

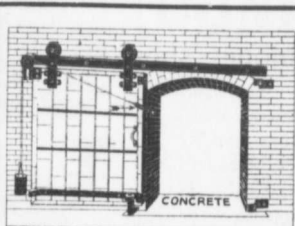
water service always at hand, always convenient. This benefit is the element which is usually termed the "readiness to serve," and the expense to the water department of its readiness to serve is always far greater than the mere cost of pumping and distributing water. Furthermore, the fixed charges and operating expenses for each meter service amount to several dollars per annum; and this expense, together with a sum sufficient to cover the "readiness to serve," is properly chargeable to each consumer, large or small, before the rate per gallon can fairly begin to apply.

To provide for these two expenses, the first method which naturally suggests itself is the establishment of a minimum meter rate. Here again there is a pitfall. If this minimum be too small it will not accomplish its purpose. If it be too large, or if the rate per gallon for small daily uses be too small, the average domestic consumer may draw far more water than he actually needs without paying more than the minimum rate; and this condition will destroy the usefulness of the meter as a means of checking waste.

To set meters wholesale, without due regard for the foregoing facts, would not only work an injustice to some classes of consumers, but might mean financial disaster to the water department; and this in turn would be a misfortune to the whole community.

To develop the full efficiency of the meter as a means of checking waste, and to make each consumer, large or small, pay his fair share of the total receipts of the work,

(Continued on page 16.)



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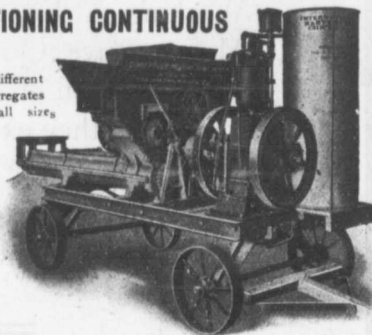
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