

is soon contaminated with gases which are not health giving, though they may not immediately kill.

"There was a time when wells dug down into the solid rock furnished pure spring water. By an occasional cleaning of the well one generation after another could go on using this water without a doubt of its purity. But estates have been divided and sub-divided, other wells have been sunk, and new cess-pits dug—the latter perhaps, on account of the narrow limits of the place, close to the well of some old homestead.

"Soon the soil becomes impregnated by the liquid filth, and, naturally, the water of the wells in the neighborhood is infected. This has continued until it is the exception where the water of a well is found fit for domestic purposes.

"In some portions of the city, owing to the neglect of the public authorities to remedy existing evils, the air became laden with poison germs, and so reduced the system of many that they readily fell victims to any contagious disease which might spring into existence.

"The importance of placing under strict vigilance the inmates of a house where such disease existed, was overlooked, so that the death-rate of Newport, though small as compared with other cities, was large in those diseases which might have been prevented.

"Eminent physicians, summer residents of Newport, anxious as well for the reputation of the city as to adapt the place to the necessities of city patients, alluded in print to the importance of measures being taken to improve its sanitary defects, and complaints were addressed to the city authorities by native physicians and others. But these appeals were unwelcome and unheeded, and, far from what was earnestly desired, resulted in openly expressed ingratitude to the authors of them.

"Although the board of aldermen were empowered by the State to appoint a board of health, which should have all the powers and duties conferred upon the board of alderman, as a board of health; and, notwithstanding the wish of the people and a memorial signed by the physicians of the city, yet they practically refused to exercise their powers, nor would they confer them upon others."

Dr. Lee thereafter referred to the work which this Society laid out for itself to perform, and indicated from a circular issued by it and stated that such

must be the work which any such Association must undertake. He then outlined a constitution and urged the adoption of some such plan for mutual protection upon those present.

#### Eminent Success of the Smead Dry Closets in the New Queen Victoria Public School, Parkdale.

Of the many improvements made in the Public School buildings throughout the country during the past few years the attention that has been given to the sanitary department is worthy of commendation. While water closets within the building did away with the dangers arising in cold or wet weather from the use of the old-fashioned privies, which, of necessity, were placed at the greatest possible distance from the school building proper, they nevertheless introduced a greater evil, in the shape of the introduction of the deadly sewer gas and the long vexed question of closets for the accommodation of the pupils where they should not be exposed to the dangers arising from the sudden change from the often overheated school-room to the chilling blasts of the outer winter atmosphere seemed impossible of successful solution. But the appearance of the Smead system of dry closets in conjunction with their system of warming and ventilating has proved, after being in operation in hundreds of public buildings throughout the United States, that closets could be provided within the main building from which no smell would arise and in which all the excrement could be consumed without necessitating the disgusting and dangerous process of removal. The system consists of the vitiated warm air passing from the various apartments under the floors being received in a gathering room, and passing, on its way to the ventilating flue over the excrement, which thoroughly dries it, forming it into fuel by just the same process as the vast buffalo manure deposits on the plains have been transformed by the action of the air into what is known as buffalo chips, the only kind of fuel to be found on the plains, which is almost exactly similar in manner of burning to bituminous coal.

Having spoken of this system from time to time in the columns of *The Mail*, and as it came to our knowledge that the closets in the new Queen Victoria school in Parkdale were to be burned out, *i.e.*, cleaned, the school term having recently closed, we sent a representative to report upon the matter. The handsome structure is a source of just pride