

passed through the village in 1824. Subsequently, a shaft was sunk, and sufficient gas concentrated to supply thirty burners. Thirty-seven years afterward, another shaft was sunk thirty feet, and two borings were made—one to 150 feet. In 1858, two thousand cubic feet of gas were delivered daily through the village.

During the years of the great oil excitement, from 1860 to 1870, many of the borings for oil reached only gas. In Knox county, Ohio, in 1860, two wells were sunk for oil. In both, streams of salt water were intercepted, and, at about six hundred feet, an immense reservoir of gas was struck. The gas ejected the water with great violence. The first well was bored in the winter, and the water soon covered the derrick with ice, forming a kind of chimney sixty feet in height. Through this, the water was thrown, at intervals of about one minute, to double that height, or 120 feet. After the water, and with it, came a great rush of gas, which continued until the pressure below was relieved, when the water again began to accumulate, and was again ejected. The process was entirely analogous to the action of the geysers described in Talk XIV. In the Knox county well, gas took the place of steam in the geyser. When the derrick was covered with ice, the gas escaping from the well was frequently ignited, and the effect, especially at night, of this fountain of mingled fire and water, shooting up to the height of one hundred and twenty feet, through a great transparent and illuminated chimney, is said to have been indescribably magnificent.

When I visited the spot, in 1866, a two-inch gas pipe had been fixed in the orifice of the second well, and the gas was escaping with a power and volume which were startling. The sound could be heard for a quarter of a mile. The pressure was two hundred and sixty-two pounds to the square inch, as reported by Mr. Peter Neff. The ignited jet formed a flame twenty feet in length, and as large around as a hogshhead. It was an exciting spectacle. If the stop-cock were closed a few minutes and again opened, the accumulated pressure gave a volume of flame as large as a house. The supply of gas