

Professor Ansted believes that the method employed is a satisfactory solution of the sewage question in its application to inland towns which cannot discharge their waste directly into the sea. The system requires no chemicals, no large extent of land, no costly apparatus, and no superior intelligence to work it. It checks the cumulative nuisance of polluted streams, and reserves for those streams the office of carrying only waste water and storm water to the ocean.

VENTILATION OF DRAINS.—ARE WATER-TRAPS NECESSARY.

BY ERNEST TURNER, F.R.I.B.A.

That there can be no smell from a drain because it is trapped is now known to be a fallacy, although there are many that still cling to the idea that a half inch or less water-seal gives immunity from the entrance of foul gases into dwelling-houses; but it has been conclusively proved that gases can pass water-traps by three methods—viz., by pressure from without, by suction from within, and by absorption and evaporation.

One of the latest theories is that water-traps are unnecessary under closet basins, and under lavatories, sinks, baths, etc., even if the waste be connected with the drain, provided certain patents and means of ventilation be adopted. This view, however requires very careful consideration and experiment before we accept it. 'Wise men shave on the chins of fools,' and there are many, having too great a faith in advertisements, and forgetting the maxim 'Caveat emptor,' who are willing to pay to be practised upon without really considering that the question may be one of life and death.

In a matter of so much moment the public should feel indebted to those who devote time and money in testing these theories before putting them into actual practice, and honestly give the results of their experience.

Those incompetent to make trials for themselves, and unable to obtain the advice of the expert, will do well to remember the old lines—

Be not the first on whom the new is tried,
Nor yet the last to set the old aside.

Before coming to the main subject of this article, I desire to state my long-formed conviction that it is a common error to suppose that the offensive effluvia in water-closets always proceeds from the sewer, for where 'pan-closets' are used it often really arises from decomposing matter collected on the outside of the basin and copper pan and on the inside of the iron container. I could instance numerous cases in which this nuisance has, without other means, been temporarily stayed by cleansing the apparatus and burning out the container, or entirely removed by the substitution of a valve closet. This has been recognized by Mr. Buchan, of