

what they are doing

receptacles (whether it be a garbage cart or a sewer) and is on its way to final sanitary disposal.

Street sweepings consist of the waste products of hundreds and thousands of human beings and animals and include the constant wastes that are being thrown off by the industries in our midst. The debris caused by the wear and tear upon the road surfaces, the dust and dirt from the pulling down or repair of buildings, soot and fine ashes from hundreds, perhaps thousands of chimneys, twigs, bark and leaves from trees, pollen, seeds and spores of plants, the expectoration from human beings, the excrement and urine of dogs and horses, and the leakage of the contents of loaded vehicles both in transit and while loading and unloading.

Even the scavengers add very materially to the filth of a town. The horses contribute droppings and urine, and the carts are sometimes so imperfectly suited to the duty they have to perform, as to distribute in part the filth they are supposed to collect.

The streets of a town are the avenues over which its produced filth has to be carried and each receptacle deposits its quota on the road as it journeys through.

Shopkeepers sweep out their collection of dust and dirt and housekeepers shake their mats on the highway to make a further addition to the miscellaneous accumulation of filth that finds its way into the streets and pollutes the air. This custom should be prohibited and each offender should be obliged to dispose of refuse in such a way as will not menace the health of his neighbors.

Now what do we do with this filth. The custom in most towns has been to use it to fill up low places in streets and sidewalks in the suburbs, and low ground elsewhere. It is absolutely necessary that stringent regulations should be made and carried out under which street sweepings should not be deposited on roadways or sidewalks to make a wearing surface. On the roadway, passing wheels throw its fine particles into the face of pedestrians and from the sidewalk it is carried on the hundreds of boots into the home. It should be used at finished grade only for the boulevard part of the sidewalk and should be covered with a thin coat of good soil and sown or sodded as soon as possible after it is deposited. On the travelled part of the road or sidewalk it should never be deposited except to fill up below grade and then only when it can be covered with good clean material. In all towns there are streets which require thousands of loads to fill them up to passable condition. Thousands more may be disposed of on the town property and when such public places of deposits are exhausted there are many private properties on which there is low ground to be filled up.

The deposits removed from catchpits should be used exclusively for the redemption of waste land, but no such disposal of catchpit or street cleanings should be permitted except by permit from local health authority. A record should be kept of such dumping grounds. The date and character of the deposit should be recorded and no permit should be given for the erection of a building on such made ground until the health authorities are satisfied that nature has rendered the foul matter harmless.

In Halifax for some years the ashes collected by the city scavengers have been used to fill up low places in streets and sidewalks. Recently nearly all such available material has been utilized for sidewalk repairs except that in the summer it is used as a frost cushion under concrete sidewalks. During the past year, the City Health Board has protested against this practice, on the ground that outbreaks of such diseases as scarlet fever and diphtheria have been caused by it. Whether or not their contention is correct, I am not prepared to express an opinion to-day, but it cannot be denied that the danger is possible.

It is claimed that householders empty sweepings into the ashpan and not into the stove. Although this is done in violation of the regulations of the Health Board, it is by no means an easy matter to prevent it. Frequently the kitchen maid finds it much more convenient to empty the dustpan into the ashes than to remove for that purpose the pots and kettles that cover the fire. The dust and dirt particles which may include the scarlet fever carrier, pass under the scavenger's eye without detection and consequently the regulation prohibiting the removal of ashes mixed with any other matter fails to protect.

It would be safer to dispose of the house ashes in the same manner as suggested for street sweepings and the same precautions should be taken by the health authorities respecting buildings on such deposits.

The best method of disposing of the house garbage cannot be

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