

and in every group of houses there will be some affirmative replies—the chances are ten to one that they refer to the vapour from the carbolic acid, which has attracted attention by escaping from the drains. If in these suspected houses an effective search be made, some defect will come to light which has allowed the leakage of sewer-gas from the drain in the house. There are many other methods of detecting flaws in house-drains and sewers; but as a ready and practical way, I believe carbolic acid volatilised by steam to be the most generally applicable. And it must also be remembered that if the process were carried out methodically, and at regular intervals, it would insure a periodical disinfection of the sewer-channels, as well as a detection of their structural imperfections.”

DISINFECTANTS.—The sixth of the new series of Reports of the Medical Officers of the Privy Council and Local Government Board contains an article on the study of disinfectants by Dr. Baxter. A great number of very careful experiments were made with a view to test the disinfecting properties of the so-called disinfectants commonly used. Evidence was adduced to show that carbolic acid, sulphur, permanganate of potash, and chlorine are all endowed with true disinfectant properties though in very varying degrees. The effectual disinfectant operation of chlorine and permanganate of potash appears to depend far more on the nature of the medium through which the particles of the infective matter are distributed than on the specific character of the particles themselves. Aerial disinfection as commonly practised in the sick-room, is either useless or positively objectionable, owing to the false sense of security it is calculated to produce. To make the air of a room smell strongly of carbolic acid by scattering carbolic powder about the floor, or of chlorine, by placing a tray of chloriae of lime in a corner, is, so far as the destruction of specific contagion is concerned, an utterly futile proceeding. The practical result of these experiments goes to prove (1) that dry heat, when it can be supplied, is probably the most efficient of all disinfectants; (2) that the old plan of stopping up crevices and fumigating with sulphur and charcoal is more efficacious than any other proceeding with more modern disinfectants; (3) that the use of carbolic vapour for disinfecting purposes should be abandoned, owing to the relative feebleness and uncertainty of its action.—*Med. Times & Gaz.*

Each full grown man in effect deposits his own dead, effete putrescible body in the vault of the privy once every forty days.—*Segur.*