

PART FIRST.

GAZETTEER

OF
WASHINGTON COUNTY, VT.

1783-1889.

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“He that hath much to do, will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.”—SAMUEL JOHNSON.

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THE MONTPELIER VILLAGE WATER WORKS.

In 1860 George B. Reed, Esq., demonstrated the feasibility of bringing water into Montpelier from Berlin pond, by a preliminary survey, and measured distances and altitudes. The next step to be taken was to secure the right of way along the route, and possession of the water. This he failed to accomplish, and the enterprise slept the ensuing twelve years.

In 1872 Samuel Wells and Mahlon Taplin so agitated and advocated the necessity of an adequate supply of pure water for culinary, sanitary, and fire purposes, that the village appointed a committee to make further investigations, and gave them a year in which to make their final report. Mr. Wells was placed at the head of the committee, and within the time had procured an adequate charter. The committee also made estimates of cost, and reported at the end of the year. All were convinced by the favorable report, but some advocated the use of substantial iron pipes, others less expensive cement pipes. This disagreement killed the enterprise and it rested another twelve years.

Again, in 1883, the question came before the village, and December 17, of that year, the following named gentlemen were elected bailiffs, and instructed to complete the system of water supply: Ward No. 1, Morton Marvin; No. 2, Joel Foster; No. 3, A. J. Sibley; No. 4, A. O. Cummins; No. 5, S. M. Walton. The board of bailiffs elected Mr. Foster their chairman, and the work was pushed with such energy that it was completed the ensuing October. The sequel is that Montpelier has now a water supply which is unsurpassed by any in Vermont.

Berlin pond has an area of 231 acres, and the reservoir, a little more than a mile down the stream, from the outlet of the pond, from which the main pipes are laid, contains an area of four acres, and is 364 feet above the village. The village completed its work by laying a main pipe of twelve inches in diameter, from the reservoir, from which water was carried into the houses of every one that desired it, and at a very moderate expense. The village has a system of hydrants, at convenient distances, and with the immense pressure of the great fall a fire of any extent has been unknown since the system has been inaugurated. The village found the supply of water largely in excess of the demand, for the purposes which it was originally designed, and the surplus has been rented to turn motors that drive light machinery. To encourage manufacturing, and produce revenue, the village has (in the season of 1888) laid another main pipe from the reservoir to the village, of twenty inches diameter, and many prophesy that in a little time the water works will pay all municipal expenses. The analysis of the water, by the state assayer of Massachusetts, shows it to be of unusual purity.

Telegraph and Express.—At the October session of the legislature in 1848 the Vermont and Boston telegraph was chartered, and, in connection with the Cheney & Co. Express, an office was opened in the Central Vermont railroad