



VOL. I

MARCH 1, 1914

No. 3

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

A REPORT

on the

IMPROVEMENT of the town of Stockbridge

by

Harold Hill Blossom

for

OLMSTED BROTHERS

Landscape Architects



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A REPORT ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE TOWN OF STOCKBRIDGE

[At the instigation of the Laurel Hill Association, the firm of Olmsted Brothers, of Brookline, Landscape Architects, sent Mr. Harold Hill Blossom of their staff to Stockbridge last summer, to view the village with a careful and practiced eye, and then to report, for the firm, a comprehensive and effective plan of improvement which should not only make suggestions for the present but look forward to the future, for it is only by adopting and sticking to a well considered plan that unity of effect can ultimately be achieved. The first few pages of Mr. Blossom's report are here omitted, as they review the history of the village and describe its geographic and scenic features, thus traversing ground familiar to our readers. Needless to say, Mr. Blossom finds our situation a happy one, our scenery of rare charm. The remainder of his report, embodying his definite plans and suggestions for improvement, is here printed entire. The Editors.]

THE PURPOSE OF VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT

The purpose of the town improvement movement is to coordinate the activities and endeavors of the individual inhabitants for the common cause of civic betterment. Without constant striving for improvement, a town will slip backwards, becoming shabby in appearance; and land values may decrease.

When improvements such as street cars and street lighting are brought in they may be placed to the damage of the town, either present or future, unless the people of the town take

an interest in the question and examine into the probable effects of the proposed change. All similar questions relating to public service corporations and any improvements made for the common good should be investigated by the public spirited citizens to insure the selection of the best method and to obtain a result which shall be to the advantage of the town in the future as well as the present. Sometimes it can be shown by comparison with the experience of other places that a desired improvement, if carried out by the town, will bring an increase in taxable values which will pay interest and sinking fund on the amount needed to carry out the improvement. This has frequently been the case where tracts of land have been purchased for parks and parkways. The indirect effect of improvements often is cumulative and far-reaching, but cannot be measured directly in commercial values. For instance, the fact that Stockbridge is so attractive has made the town well-known, and there has resulted a demand for land for country places which has caused a large increase in land values. Everyone in the town profits by this. But imagine for a moment that all the grand trees on Main Street were cut down; that rows of stores were erected close to the sidewalk; and that trolley cars were running up and down Main Street. Thus one could easily realize how the high standard of the residence property along Main Street would be greatly altered and how the effect would reach out far beyond Main Street itself. If such a change were not accompanied by a great increase in commercial activity, there would ensue a decided loss to the town in taxable values.

Besides stimulating the community to combine in its efforts for a common cause, the town improvement movement seeks to arouse the individual to a sense of his obligations to the community he lives in and of his personal responsibility to establish and maintain his part of the larger whole in as good condition as he is able. Unwise or selfish action on the part of one individual may undo the good effect of the work of many others. In such cases there is often no legal redress and the force of public opinion becomes the only hope of the community. It can become, however, a stronger power than the law poorly enforced; and it is in the development and direction of public opinion that the village improvement movement finds its largest field of activity.

The feeling of jealousy that sometimes exists between the old inhabitants of a town and the people who come from cities to live part of the year in the town exists only through a lack of understanding of the condition of mutual dependence of the one group on the other. As soon as people realize that the activities of each group become an economic part in the life of the other, then any feelings of jealousy will pass away and all will work together for the common weal. Such harmonious cooperation on the part of all the inhabitants of a town will bring prosperity and happiness to the whole community. Such a community becomes famed throughout the land and draws to itself noble natures from other parts of the country.

ORGANIZATION NEEDED FOR VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT

The impulse of the many towards the achievement of any good work will result in the greatest amount of good if the activities of all are correlated through a central agency. There is a great waste of energy in

trying to accomplish an end if each one works in his own way independently of the efforts of each of the other workers. If a great tower is to be built, a confusion of activities will result in as much disaster as a confusion of tongues.

