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## Keeping Your Town Clean

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## KEEPING YOUR TOWN CLEAN

By S. C. DICKINSON

A sudden mine disaster, by which scores and even hundreds of lives are lost, receives nation-wide attention; but deaths caused by typhoid fever, diphtheria, tuberculosis, etc., caused by unsanitary dwellings, foul air, infected water, and the like, may carry off their toll, with few voices raised in protest and fewer still proclaiming remedies that are practical.

Much sickness is caused by germs getting into the human system and, of course, the way to prevent disease is to keep them out. These germs exist by the million, in everything and on everything, and they are so very small that they cannot be seen by the naked eye. It takes 350,000 typhoid fever germs side by side to form a line one inch long. From 200,000 to 1,000,000 bacteria have been found in one cubic centimeter of earth. Most of them, though, are perfectly harmless.

Because these germs cannot be seen it is difficult to protect ourselves from them. If it were easy, there would be much less sickness. One precaution to be observed in preventing sickness, and it will prove more helpful than any of them, is to avoid all things unclean.

Cleanliness means clean food, clean water, clean milk, clean houses, clean yards, clean air, clean bodies, etc. We have learned that germs and uncleanliness are closely related.

Unclean and decaying matter does not breed these germs, but it is dangerous to have this kind of matter about, because it furnishes a place where germs may multiply. Nearly all the germs that attack us are spread from the body of persons who are sick with germ diseases.

In order to prevent sickness, poor health, etc., it will be necessary to keep your town as clean as possible. It is impossible to move away from the filth as people did in early times, therefore it must be moved away from them. The wholesomeness and healthfulness of the dwelling site depend upon how quickly the wastes are removed from it.

A covered, water-tight can for trash and one for garbage should be provided and kept near the back of each lot. All waste such as garbage, cans, bottles, rubbish, etc., should be thrown into it. It is a mistake to keep the trash can near the back door for the sake of con-

venience. A few steps may be saved but flies and bad smells get into the kitchen.

A wagon should visit each yard each week, and in warm weather about every other day, and this trash and garbage should be carried off and burned or buried far away from any house. The collecting and burning of garbage should be done by the town or company controlling it.

Almost any kind of germs may be carried by flies. Not only do they carry germs on their feet, but when a fly feeds on matter that contains disease germs, the germs are found in the matter that comes from its alimentary canal. In one speck left by a fly that had been captured on the face of a leper, 1115 leprosy germs were found.

Every means should be taken to keep flies out of the house. Flies breed in and thrive on filth. Disease germs and filth are plastered upon their hairy legs. Don't permit flies to walk on the food. Just before that fly touched the butter it may have dipped its feet into the spit of a consumptive. Keep your premises clean, screen your houses, then swat the flies.

Gutters should be built so that the dirty water from the house may be drained off. Dirty dishwater and kitchen slops should not be thrown out the back door. This practice keeps the ground damp and muddy and causes dirt to be tracked into the house. The water also forms breeding pools for mosquitoes and causes the ground to give off bad smells. If there are no gutters an area some distance from the back door should be spaded up. If the dirty water is poured over this loosened earth, it will disappear much quicker than if it is thrown on the hard, tramped ground near the back door.

Sometimes old kegs, tubs, buckets, etc., are kept near the kitchen doors for holding rainwater. Such receptacles furnish breeding places for mosquitoes and mosquitoes cause malaria, yellow fever, skin diseases and sleepless nights. If it is desired to collect rainwater, you should buy a clean barrel. This should be raised a few inches off the ground to prevent rotting and should be kept covered during the mosquito season. A few drops of oil on top of the water in the barrel will keep the mosquitoes from breeding and will not hurt the water.

Tall weeds should not be allowed to grow around the house or in the yard for they make good hiding places for the mosquitoes during the day. Such weeds will also hide decaying rubbish and garbage, tin cans, etc., half filled with water, a good place to breed germs and mosquitoes. The weeds also take the strength from the soil. They do no good and should be kept cut.

It must be remembered that mosquitoes will lay their eggs and breed in a very small quantity of water. Broken bottles and dishes and tin cans which are scattered about the yard will hold enough water to furnish breeding places for mosquitoes. Unless you keep your yard and premises clean it will be useless to spend large sums of money draining swamps and filling in lowlands.

Usually each house has a yard so that a garden is possible. One can get pleasure and profit out of a garden. If a garden is started at the right time and cultivated in the proper way, the work is not difficult. A home means more than a mere shelter from the elements. Fifteen or twenty minutes spent each evening among the green growing things is restful for the man who has spent his day at work.

The garden will keep the children out of mischief and teach them thrift and knowledge of nature and her ways. It will furnish healthful and pleasant diversion for the man's wife and will be a means of getting her to spend more of her time out of doors in the pure air and sunshine.

The gardens and lawn help make a cleaner house. They reduce the dust nuisance. Dust is not a disease, but it is the cause of a disease. Dust irritates the lungs and makes them less able to perform their proper duty. Because of this constant irritation, the lungs become inflamed, and consumption is liable to develop.

Do not use the space under the house for storage as it is injurious to the health. Chickens, rabbits, hogs, etc., should not be allowed under the house or porch. Animals leave filth from which foul smells arise. The warm house acts as a chimney and draws the foul smells into the living and sleeping rooms. Old household goods should not be stored under the house—it is soon ruined by dust and dampness and the material increases the fire hazard. The area under the house should be kept dry. To prevent water from the yard rains from getting under the house, ditches should be dug.

