

The committee are engaged in the preparation of a bill which they flatter themselves will remedy many of the evils complained of if passed into a law.

During the stay of the committee in Baltimore, they were invited by Columbus O'Donnell, Esq., President of the Gas Company, to visit the company's works and examine the meter invented by Crosley for the measurement of gas; and as a case had been referred to the committee to report a bill for the appointment of an inspector and measurer of gas in the city of Baltimore, the acceptance of the invitation came within the province of the committee's duties.

From the verbal explanations made upon the ground by Mr. O'Donnell, the President, and Mr. Mowton, the Secretary of the Company, it would be impossible for the committee to convey a correct idea of the character of the gas meter.

The committee have therefore taken the liberty to embrace in this report the following communication from the Secretary of the Company, which contains some valuable information in reference to this matter, not now in possession of the public.

*Baltimore, February 1st, 1842.*

FRANCIS GALLAGHER, Esq.

*Chairman of the Committee on Inspections.*

Sir,—In conformity with the suggestion of a member of the committee, I take the liberty of presenting to their consideration some facts relative to the Gas Light Company of Baltimore, which it is presumed may have a bearing on the question of reporting a bill, authorizing the City Councils to appoint an inspector of meters.

The Gas Light Company had its origin under an ordinance of the city, dated 17th June 1816, which ordinance was ratified by the Act of Assembly of December session 1816, chap. 257. At this time gas was universally sold, at so much per burner, according to the quantity that the particular kind of burner was supposed to consume in a given time. This mode of sale permitted of numerous abuses, to remedy which, mechanical and scientific ingenuity were long tasked in vain. The bat wing burner, for instance, was enlarged by a file and a drill, performed the same office for those with circular openings. It was a frequent practice too, to leave the gas burning all night as a protection against thieves, and in one or other of these methods, double and treble the quantity of gas was used, that the manufacturer was paid for supplying. It was soon seen, that if the whole quantity consumed was averaged among the whole number of consumers, those who used the gas carefully, would pay too much, and those who used it lavishly, would pay too little. It therefore became an object of equal interest to the manufacturers and the careful consumers, to devise a method, by which the quantity each consumer used, could be ascertained. This was at length accomplished by Crossley, the manufacturer of the gas meter. Wherever gas is