The need of coordinating the endeavors of the people in a movement of civic improvement by organizing the work under the direction of a central head or committee becomes particularly necessary in our modern city and town life because of the far-reaching complexity of our present civilization. In the Laurel Hill Association, Stockbridge already has a well established organization which can direct and coordinate the activities of all the people in the movements to improve the town.

The next step is to examine into the present condition of the town in order to see where is work that needs to be done now and to make plans, looking as far into the future as possible, trying to foresee and gauge the changes that must come and providing for them long in advance. A far-sighted policy will provide for a continuity in the growth of the town and a conservation of effort, for it will reduce to the minimum the amount of tearing down of work that has been done in the past to provide for the changed needs of the present and future.

WORK TO BE DONE AT ONCE

A survey of the town of Stockbridge shows that her citizens in the past took a pride in their town and planned wisely for the future in many respects. The fact that the wires have been placed underground in the town proper and that the street car line has been assigned to a back street shows that the spirit of the past continues in the present generation, and that constant en-

deavor will be made to continue improving the town, as its needs and population grow.

MAIN STREET; FROM THE NEW SCHOOL TO THE INDIAN BURIAL GROUND

Main Street, particularly from the New School Building to the Indian Burial Ground, is the most important feature of the town proper. The street was given an ample width in the beginning, being over 100 feet between the property lines; and the trees, mostly elms, were planted at the edge of the street or else in many cases just inside the property line, and now have grown large enough to meet across the street. The traveled way is about 26 feet wide and is in the center. The electric lights are very simple and inconspicuous. Many of the houses are set back from the street with lawns in front and the style of architecture is mostly Old Colonial. These conditions result in a street of great dignity and charm, and its present character should be preserved and developed farther along the same line.

This straight portion of Main Street should have in it no other tree than the American elm. At present, while the elm dominates, there is quite a sprinkling of sugar maples, and a few scattering trees of other species. This mixing in of other trees lessens the impressiveness of the elms, and it should become a fixed policy of the town to remove the other varieties as fast as opportunity offers and to substitute in their places American elms. In order to effect these changes without waiting years for a good effect, large elms can be moved in. Trees with a diameter of from five to ten inches can be selected growing in open places in the fields. These should be root pruned in the early spring by digging a trench all

around the tree in order to cut the large roots. Fibrous roots will be formed and the tree can be moved the following spring with a better chance of becoming established quickly than if not thus prepared.

It will not be possible to space these trees uniformly because the existing location of drive entrances and of the houses themselves will make it necessary to vary the spacing here and there. The distance apart of the existing elm trees varies from 20 to 70 feet. The former distance is much too little, and while the latter distance is excellent for elms when they have reached a good development, it means waiting so long for a good effect to be attained that it will be better to adopt a spacing of fifty feet in the case of elms. It is safe to say that a variation in the distance between trees if it is not extreme will hardly ever be noticed and will not detract from the excellence of the general effect.

The matter of the alignment of the street trees is of greater importance. From the Soldier's Monument looking westward, one cannot fail to notice the lack of balance between the two sides of the street. On the north side the elms stand nearly in a straight row, the great trunks forming a succession of columns which is very effective and very satisfying as a frame to the street. The sidewalk runs between the trees and the property line in a space ranging from six to twelve feet wide, and there is a broad lawn strip between the sidewalk and the edge of the travelled way. This is a very satisfactory arrangement and helps to give the fine sense of breadth to the street. But on the south side the conditions are quite different. Most of the trees are inside the fence lines and their large boles do not form a long impressive line for several reasons: first, they are not planted

signs of failing they should be re-moved and elms planted in their stead. There are several long gaps which could be planted at once with elms, which would greatly improve the street.

Everything possible should be done to increase the land values along this part of Main Street, as an increase in the land values will tend to bring an improvement in the character of the properties, which will in turn improve the appearance of the street.

BYINGTON MEMORIAL SEAT

A path, four and a half feet wide, should be constructed to pass in front of the seat so as to give access to it. A grouping of flowering shrubs at the back of the seat (that is, the north side) with one crab apple amongst them to overtop them and ultimately reach out over the seat, will give a good setting for the memorial.

