

THE Sanitary Review

SEWERAGE, SEWAGE DISPOSAL, WATER SUPPLY AND
WATER PURIFICATION

DR. HODGETTS AND THE CONSERVATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

The appointment of Dr. Hodgetts as medical adviser on matters affecting public health to the Conservancy Commission at Ottawa marks another step in the advance of preventive medicine in Canada.

The great interest the doctor has taken, as chief medical officer of health of Ontario, in all questions affecting water supply and sewage purification, and his general grasp and knowledge of the underlying principles of these subjects, will make it difficult for the Provincial Government to fill his place, but at the same time the Dominion as a whole will gain by the interprovincial appointment.

Dr. Hodgetts at an early date appreciated the great importance to public health of pure water, that its continued dependence was closely related to the question of sewage disposal, and the adoption of active measures to prevent the contamination of sources of water supply.

He has done good work in Ontario in bringing to the front questions of sanitary engineering; his work in this direction has, however, been more of a casual than defined character. The reason for this exists in the fact that the doctor has not had the proper support and backing of the Government by the adoption of efficient prominent legal machinery for making sanitary engineering a provincial feature of his work. No one, we think, has felt this more than the doctor himself. With a Public Health Act which hints more at, than insists on, sewage disposal, and appears to ask that plans for prospective work be submitted rather than demanding such, Dr. Hodgetts has still been able to exert an authority and influence over municipalities productive of results.

Dr. Hodgetts excels as an organizer and administrator; and there are many in Toronto who know him, who feel a keen disappointment that he was unable to accept the position of M.O.H. made vacant by the resignation of Dr. Sheard.

The doctor is more of an evangelist in hygiene than a disciple of the higher criticism. He is content with the broad facts, and makes a bee line for apparent deductions which will effect practical and immediate results. He is in no sense of the term a research or laboratory man, but a tiller of the soil, looking straight for the harvest. When he lectures, even before his brother scientists, there is no striving after learned effect, but simple words and simple lantern slides tell a story absolutely convincing and refreshing.

We call to mind an occasion of only last year when he addressed the Saskatchewan Medical Association at Saskatoon. The doctor simply walked on to the platform and talked practical common sense for twenty minutes, and illustrated his points with simple, realistic pictures of tuberculosis cases and methods of treatment, and asked that an association be formed throughout the Province, with committees in every city, town and village,

with a view to spreading information of a preventive character. The Chief Commissioner of Health, Dr. Seymour, took the reins in hand. At the present time there is hardly a city, town or village in the whole Province which is not organizing and doing great work in fighting the white plague.

This is the sort of work that Hodgetts is cut out for. As an organizer he will make his personality felt throughout the Dominion, which has claimed his services.

The general principles of pure water supply and sewage disposal, which the sanitary engineer has at heart will gain rapid ground by the doctor's influence and common sense enthusiasm, and, although he will be missed in Ontario, and by no body more than by his own staff, still, as part of the Dominion, Ontario will continue to benefit by his activities.

Dr. Hodgetts' work and his practical abilities have received world-wide recognition. Only recently he was the recipient of royal favor by being appointed an Esquire to the Order of St. John, while he has recently been honored by health experts in the United States. The "British Medical Journal" of October 5th, 1907, says in an editorial on one of the doctor's striking and practical pamphlets on "Vaccination": "The publication and free circulation of such a pamphlet in this country would do much to avert the disastrous results which may follow the present encouragement of thoughtless indifference." It is needless to say that the British Government at once took advantage of this hint.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL IDEALS.*

By W. C. Easdale, M.R.San.I.

TANKS.

The term "multiplicity of methods" used at the commencement of this paper applies probably with greater force to the preliminary treatment in tanks than to any other stage of the process. The Royal Commission in their fifth report deal with five different types—namely: Chemical precipitation, quiescent and continuous flow; sedimentation, quiescent and continuous flow; and septic tanks. To these may be added Dr. Travis's hydrolytic tank, Mr. Dibdin's slate beds, Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's cultivation tank, the Imhoff tank, Mr. Commin's separator, the Fieldhouse tank and many others. Each of these methods has its supporters, and some may be more suitable than others for particular conditions or special requirements. As the function of all preliminary processes is to arrest the solids in suspension and provide an effluent suitable for the final process of oxidation in filters or on land, it is obvious that the type of filter to be used must also be considered in deciding upon the best form of preliminary process to adopt. Some prefer to throw