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HOW TO DEAL WITH TOWN REFUSE.

The life of a vestryman would be a happy one but for "dust." Snow is only an occasional visitor. When snow comes he has three choices—to clear the snow away properly, as is done in one part of London and in one London suburb; or he can ruin the constitutions of Her Majesty's ligges and their beasts of burden by salting the thoroughfares. The third course, and safer than the last mentioned, is to do nothing. Unluckily, "dust"—in other words, the heterogeneous matter that makes up the contents of the dustbin—is always with us. Go where he will with his refuse, the vestryman is chivied elsewhere. He reads Dickens's description of the golden days of the dustmen and is happy for the moment. But what was the amount of dust of former days compared to that of these? Judged by quantity, the vestryman of to-day should accumulate his wealth in precious stones rather than in comparative valueless gold. However, dust to him is as bad as was formerly the possession of a white elephant to others, and there is little reason to doubt that he would willingly hail a saviour to get him out of his difficulty. In a novel this help would be found to turn up. But truth no doubt is stranger than fiction, and in some cases, if not in the majority of cases, the best of fiction is written from actual fact sufficiently disguised for the purposes of propriety. It is a striking, if not quite the impossible fact some might have imagined, that two men have apparently succeeded in solving the problem that the united intelligence of vestrymen has hitherto failed to solve. Things have come to the condition that we should be glad to get rid of dust at any cost, and thus escape being voted a nuisance whatever we do and wherever we go. The new process for effecting the wished-for riddance has been at work for two years at Chelsea, and is operated by what has been named the Refuse Disposal Company, Limited, of the Salopian Wharf, Lot's Road, the invention being that of Mr. Joseph Russeil (Rosser & Russell, Engineers, Charing Cross) and Mr. J. C. Stanley, the success of carrying the process into practical efficiency being due to the combined experience of these gentlemen in mechanical and chemical laws respectively. Every opportunity has been given by the company for inspection of the process, and it has already commended itself highly to those who have

examined as well as to those who have tried it. The process has been described in a recent issue of *Engineering* with extreme care and accuracy, and we therefore do not hesitate to give the following extract:—

A cursory inspection of the contents of a dustcart leads to the idea that they are mostly valueless and wholly offensive, or capable of becoming offensive under the influence of time and heat. But this is a mistake, due to the large bulk of the lighter and more odorous constituents. Such articles as empty meat-tins, bottles, waste paper and straw, and vegetable refuse, make a large bulk, but only weigh very little. Three-fourths of the weight of dust collected consists of fuel. A proportion of this has never been on the fire, while most of the remainder is good cinder; it has had the gases expelled, but the carbon remains, and makes capital fuel. Of course there is some thoroughly-burned ash, but it is wonderful how much less than one would expect to find. The modern servant is not addicted to the use of the riddle, and all she finds in the grate in the morning goes into the dustbin. This is well known to those interested in such matters, and the brickmakers consequently absorb many thousands of tons of breeze from the dustcarts annually, to the great annoyance of their neighbours. For although the amount of animal and vegetable refuse is relatively small, it is usually sufficient to taint all the other elements of the dust, and to render them offensive when burnt or handled.

The salient feature of Mr. Russell and Mr. Stanley's method is that the dust is dealt with immediately it arrives, and that during the whole time it is under treatment it is kept in motion, and is fully exposed to the air in thin layers. It is tipped from the cart into the first machine, and immediately commences its passage through the various sorting devices; in a few moments it has been divided into its different constituents, while all that is offensive has been intimately ground up with other material, mostly carbon, in which it is not only lost, but deodorised. The breeze and ashes find a ready sale among the brickmakers, but there is still a better outlet for them. By mixing them with pitch they can be pressed into briquettes and used for steam-raising. It can scarcely be contended that these briquettes are equal to those made from fresh Welsh coal, but they are very fair,