SOLDIERS' MONUMENT

The Soldiers' Monument is attractive in design and color. A few evergreen trees on the west side of Pine Street give it a fine background from one point of view, and some evergreens on the west side of the little square also give a green background. It would add greatly to the effectiveness of this monument if the evergreen background could be continued around the northwest side by removing the poor maple and planting in place of it hemlock, or white spruce, and also a similar planting extending out from the northwest corner of the Episcopal Church to the sidewalk on Pine Street. With this evergreen background the old monument will make a very effective picture, especially as seen coming up South Street.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Episcopal Church stands in a very prominent location on Main Street and on account of its stone

need be a matter of only about ten feet to produce the effect of a graceful curve. Second, filling can be done on each side of the causeway so as to make a more gradual transition between the level of the meadow and that of the roadway. Also this widening of the causeway will make it possible to remove the iron railing alongside the road. Third, the straight rows of trees on either side of the road should be removed as they serve to accentuate the straightness of the road and the cutting in two of the meadow. Instead, it would be well to plant a group of trees such as the plane tree (*Platanus orientalis*), at the east end of the bridge and also at the edge of the Burial Ground and just across the road from it. The road will then emerge from a grove, cross the open meadow and plunge into another grove and cross the bridge. An elm or two which are growing naturally on the edge of the causeway could be left.

MAIN STREET; FROM THE SCHOOL TO EAST MAIN STREET

From the new High School Building eastward, Main Street is quite lacking in that character which makes the lower part of it so attractive. In the first place, the street narrows down from over 100 feet wide to less than 70. Then again the ground slopes up somewhat on the north side and falls away rapidly on the south side, which puts the houses on the south side much below the street level. Besides these differences, the street trees are more mixed as to kinds and more irregular as to spacing. There are 39 elms, 18 sugar maples, 2 soft maples, 3 ashes, 2 locusts, and one yellow birch. The wisest policy would be gradually to transform this street into one with elms only as the street tree. As soon as any of the other kinds of trees show

the elms will be approximately 50 feet apart.

From South Street to the Indian Burial Ground, the houses along Main Street in their relation to the street and in their style of architecture are a large factor in producing the attractiveness of the street. From the corner of Pine Street, looking in the other direction, the effect is confused. Instead of there being ample space between the buildings and the sidewalk, some of them crowd upon the sidewalk. The effect of this on the beautiful street is most unfortunate. If the store next to the Episcopal Church were moved back and a patch of grass were maintained between it and the sidewalk the result would be a decided improvement.

THE CAUSEWAY

That part of Main Street which runs from the Indian Burial Ground across the meadow to the other side of the river forms a causeway. It is doubtful if a straight causeway can ever be other than ugly and out of harmony with its surroundings.

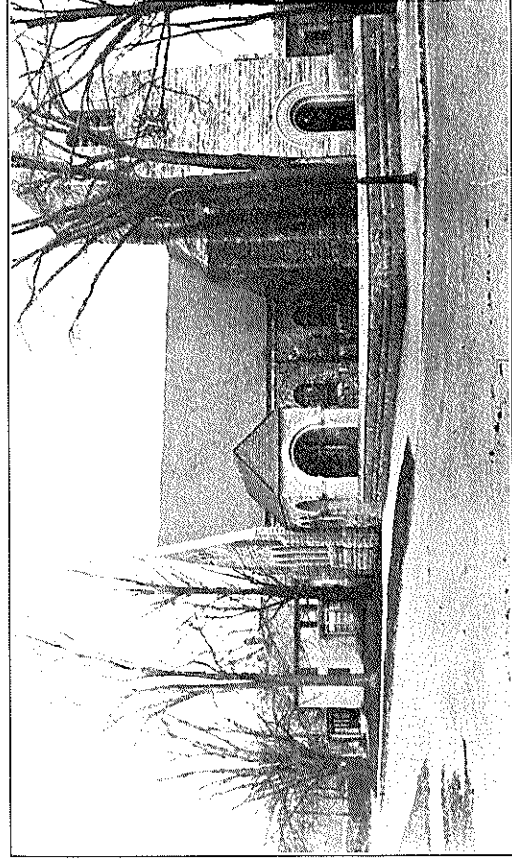
Its very nature, being raised above the surrounding land like a railroad embankment, makes it discordant. It cuts the sweep of the meadow in two, and its lines are straight and its form is harsh; whereas the lines of the stream are gracefully curving and the form of the meadow is gently undulating. But the causeway is a necessity as the road cannot be brought down to the level of the meadow without being inundated at times. It would be possible, however, to soften the effect of the causeway in several ways. First, by curving the road away from the Burial Ground, and then reversing the curve so that the road will swing into the bridge with a slight curve in the direction of the continuing road on the west side of the river. Because of the foreshortening the variation of the road from a straight line

