such companies, or the Comptroller, may deem it safe and expedient so to do.

All which, with the bill, is respectfully submitted.