

It is curious to note the ignorance of the nominally educated public upon the nature of your duties. It is but too often supposed that it is simply a question of waterclosets, of drain-pipes, of cesspools and slums, with which the so-called better class of people have nothing to do. The cook and the kitchen-maid have to see that the dustmen do their work; and if that is done, and the waterclosets of the house do not smell, the public think they have done their part in the matter, and they relegate the sanitary inspectors and their assistants to obscurity and sometimes unsatisfactory neglect.

I want to show the outside public, if they will listen to me, that there is something much higher in sanitary work than the points I have mentioned. That unsavoury subjects may be put aside, but if their condition is not supervised by intelligent men who understand what they are about, it is the public who suffer most, and that but too often in ignorance of the true reason for their suffering. The duties of sanitary inspectors may be mainly in the slums; they may be at work in the supervision of dustbins, of sewers, of cellar dwellings, of slaughter houses and knackers' yards, of food markets and refuse heaps in out-of-the-way places; but if their work is only half done, if they only comply with the letter and do not enter into the spirit of their work, the effect of their perfunctory performance may make itself felt when least expected, and in ways which cannot be brought home directly to the delinquent and neglectful people.

It is not only by the removal of epidemic and infectious disease that a locality benefits by sanitary inspection. There may be a complete absence of the disease of germs upon which typhoid or small-pox depends. There may be no scarletina in the district, and the so-called zymotic death-rate may be low, and yet the health of the district may be most unsatisfactory. It is too much the custom to study what is called the zymotic death-rate, and to judge from that factor as to the general health of a given district; and it is often assumed that because that form of disease is not so fatal as in other places, therefore the sanitary state of that district is satisfactory. This is a serious