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OUR TROUBLESONE ALLEYS.

From time to time dwellers on the Back Bay and other sections of the city where the houses back on private alleys utter complaints which command sympathy, even if they do not help much toward providing a remedy. There are numerous appeals, though there seems to be no organized movement, to have Boston assume care of these alleys and see that they are kept in a clean and healthful condition. It took a long time to get them paved, and though that proved a benefit in keeping the filth above the surface and lessening the opportunities for germ development, the time has come when repaving is needed.

The city carts pass through to remove ashes and garbage, but there their responsibility ceases, and sometimes they add to the filthy accumulations. The delivery wagons and other frequenters of these ways find them convenient dumping grounds for unconsidered trifles. Waste paper or waste anything attracts other waste, and as the business of the whole is the business of nobody, there is likely to be an offensive and disease-breeding condition before anyone is aware of it, or at least before anyone has taken steps to correct it. The Board of Health does bring the abutters up to a realizing sense of their responsibility occasionally, but it could keep a much closer supervision over these secluded catch-alls if the city had direct responsibility and authority.

Previous to Mr. Matthews's administration the city attended to this, more or less efficiently, but he assumed that it was not the city's business, and technically he was right. The city solicitor also decided that in assuming charge of the condition of these alleys the city must be responsible for damage sustained in them. In spite of this the city seems to have a duty here. Long lines of abutters will not and can not act in unison, and from their failure, not only they but all in the city have to submit to additional menaces to health as well as to happiness. It is a matter in which everyone is or should be interested, and those most so should organize for relief, for the condition at present is not satisfactory or creditable.