

Metropolitan Sewers.

Mr GRANT'S Report on Two Cases of Cholera in Mount Place, St George's Road.

SURREY AND KENT.

With reference to two Coroners' Inquests on cases of cholera which I have been summoned within the last fortnight to attend, I would beg to state one feature that has been particularly apparent in connexion with both, and which may not be too unimportant to report.

In both cases death followed immediately after emptying, *by hand*, the cesspools which were under the back areas.

In the first case, at Mount place, Gibraltar Row, St George's Road, there was a cesspool containing about four cubic yards, under a privy in a small court behind. The landlord, after the death of the first child, a boy five years old, emptied this cesspool at midnight, on a Monday, by an overflow drain passing under the floor. On Tuesday a second child was seized with cholera, and died next day.

At the inquest on the first child (before the death of the second), I gave it as my opinion to the Coroner and Jury, that what the landlord had done in emptying that cesspool in the way he had done it, and in opening the house drains at all at that moment, was worse than if he had left them alone.

In the second case, the landlord had, at the request of a person appointed (I believe by the parish) as Inspector of Nuisances, emptied by hand a cesspool under a privy situated, like the last, in a small court, about 5 feet by 3 feet. *Within a week afterwards, the mother, a son 20 years of age, and a child, all died of cholera.*

These four deaths immediately following the emptying of cesspools *by hand*, without using the hose or any deodorising agent, struck me so forcibly as bearing the relation of cause and effect, that I have no hesitation in saying that unless Magistrates, Coroners, Parish and other authorities, giving orders to cleanse cesspools and filthy places in confined courts and back-yards, can also take means to insure that it is done with caution, and the use of the best means at their disposal of preventing smell during and after the operation, it would be better that for the present in such cases nothing should be done.

For the same reason, although there are localities in this district where cholera is decimating the inhabitants, there is but too great probability that in carrying out what would be a great and permanent benefit, when finished, the mortality might, and I believe would, be doubled or trebled during the execution, unless the inhabitants were previously removed from the place.

Cleanliness, and the use of deodorising agents, in the vile privies attached to those small houses in which cholera chiefly prevails, would do more good in many cases where the people have but one or two rooms to live in, than could be effected by, at present, altering the cesspools and old overflow drains which are connected with them.

JOHN GRANT,

Assistant-Surveyor.

1 GREEK STREET, SOHO SQUARE,

6th August, 1849.