

Dogs, dirt & disease.

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DOGS, DIRT & DISEASE.

Recent discoveries in scientific Medicine — especially Tropical Medicine—and our advancing knowledge in Bio-Chemistry and Economic Entomology teach us that an ever increasing proportion of preventable disease is due to our domestic and domesticated animals, including too-long domesticated noxious insects and other vermin like mice, rats, &c., together with their innumerable external and internal parasites.

Increase of wealth has contributed to augment the number of dogs kept in towns, where now one frequently sees a family or individual owning several dogs.

Formerly our cave-dwelling ancestors shared their abodes with their pigs; now the well-to-do and wealthy do likewise with their pet pugs and poodles, allowing these animals to sleep in their bed-rooms and even upon their beds!

Such thoughtless individuals have evidently forgotten the old household proverb,—so forcibly expressed in various languages—that “he who lies down with dogs will get up with fleas,” and perhaps other troubles or maladies.

Law and Custom allow one to convert a portion of one's house into a kennel.

But assuredly neither Law nor Custom should permit the keeping of dogs in towns to become both an offensive public nuisance and a dreaded distributor of dirt and disease.

Countless curs discharge the putrid contents of their intestines upon and about pavements, railings, areas and doorsteps in towns as is well known.

By tenaciously adhering to boots and the long scavenger skirts still worn by a few women, some of this filth gets introduced and trod into our houses. And, of course, during prolonged dry weather this excremental dust is blown through opened doors, windows and ventilators.

In crowded congested thoroughfares with continuous traffic, this filth about the pavements &c. is apt to be rapidly and widely distributed. But in secluded areas with few foot passengers, these putrid accumulations may remain for a long time undisturbed except by flies, bluebottles, &c.

The excreta of dogs abound in parasites injurious to man and other domestic animals.

POLLUTED PUBLIC PAVEMENTS.

My accompanying Leaflet on "DOGS, DIRT AND DISEASE" induced THE BRIGHTON & SUSSEX MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY on 1 December, 1910, to unanimously pass the following resolution, to be forwarded to the Town Councils of Brighton and Hove:—

"That this Society earnestly requests the Town Councils of Brighton and Hove to pass and enforce a bye-law against spitting on the pavements, and to take steps to prevent the great and insanitary nuisance caused by dogs on the public foot-paths."

The proposition against spitting on the pavements was previously proposed by MR. JACOMB HOOD, M.R.C.S., of Brighton, which induced me to add my protest thereto anent the troubles created by dogs.

J. LAWRENCE-HAMILTON, M.R.C.S.

**30 Sussex Square, Brighton,
5 December, 1910.**

Polluted Public Pavements.

J. LAWRENCE-HAMILTON, M.R.C.S.

In towns it is the chief cause of the plagues of flies, bluebottles, &c., infesting our houses and infecting our food.

Bluebottles, house flies, wasps, hornets, ants, &c., are filth-feeders, whose excessive numbers in houses, butchers' and fishmongers' shops, &c., indicate the presence of decaying animal substances.

The feet and lower surface of the bodies of these insects, as well as their excreta, distribute putrid matter. In Egypt filth-feeding flies infest and infect the eyes and eyelids of young children, creating loathsome contagious disease.

After feeding on decayed animal products, wasps or hornets may subcutaneously inject putrid poison fatally. Hence, in the Bible, we read of hornets being sent to drive out and destroy enemies.

(Details of putrid poisoning are explained in my "FOUL FISH AND FILTH FEVERS," published at Washington in 1894 by the United States Government).

It has been observed that the ordinary domesticated house fly whilst awake defecates every five minutes. Hence the incessant accumulating dirt on uncleaned windows, mirrors and light painted woodwork during warm weather.

—(House flies abound on white, bright or light surfaces, whilst mosquitoes frequent dark and black surfaces)—

Owners should train their dogs to excrete on the road as far away from houses as possible. And, where there are planted terraces in front of the houses, then their dogs should be taught to manure the local grass and shrubs or trees, instead of soiling pavements, railing, areas, door-steps, and the sun blinds covering the street doors.

In too many towns this question is virtually ignored by their Sanitary Authorities, and practically no steps are taken to deal efficiently with this persistently pestilential pollution of public pavements.

If a gold medal were offered for the most successful sinner in this direction, probably it would be secured by the town of Brighton, whose chief aim is to attract the stranger, often an enfeebled convalescent, who urgently requires protection against dirt diseases.

The Local Government Board should possess ample powers to compel Urban Authorities themselves to efficiently clean and scavenger the public pavements and their adjoining premises, including the removal and disinfection of the dejecta of dogs thereon, which emanations are loaded with putrefying bacteria and their poisonous products.

J. LAWRENCE-HAMILTON, M.R.C.S.

30 Sussex Square, Brighton,
1 December, 1910.

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