

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION.

SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING, NASHVILLE, TENN., NOV. 18-21, 1879

The meeting was held in the hall of the House of Representatives, and called to order on Tuesday, November 18th by Prof. J. L. Cabell, M. D., President, at 12 o'clock. Prayer was offered by Rev. O. P. Fitzgerald, of Nashville.

## THE DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE OF CITIES.

BY COL. GEO. E. WARING C. E., OF NEWPORT, R. I.

The President has asked me to prepare a paper concerning the most perfect methods of city sewerage, one which may serve as a standard of comparison in considering the character of existing work. It would savor of presumption to describe or to prescribe methods radically different and better than those now in use. It is impossible to foretell the improvements which are to grow out of the present rapidly increasing interest among intelligent and ingenious men in all that relates to sanitary practice. If I were to attempt now to set forth the details of a perfect system of sewerage I fear that my recommendations, like Dr. Richardson's City Hygeia, would surpass what practical men and investors of capital would accept.

The most that it is prudent to do is to consider the question in its purely sanitary bearings, and to indicate in what way the best requirements of public health may be met, in the light of our present knowledge.

So far as we can judge of the future from the indications of the present, it would seem that, in one respect, we are to witness a very marked change in the practice of sanitary engineering. There is much reason for believing that there will be a distinct separation between the application of sewerage to the removal of domestic and manufacturing wastes and soil water and the construction of conduits for the protection of public and private property against the action of storm water. This latter, like the construction of roadways and bridges, will be treated as a purely civil engineering question, having, at best, only an indirect sanitary relation. The interests of public health, so far as sewerage is concerned, will, in my opinion, be best served by a close adherence to the collection and removal of foul waters, and to their proper and final disposal.