Next to air, water is the most indispensable to life and health; and the lack of a water or a supply of water contaminated by impurities, naturally exerts a great influence on health. A deficient supply for drinking purposes will cause failing health, and a lack of water for body cleansing and flushing purposes will impair the health and predispose to various diseases. The impurities contained in water are capable of producing various diseases, according to the character and the quantity of the impurity.

The physical impurities, such as the debris of vegetable, animal and mineral matter, which are often found in water, may be dangerous

to health because of the disturbances they cause in the digestive tract. The degree of injuriousness depends upon the quantity, composition, etc., of the impurities. The tape-worm, hook-worm and round-worm disease and typhoid, cholera and dysentery have been, and are frequently caused by the drinking of water containing germs of these diseases.

In all mining camps, cities, etc., steps should be taken to prevent the water from becoming contaminated. Muddy water in your well after a rain is proof that the drainings from the yard are getting into your drinking water. This furnishes another reason why the yard should be kept clean and why a garden makes a better companion for the well than a hogpen or a hencoop.

The yard should be kept neat and clean; ditches should be dug that will drain the surface water away from the well; a tight platform should be made over the well so that dirt tracked by the shoes will not get into the water; a border of grass should be planted around the well.

Water from wells should be drawn out through a pump instead of by a bucket and rope. The water will be more easily handled and will be cleaner. The pump should not have fancy open work at the base, as this permits pollution of the well by dogs.

When a rope and bucket are used some people forget and spit on their hands before hoisting the rope. This is just as bad as spitting in the well. If a rope and bucket must be used, a windlass should be made for the rope to wind on. A galvanized iron bucket should be used instead of a wooden bucket, as it can be cleaned, scoured, and boiled out more easily. If the water is obtained from a cistern the same care should be used with it as with a well.

That the air, without which we cannot live more than a few minutes, has a great influence on the health of man, is self-evident. The physical condition of the air, the temperature, pressure, humidity, motion, the degree of vitiation, the relative content of one or the other of its constituents and the impurities in the air, all have a marked influence on the health, life and longevity of man.

The air passes into the lungs and there the blood absorbs part of the oxygen, and also gives off impurities. The dark blue blood, which has been through the entire body and gathered up the waste products, is changed to bright red blood when it is exposed to the pure air in the lungs. When we exhale impurities in the form of carbon dioxide—this is known as stale air and contains moisture and heat and should not be immediately rebreathed.

Motion prevents us from breathing this stale air. This air must be moved or we must move away from it. When we sleep in a room with all the windows closed the air becomes stagnant because the air is at rest and this explains why we should open our bedroom windows when we go to bed. Air is lung food—our lungs work when we sleep and they deserve pure, clean food.

Impure air reduces vital resistance, decreases metabolism, the process by which dead food is built up into living matter and the living matter is broken down into simpler products within a cell or organism, causes anaemia (lack of red corpuscles), headaches, loss of appetite, and predisposes a person to respiratory and general diseases.

If you keep a cow or any other kind of an animal or animals special means should be taken to keep the pens or stables in a sanitary condition. They should be cleaned out once a day and the refuse kept in a covered barrel and this should be emptied once a week. The stables or pens should be whitewashed twice a year and the dust, cobwebs, etc., should be brushed down every week.

If you wish to keep cows, pigs, chickens, etc., they should receive proper attention. The stables, sheds, pens, etc., should be built about 300 yards from the house. All should be cleaned every day and under no consideration should refuse be allowed to collect. Proper cans or barrels should be provided and these receptacles should be emptied once a week.

Pigs are especially filthy and special care should be taken in their case.

Milk cows should be thoroughly cleaned before each milking. Many deaths and much of the sickness of children are caused by impure milk. It is the dirt more than the heat that sours milk. The cow's udder should be washed and dried with a clean cloth before she is milked, and should be kept dry during the milking. The milker should scrub his hands just before milking and under no consideration should a sickly person or one with sores on his hands ever milk the cow. The milking pail should be washed and scalded before using and after obtaining the milk great care should be exercised in handling it. Be very careful and not get it dirty.

Many disease germs leave the body with the bowel discharges. This is true not only of sick people but also of people who are coming down with sickness, or of people who are getting well. Seemingly well people may discharge disease germs. In the light of this knowledge the outhouse, up in the corner of the back yard, can be neglected only at our peril. In plain words, an insanitary outhouse is one that

does not prevent the bowel discharges from re-entering the human system. Contaminated well water, food infection by flies, and soil pollution by chickens are the indirect ways in which this revolting process takes place.

If the container under the outhouse is watertight, the danger of well pollution will be gone. This container must be protected from hogs, chickens, dogs and flies. An effective way to keep flies away from it is to sprinkle lime in the container. The containers must be removed and cleaned regularly and their contents burned or treated in such a way that it will not be dangerous to health.

Rubbish, garbage, dead cats, dogs, etc., should never be allowed to collect in alleys. As in other cases, they will form a breeding place for germs, etc. Material of this character should be placed in trash and rubbish cans and then carted away about twice a week to an incinerator or mixed with wood or coal and burned.

The fire waste in the United States is \$240,000,000 a year—this is \$660,000 a day, \$27,600 an hour or \$460 a minute. Rubbish heaps are fire breeders. Fires start in them and are fed by them. Ashes carelessly deposited in wooden boxes, against wooden fences or other combustible surface, is another source of fire. Part of the loss mentioned is due to unsanitary conditions. A clean city has very few fires. The fire hazard can be reduced to a minimum by keeping your town or city clean.

To do these few simple things may seem a bother, and it is hard to make one who is feeling well realize that he ever may be sick. Keep the home and its surroundings clean and you will avoid much sickness and useless suffering to yourself and to others.