

### THE COST OF POWER.

A suggestive paper on the comparative cost of generating power by the steam engine, water turbine, and gas engine was read before a Mechanical Science section of the British Association, recently, by Mr. J. B. C. Kershaw, and the opinion was expressed that water, when developed, without excessive capital expenditure, is the cheapest source of mechanical or electrical energy. The supremacy which the steam engine so long enjoyed, it was pointed out, was now assailed by the water turbine and the gas engine. Two years ago the aggregate amount of power generated from falling water was estimated to be between 236,000 and 350,000 h.p. Gas engines up to 650 h.p. had been built, and worked smoothly and economically, and blast-furnace gases were now utilized in many places for driving the engines which supplied the blast.

The question which the engineer had now to settle when deciding upon the site and locality for a new factory was no longer so simple as when only one method of power generation in large units was open to him. In all cases where purely local considerations did not settle the matter, the most economical source of power could only be determined after an exhaustive study of comparative cost. Mr. Kershaw gave a table of comparative costs which, he said, supported the opinion now generally held, that water, when developed without excessive expenditure, was the cheapest source of mechanical or electrical energy. Electrical energy generated by falling water was costing more at Rheinfelden, at Zurich, and at Buffalo than it would cost in South Lancashire if

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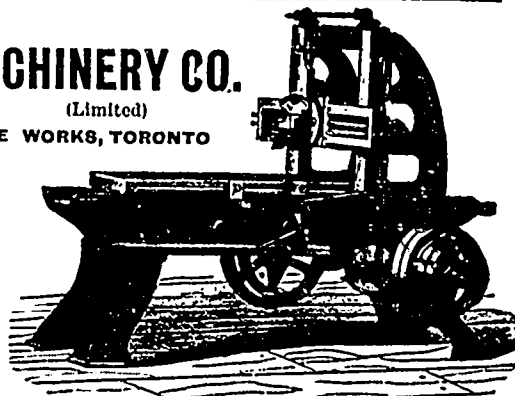
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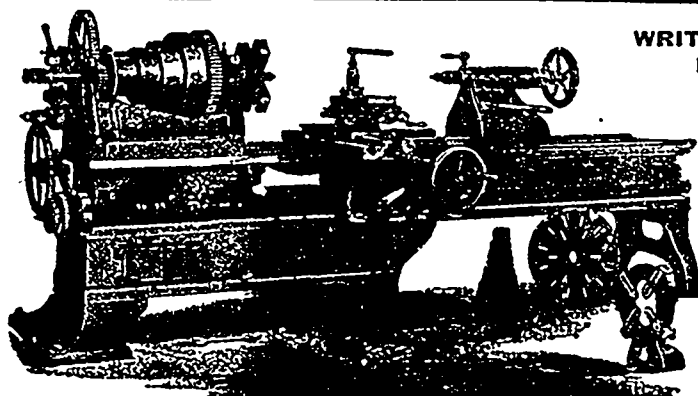
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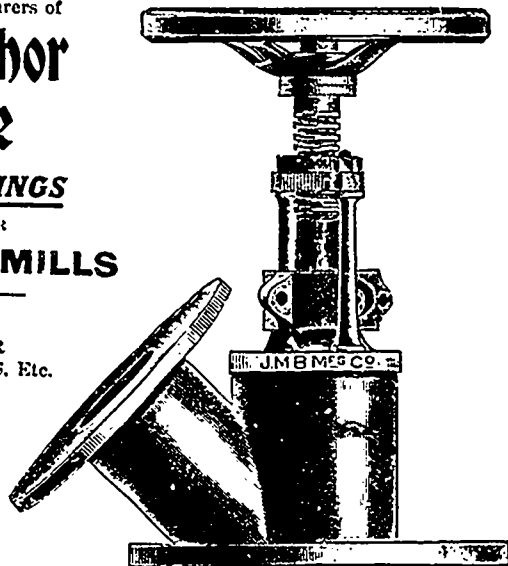
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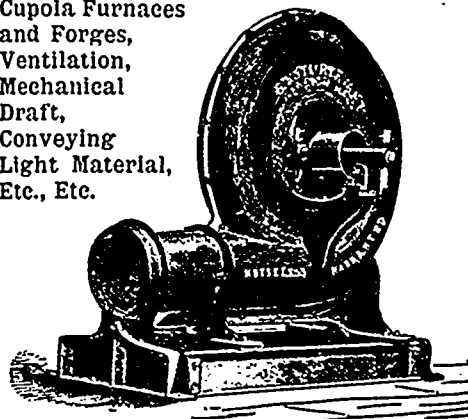
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