

WATER SCARCE AND DISCOLOURED

Householders' Complaints

A humorous correspondent last week suggested that the Waterworks Co. might wash the water before serving. Complaints on this score as also on the cutting off of the water for some hours daily have been frequent of late. It was also generally felt that if the Waterworks Co. would take the public into its confidence rather more, the latter would be quite ready to enter into difficulties from which the Company might be suffering and to await better times calmly. The following explanation has now been given us by the Company.—

“The discolouration of the water and shortage during certain hours the last few days is due to the abnormal state of the river; statistics show that the amount of silt in the water in the Huangpu River is higher than ever recorded. This is caused by the long spell of dry weather and the very unusual lowness of the Yangtze (mentioned in the “N.-C. Daily News” recently).

“The effect of this abnormal amount of silt is to render filtration extremely slow, and with the extra demand for water that always occurs just before the Chinese New Year, it has been found impossible to keep up the usual supply during the day. It is hoped that the present rain will improve matters to some extent. The Waterworks Company informs us that every effort is being made to provide an increased supply and to mitigate the inconvenience to consumers at the earliest date possible.”

The reference in the above to an extra demand for water before Chinese New Year is decidedly interesting. These days, it appears, are used by all good Chinese housewives for a general wash up and spring cleaning, and again and again it has been found latterly that pressure has been worked up only to be taken off at once by the abnormal Chinese demand.

As regards the rest of the explanation, the Company tell us that they have said nothing hitherto, as they were hoping every day to be able to improve matters. It appears that the French Waterworks Co. has also been suffering from shortage through the same causes.