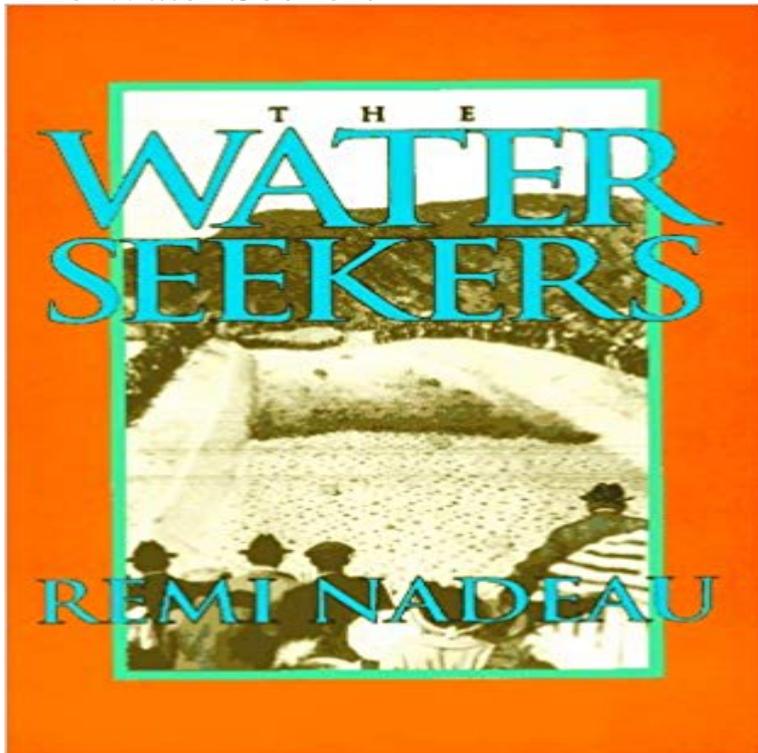


The Water Seekers



Excerpt from The Water Seekers Until the rise of modern cities these Roman aqueducts were unrivaled. In the early 1600s the spreading metropolis of London turned afield for more water, building a twenty-mile conduit from two great springs in Hertfordshire. The United States saw its first big water quest when the rising city of New York, bursting with a population of launched its forty-mile aqueduct to the Croton watershed in 1832. On its completion ten years later, most New Yorkers agreed with the earlier prophecy of De Witt Clinton: It is not at all probable that the city will ever require more than it can provide. But New York proceeded to ignore his words and perplex her water engineers with an astonishing growth. Her population had passed when drought struck in 1880. The city was separated from thirst by a ten-day water supply in the reservoirs when timely rains forestalled disaster. Having experienced water famine, New York last little time in reaching out for a new supply. A second aqueduct, tapping the full limit of the Croton watershed, was finished barely in time to save the city from an other desperate drought in 1891. The Big Towns resolute expansion sent water engineers farther afield by the early 1900s. A hundred miles north of New York lay an enormous new source in the wooded and sparsely settled Catskill Mountains; in the ten years from 1907 to 1917 the city built a third great aqueduct over the route, more than doubling its Croton supply. While construction was in progress another drought visited New York in 1911, forcing house-to-house checkups on leaky faucets. Only by careful water conservation did its citizens hold off water famine until the completion of their Catskill Aqueduct, which served a population of more than Outpacing all other American cities in size, New York was also pointing the way in the business of seeking water. About the Publisher Forgotten Books publishes

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