

"My friend, David Pollock, who was about the earliest promoter of the introduction of gas from the invention of Mr. Winsor—the first successful experimentalist with it in his own dwelling—and for 30 years Governor of the Chartered Gas-Light and Coke Company, was so concerned in the application, that he hastened to London from the Circuit to be present at the lighting of the bridge and pagoda with this new flame. Mortifying to relate, it will be remembered that the pagoda caught fire: the gas was put out, happily without explosion, and every part thrown into smouldering darkness."

In 1814, a Committee of Members of the Royal Society was appointed to inquire into the causes which led to an explosion of the Gas-works in Westminster, which had only just been established. The Committee consisted of Sir Joseph Banks, Sir C. Blagden, Col. Congreve, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Rennie, Dr. Wallaston, and Dr. Young. They met several times at the Gas-works, for the purpose of examining the apparatus, and made a very elaborate Report. They were strongly of opinion that if gas-lighting was to become prevalent, the Gas-works ought to be placed at a considerable distance from all buildings, and that the reservoirs, or gasometers, should be small and numerous; and always separated from each other by mounds of earth, or strong party-walls.

In 1822, St. James's Park was first lighted with gas; and the last important locality to adopt gas-lighting was Grosvenor-square in 1842.

Theatres were first lighted in 1817–18; church clock-dials in 1827. The Haymarket was the last of the London theatres into which gas was introduced, in consequence of some absurd prejudice of the proprietor of that theatre, who bound the lessee to adhere to the old-fashioned method of lighting with oil. The change took place April 15, 1853.

Coal-gas is made from coal enclosed in red-hot cast-iron or clay cylinders, or retorts; when hydro-carbon gases are evolved, and coke left behind; the gas being carried away by wide tubes, is next cooled and washed with water, and then exposed to lime in close purifiers. It is then stored in sheet-iron gas-holders, mis-called gasometers: some of which hold 700,000 cubic feet of gas; and the several London Companies have storage for millions of cubic feet of gas. Thence it is driven by the weight of the gas-holders through cast-iron mains or pipes under the streets, and from them by wrought-iron service-pipes to the lamps and burners.

The London Gas Company's works, Vauxhall, are the most powerful and complete in the world; from this point, their mains pass across Vauxhall-bridge to western London; and by Westminster and Waterloo Bridges to Hamstead and Highgate, seven miles distant, where they supply gas with the same precision and abundance as at Vauxhall.

Gas made from oil and resin is too costly for street-lighting, but has been used for large public establishments. Covent-garden Theatre was formerly lighted with oil-gas, made on the premises; and the London Institution, with resin-gas, first made by Mr.