

institution. Up to the time these alterations were made, pyæmia and erysipelas had almost driven the medical staff to despair. When the whole of the ventilation was completed, and so soon as the pressure was removed from the traps of the closets and lavatories, no fresh cases were found to occur. For months the hospital wards were free from erysipelas and pyæmia. Suddenly, however, there was a fresh outbreak of these diseases, but it was noticed that the epidemic was confined to one of the surgical wards, built apart from the main building on the pavilion plan, and having only one storey. Close investigation proved that the ventilation pipe in this wing had been stopped up by a careless workman. When this was remedied, all trace of the epidemic disappeared, and for four years this hospital has been almost free from these diseases.—*Sanitary Record*.

THE ACTION OF SEWER GAS ON LEAD AND ZINC.—It is impossible to determine otherwise than by experience and observation how long an ordinary lead pipe or trap will resist the action of sewer gas before perforation takes place, but it is certain that a thick one will do so much longer than a thin one, and it is equally true that one efficiently ventilated will serve nearly double the time of one continuously air-bound. I have paid particular attention to the action of sewer gas on zinc rhones on eaves of buildings where it was striking on the under part, and found in the course of a couple of years or so pretty large holes eaten completely through, showing that that material could not long withstand the effect of the gas. Lead is, of course, more durable than zinc, but the difference is only a question of degree, as shown by the fact that, in not a few of the water closets repaired by the officers of the department during the year, small apertures were found in the main vertical lead pipe, and in the cross or horizontal one leading from it to the trap of the closet various perforations were found on the top, indicating clearly the operation of foul air from the drain. Lead traps and soil pipes from water closets, baths, and fixed basins, are all subject to tear and wear, but the traps, being burdened with the additional strain of barring the passage of sewer gas, do their work less efficiently and for a much shorter period than they are generally credited with, hence the necessity for proper ventilation and occasional inspection. There is often considerable indifference shown by many plumbers when sent by their masters to examine into complaints of smell supposed to be coming from lavatory appliances. They usually look for a fluid leakage; and when that is not perceptible they leave, declaring to the complainer that the pipes are all right, when probably a little longer time spent in making a more complete examination would have revealed that such was not the case. They seem to imagine that it is the liquid only which wears holes, and do not even dream that the gas from the drain is the most powerful agent of the two as an element of mischief. This is another fruitful means by which sorrow is brought to many a home. It is indisputable that drain air accelerates decay in lead fittings, and these and their drain