

ELECTRICITY FROM A WINDMILL.

Mr. Feely's Plant for Lighting His House Said to be the Only One of the Kind.

After experiments extending over two years, Joseph J. Feely of Walpole, Mass., has succeeded in installing an electric plant run by a windmill, by means of which his house, stables, and grounds are lighted by electricity. It is said to be the first and only really successful windmill electric lighting plant constructed at a reasonable cost.

In the development of this plant the main obstacle, from an electrical point of view, was the variability of the wind and the resulting erratic fluctuations of the electric pressures, which rendered their utilization impossible, and also subjected the ordinary mechanical connections to excessive and fatal strains. To overcome this, there were devised a self-regulating constant voltage dynamo and a so-called speed equalizer. The windmill shaft is connected with the speed equalizer, which has means for mechanically storing energy and for overcoming the frequent temporary subsidings of the wind. The wind power, after having been converted into electric energy, is conveyed to a system of storage batteries, from which in turn the electric service is drawn. An ingenious controlling device prevents the reaction of the storage batteries upon the dynamo and a resulting fatal reversal of the whole process.

The owner, Mr. Feely, has tabulated wind statistics, both from the United States Weather Bureau and from continuous personal observations made under his direction, and finds that the actual wind available for his equipment is far in excess of the requirements of his own or other like residences, the storage capacity being ample to bridge him over any possible period of calm. This plant has been so nicely adjusted that it is possible to utilize a very much lower rate of wind speed than has ever been attempted before.

Another feature of this plant is that it could be duplicated for about seven or eight hundred dollars, and as it can be run for a dozen or fifteen years with practically no expense, other than for lubricants and occasional cleaning, it could be brought within the reach of a very large number of people. Mr. Feely's early experiments taught him that a plant of this kind could not be operated, even with the primary generating energy free of cost, if constant personal supervision was necessary, and this system has been so arranged that it is entirely automatic, and need not be looked after oftener than once or twice in a fortnight.

One of the things that strike the average observer in an examination of the plant is the absolute and unvarying uniformity of the lights, even in the midst of the most fitful and changing winds, which do not seem to have any effect whatever upon the lamps. This system has been in operation now for several months, and has been subjected to almost every possible test, and seems to be equal to any contingency that can probably develop.

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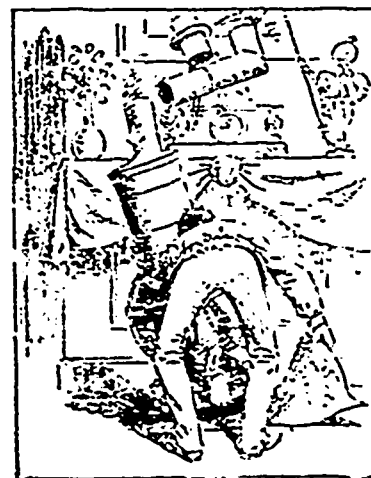
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