

samples of the air of various parts of the house, and subjecting it to analysis by a very able chemist. His verdict was *not guilty*.

In January 1853, on an intensely cold day, a conglomeration of sages, yclept a grand jury, inspected the establishment. They explored the basement of the building, or said they so did, and drew up a sample of surface underlying water, which they pronounced clear and odorless. We shall see, anon, how seriously the coldness of the clay must have dimmed their eyesight and blunted their noses.

For more than two years previous to the invasion of cholera erysipelas and very destructive dysenteries and diarrhoeas had been contended with. These continued throughout the summer of 1853, and the succeeding winter.

Shortly after my entrance, I made a close and extensive personal examination of the whole basement. The result was the discovery of the most foul and enormous cess-pool that perhaps ever existed under any large building. The depth of this pestilent reservoir, in the eastern end, was from three to four feet, and its consistence varied from that of strong infusion of black tea, to viscid soft soap. In the western end, owing to a gradual slope left in the ground from west to east, the depth was less, but in every part the abomination was present. Such was the limpid Pierian spring, from which the January grand muses drew their inspiration.

To infer that this accumulation of filth proceeded from some defect in the sewerage, whether consisting in primary misconstruction, or subsequent obstruction, required no witchcraft endowment. The person who had served as clerk of works, was sent for, to explain the sewerage arrangements, for no plans were to be found in the institution. He at once began to denounce the cooks and laundry girls, who, he affirmed, had choked the basement drains with dirty dishcloths. This explanation appeared to me apocryphal, but for the present we had to accept it as all he was able to give.

It would have been nothing short of sanitary lunacy to set about the cleansing process before cool weather should set in. The work was therefore deferred until October, and a tedious, tiresome, and sickening work it was, to empty the huge hulk of its fetid contents. The thick admixture of kitchen grease, dirty suds, (the laundry was then within the house) *et hoc genus omne*, which had all been deposited in high temperature, and gave forth, when exposed, volumes of stinking steam, had to be baled up and carried out by the workers, to two openings made in the main sewer, which runs parallel to the south front of the building. When at length sufficient clear-