in a straight line; second, the distance between them is quite varied; and, third, there is a considerable admixture of other kinds of trees in with the elms. A definite line should be established on this side of the street corresponding with the line on the north side; and a number of large elms should be planted now along this line where there is room for them, establishing the sidewalk between the line of street trees and the property line and allowing for an ultimate complete line of elms spaced as nearly as possible at a constant distance of 50 feet apart.

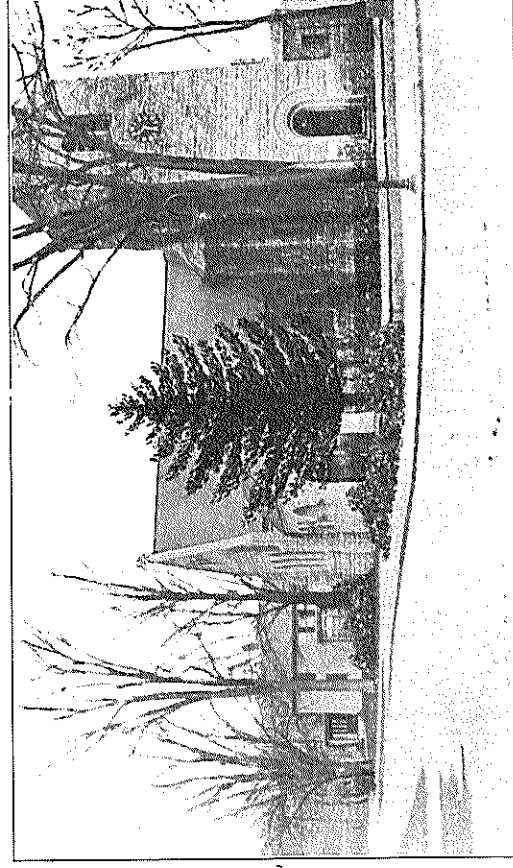
Looking down Main Street westward the glimpse of French's Hill makes the vista complete. Two of the largest elms on the north side have reached out so far that they almost completely shut off the view of the hill. It would be well to cut the out-reaching part of the branches so that the hill will be plainly seen ending the vista; but this pruning must be done properly and in such manner that it will not be apparent that the trees have been cut.

Looking in the other direction, from the corner of South and Main Streets, one first of all feels the need of a large elm tree in front of the Episcopal Church and near the Corner. The splendid large elms just to the west of Pine Street make it all the more necessary to balance the other side of the street with similar trees. The red maple in front of the Episcopal Church is in none too good condition and is moreover objectionable because it breaks the effect of continuity of the elms, an effect which is of far more value than any beauty of individual trees.

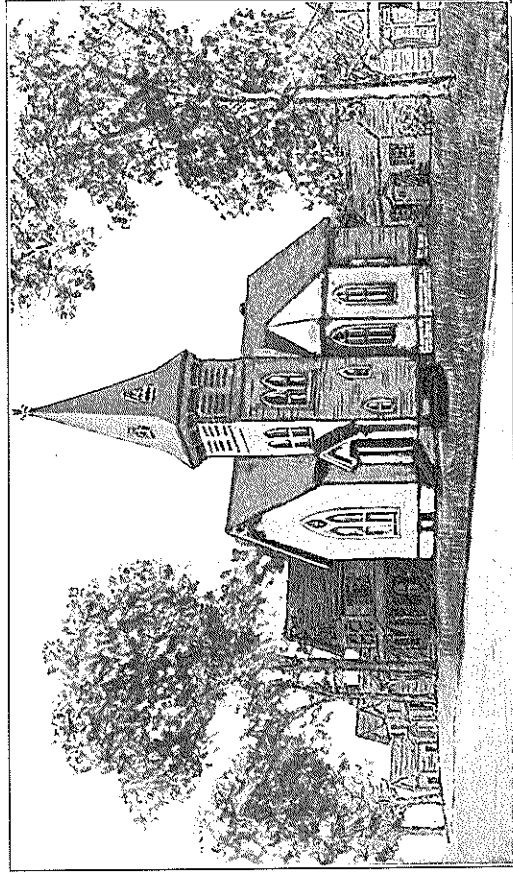
Opposite Elm Street is a group of trees which are badly placed. They are maples and elms mixed together and stand even as closely as 20 feet apart. The four maples should be removed and replaced by two large elms spaced so that all



