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PRACTICAL HYGIENE.

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AIR IN ITS RELATIONS TO HEALTH.

SECTION V.

AIR VITIATED BY DECOMPOSING ANIMAL MATTER—CARCASSES ON THE GROUND,
BODIES IN GRAVEYARDS, STABLE MANURE, &c.

The evidence is conflicting, and opinions differ materially, as regards the composition, and the effects upon the health, of air containing affluvia from decomposing animal bodies on the surface of the ground and in grave yards, and also from manure in heaps and when spread upon fields.

AIR OF GRAVEYARDS.—The decomposition of animal bodies gives rise to a very large amount of carbonic acid gas. Parkes says it has been calculated that when intramural burial was carried on in London, $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions of cubic feet of carbonic acid were disengaged annually from the 52,000 bodies then buried. Ammonia and an offensive putrid vapor are also given off by decomposing animal bodies. The air of cemeteries usually contains more carbonic acid than ordinary air, while the organic matter is perceptibly larger when tested by potassium permanganate.

EFFECTS OF EFFLUVIA FROM ORDINARY MANURE.—There is no evidence that any serious disease has arisen from collections of stable manure, or from the spreading of this upon fields, either to the workmen engaged in moving or spreading it, or to those living in the immediate neighborhood. The spreading of manure of this sort upon fields in the proximity of dwellings has been complained of as a nuisance, however, and has been said to have caused diarrhœa and general disturbed health amongst those living in the dwellings.