

and unobserved, gradually deteriorate health, predispose to malignant fevers, and not seldom end in premature death.

Having witnessed so many instances of the dangerous consequences resulting from such causes, and being aware that by comparatively cheap and easy means such misfortunes can be averted, I deem it a duty to communicate my views on the subject, not only to the profession, but also to the public through the medium of the *British American Journal*. I am the more desirous to express my sentiments at this moment, from the circumstance that two deaths have taken place from putrid fever within a few days. This is only an aggravated case of what frequently occurs, and it is well to state the circumstances:—An old privy was emptied in a neighbouring yard, the workmen, hardy fellows whose mental and physical vigour was kept up as well by the excitement of a good fee as by oft repeated glasses of brandy, finished their unsavoury job with little inconvenience, but two weakly boys, taking interest in what was passing, remained on the spot during the process; they were somewhat annoyed by the smell at the time, and felt unwell in the evening; the next morning they were attacked with constant nausea and gastric pains—the unequivocal symptoms of typhus set in, which baffled every effort, and in four days one of the boys died, and the other followed him a few hours after. The peculiarity and severity of the symptoms lead to an investigation, when the above facts were elicited.

In towns where privies, cesspools and congenerous materials are necessarily confined in narrow limits, it is a difficult matter to avoid the noisome effects of such accumulations, yet by means very cheap, easily applied and readily obtainable, the many mischiefs that arise from such causes can be in a great measure overcome, and that often by substances that are looked upon as burdens and annoyances. The soot from stovepipes and chimneys, as well as the ashes, the lime of old white-wash, refuse salt and pickle, and all such other substances as are met with in every house, should be thrown into the privies—they will not only correct much of the vile odour, but will act as absorbents, reduce the volume of the poisonous matter, and give it a consistence which will greatly facilitate its removal. The refuse substances mentioned, which are constantly thrown either into the yard, street or road to the annoyance of every one, would thus be turned into most useful agents, and the whole would form very valuable fertilizers for the agriculturist. But as these matters cost nothing, they are deemed worthless; well, to meet this contingency, let the lovers of that which must be purchased be made acquainted with a few of a variety of drugs that must be bought and cost but little, and are readily applied and most efficacious. And, indeed, during the hot weather, decomposition and putrescency are so rife that the domestic articles above alluded to would scarcely be in sufficient abundance to meet the requirements, hence the advantage of having other ingredients to resort to.

One pound of green vitriol dissolved in a bucket of warm water, should be sprinkled in the privy or dung heap; or the same quantity of alum, or both may be combined. One pound of oil of vitriol in a gallon of water would answer the same purpose, care being taken in the use of the acid, as it is a violent escharotic. Another most efficient solution is that of soda ash, one pound in a