

How a City May be Made Attractive

THE need for improving the existing conditions in and around cities and large towns was depicted clearly and with force by Mr. J. Horace McFarland of Harrisburg, Pa., who spoke in St. George's Hall, Toronto, on March 20, under the auspices of the Toronto Horticultural Society. That much can be done in a short time to improve these conditions was proved by the success that has attended the efforts of Mr. McFarland and his co-workers in Harrisburg. Excellent views were thrown on canvas to illustrate unsightly spectacles commonly found as a city is approached. Among these were such public nuisances as the repulsive signboards, the odoriferous

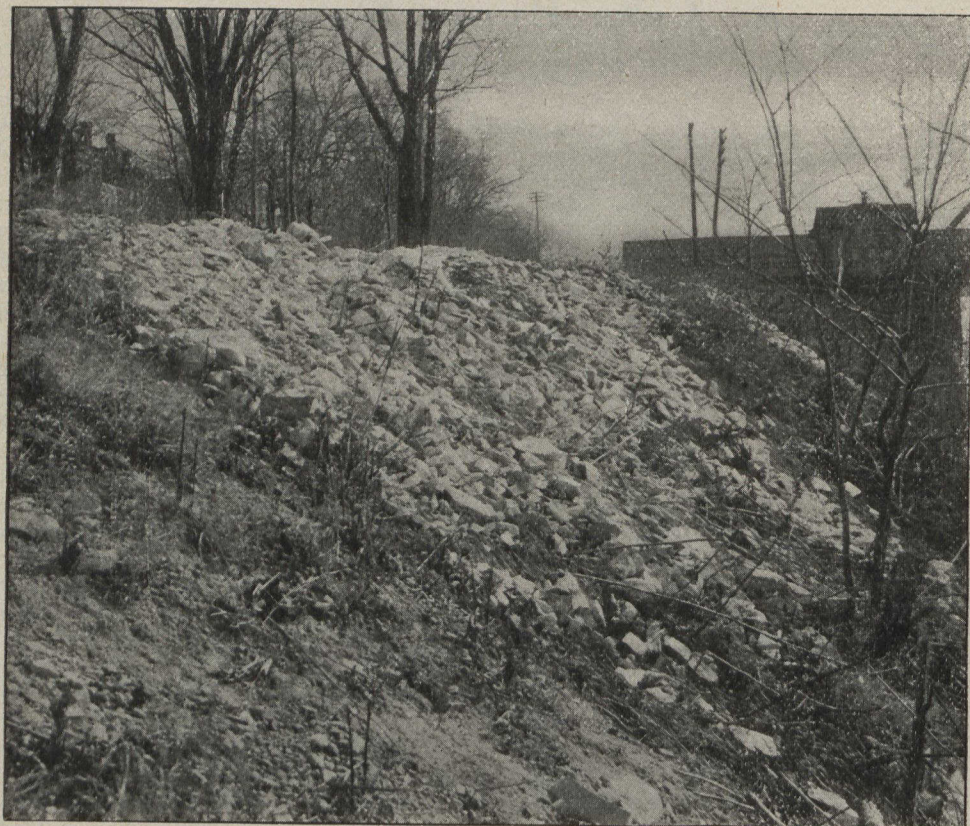
Before dealing with civic improvement proper, Mr. McFarland discussed the Niagara Falls problem, and advised the citizens of Canada to put forth every possible effort to prevent that great scenic wonder from being destroyed to fill the pockets of 1,000 stockholders representing six development companies. Those financially interested claimed that by using this power to develop electricity, a great public benefit would result. It was shown, however, that in Buffalo light was more costly than in Harrisburg, where no such means of developing power is at hand. Views were presented showing the beauties of the falls and the rapids at present, and others showing what a hideous sight

citizens should be proud of, because they think it may result in a paltry gain. Pressure should be brought to bear on those in authority. Letters should be sent to your premier, and to the members of your parliament urging that steps be taken to prevent these development companies from destroying such a magnificent production of nature."

The methods adopted in forwarding civic improvement in Harrisburg were outlined. In 1902, \$5,000 were subscribed by 60 citizens to be devoted to formulating a scheme for general improvements. Three men were selected, one of whom was given charge of water and sewage systems, another control of paving, and the third charge of parks, drives, etc. These three men drafted a plan of the various steps that should be taken to make Harrisburg what it should be. The report recommended the expenditure of \$1,090,000.

The people had to be convinced that the benefits that would result warranted the use of so much public money. The \$5,000 that had been subscribed were spent in educating the people to the need of this. A copy of the report containing the suggested improvements was sent to every citizen; clergymen and principals of schools co-operated; every organization in the city was approached, and the newspapers gave valuable assistance. Women workers formed committees and sent representatives to the schools to talk to the children and distribute pamphlets. In this way many parents were won through the children. Everything possible was done to have the people vote intelligently.

It was pointed out to the voters that if this scheme was carried out it would mean an increase in the tax rate of about three and a half mills under the most unfavorable conditions, but if everything prospered as they hoped it would, the increase would not be over two mills. In return for this expenditure they offered beautiful parks and streets, and, more important from the standpoint of economy, a pure water supply and a perfect sewage system. In this connection views were used to show the condition of the streets, the extent of the garbage dumps, and the prevalence of large signboards hiding natural scenery that should be open to the view of wayfarers and travellers. Statistics were given showing the ravages of typhoid fever and other diseases due to using impure water and to an inadequate sewage system. Unfiltered water from the Susquehanna River was being used throughout the city. This water had received the sewage from cities and towns farther up the river, with a total population of over 522,000. At certain seasons the waters of the river lowered



An Unsightly Dump at Harrisburg, Pa., Before Improvement

dump heaps and the death-dealing sewage systems.

The executive of the Toronto Society are to be congratulated on securing the services of such an authority on civic improvement as is Mr. McFarland. Great things are promised by the society in the way of improvements in Toronto's streets, parks, etc., and it can only be expected that Mr. McFarland's address will stimulate that body to still greater work than had been proposed. President Frankland introduced the speaker of the evening as the president of the American Civic Improvement Association.

will replace them if these companies are allowed to carry on operations at their own free wills.

"The people," said Mr. McFarland, "have the power to run the country's affairs, and they should set to work to save the falls. Every year finds an expenditure of \$15,000,000 by those who visit this greatest scenic wonder of the world.

"Citizens of Ontario also benefit from the visits of these sight-seers who spend considerable money. When the waters of Niagara are harnessed, all this is lost. People lose sight of the fact that this is a sight that American