baneful results which ensue from living in houses under which water lodges and becomes stagnant may be referred to. There are few medical practitioners who have not witnessed these results. The miasmatic poison of ague is similarly inodorous, or has no necessarily unpleasant odour. In like manner sewers have sometimes very little unpleasant smell. In some cases we have a smell somewhat similar to that produced by those burning-fluids into the composition of which fusel-oil enters. People living in a house become so accustomed to these faint odours as to take little notice of them; and with some people the sense of smell is not very acute. Hence we must be very careful how we accept negative evidence as to the presence of noxious gases. And hence, too, we must be all the more careful to avoid their existence and presence, and to devise means to this end.

It is plain that to prevent the constant accumulation of noxious gases, we must in the first place get rid, as far as possible, of decomposable material before it begins to decompose; and, secondly, we must see that the noxious gases from any decomposing material which has evaded our care do not reach us. These two propositions may seem very simple, but in practice we often find that they have not been carried out.

As regards the first of them it has become an acknowledged desideratum amongst sanitarians that all decomposable material entering sewers should pass out of the sewer-system within twenty-four hours. For the accomplishment of this object many points need careful consideration, such as the materials of which drains and sewers are to be constructed, their course, their slope, their bed or foundation, the construction of their joints, the course of their junctions, the facilities for flushing them, etc. Some details in connection with these points have been referred to above; others will necessarily come under the direct superintendence of an engineer.

It will be found that with all possible care in carrying off rapidly the material thrown into the drains, we cannot entirely prevent the collection of a certain amount of noxious gases in them. We find that such gases are in practice disposed of in three principal ways:

1. In a very large number of cases they are allowed to escape into the inside of dwellings. To such an extent is this the case that some sanitarians advise us to abolish sewers altogether, an advice which is not practicable under existing circumstances.

2. In some instances they are supposed to discharge through gratings in the centre of the road bed.

But in many cases they discharge at the edge of the sidewalk through the traps of gullies emptied by evaporation. Examples of this may be seen at many street corners in winter time.

The ventilating gratings of sewers are often so clogged with dirt that they are of little value in disposing of the total amount of sewer-gas. In winter they are very often completely closed.

3. In a few cases the sewer-gas is discharged above the house-tops. Very little consideration will suffice to show that this is the proper method. It is surely safer to discharge it away above our heads than at our very feet.

This method is illustrated in the diagram on page 14.