

gas to the rooms of a house and every one ought to know that the time to see that a house is supplied with good and efficient drainage is when the house is being constructed. The trouble is that houses are built over sewers and connected with them with as much unconcern as though they were streams of pure water. Unfortunately sewers and drains are out of sight. A man may easily settle the question whether decaying garbage, in or about his premises, is responsible for obnoxious smells, but he cannot of his own knowledge say that they come from a defective drain or sewer. He can learn something of the architecture and mechanical construction of a house by observation, but he cannot so readily learn how a house should be drained even if the thought ever occurred to him that house-drainage consisted of anything more than getting waste water out of sight. He has possibly heard something about traps in pipes and drains but does not know where to look for them and very likely would not know their use when found. A plumber's advice and services are paid for but often to no good end. There is no part of a house in which imperfect work may so effectually escape detection as the drainage, hence there is often but little good work in the construction of drains. So long as the man who builds his own house does not know how sewage should be properly disposed of, it will have defective drainage and he will be troubled with sewer gas. So long as the tenant of a house is not able when he rents to determine whether the drainage is properly constructed, as he is that the house is secure, commodious and warm, those who have money to invest will continue to construct houses better adapted to ventilating the street sewers than for occupation. A man might better put his family into a shed in which they would suffer from cold in winter and heat in summer than into a brick mansion where the waste pipe of its kitchen sink is not securely tapped and ventilated, better for a family to live on a house-top where poisonous gases are sure to be disinfected by pure air, than within the house, although it has all the conveniences which human ingenuity can devise, and yet have defective drains beneath it. No provision of the Public Health Act of Ontario is of more importance than that which provides for the inspection of house drains, during construction by the local health authorities, and I think I am safe in saying no provision of that Act is so system-

atically ignored. Speaking from my own observations and experience during several years in which I was a Medical Health Officer, and judging from the negative replies sent me by the four members of this committee who have replied to the following question, viz.: Are house drains and plumbings inspected during construction, by municipal authorities? The requirements of the Act, in this particular, are seldom, if ever, complied with, at least in the villages and smaller towns of the Province. Both builders and owners generally regard an interference in the matter on the part of local health authorities, as gratuitous and unnecessary, and the construction of house drains, is now, as it ever has been, left almost exclusively to drain-layers and plumbers who are permitted to do work to suit themselves alone. When completed the work is so effectually concealed that no one could find out, if he desired to, whether it was done well or not, the result is that in many instances, competition has reduced the work to a sham and those houses which do not have defective drainage are the exception. The worst of it is, that the people themselves, who must suffer the consequences do not realize this, and are slow to learn the fact that the penalty of death even has been paid and must be paid over and over again, for the ignorance. It will be a blessed thing for this country and for every other, when every man and woman possesses such a knowledge of this subject and of its important bearing upon their health and comfort that the first enquiry about the house he or she is about to move into will be as to its drainage, and if not thoroughly satisfied as to its thoroughness and efficiency, shun it as they would a pest house. Then and then only shall we have happy homes, then and only then will those plagues such as diphtheria and kindred diseases which carry our children by hundreds to early graves, be unknown to our land.

Dr. Teale, a prominent physician and sanitarian, of Leeds, England, says, "That having discovered and rectified, one by one, numerous defects of drainage in my own house and in property under my charge, and having further traced illness among my patients to scandalous carelessness and gross dishonesty in drain work, I became indignantly alive to the fact that very few houses are safe to live in. The conviction struck deeply into my mind that probably one-third at least of the incidental illness and some of the fatal results in surgi-