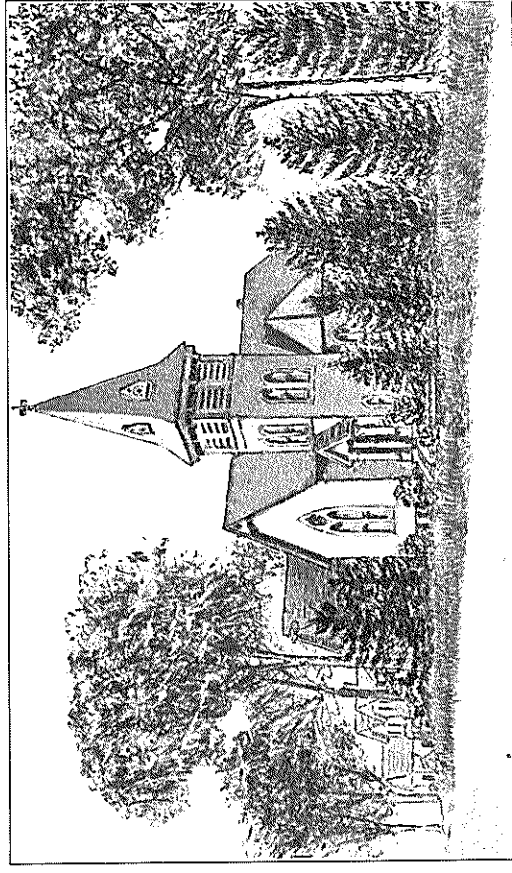
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH—NOW



THE PROPOSED CHANGES



THE METHODIST CHURCH—NOW



AS PROPOSED—The new pines will, of course, in time grow tall and reveal the houses behind

construction it may be expected to endure many centuries. Our street trees, excepting the oaks, endure on the average only about a century; hence the existing trees near the church should not be regarded as so permanent that the unfortunate effect which they have in relation to the Church building must be deemed unalterable. It would be best to replace them by a single tree, which, if three or four inches in diameter to start with, and planted in a well prepared tree pit and given proper attention, will in ten years be large enough to be effective in relation to this building.

The most attractive view of the Church will be that one which gives a composition of the church tower doorway with a limited amount of foliage on either side; not enough to hide the architecture but just enough to soften it. As it is, there are four trees in front of the south side of the church; and the tower, which is very attractive both in mass and in detail, is almost completely hidden. The worst offender in this respect is the beech, which stands directly in front of the tower and just inside the street wall—a fine tree in itself, but placed absolutely wrong in relation to the church. It surely ought to be removed. It could be moved with a large frozen ball, if it is thought to be worth the expense, well enough to afford reasonable assurance of success.

The red maple standing near the curb and west of the western entrance to the tower door should also be removed, as it spoils a view of the tower for people coming up South Street. Other reasons for removing this tree have been given in the recommendations regarding the trees on Main Street. The planting of an elm farther west, that is, at the corner of Main and Pine Streets, is needed for its effects in regard to Main Street. Its position will not interfere with the view

of the church tower, as it will be far enough to one side, and also because from some points of view it will combine more or less with the large elm inside the church grounds.

The maple which stands inside the church grounds near the store should remain as it helps to make the side of the store less conspicuous. If the store cannot be moved back, some hemlocks should be planted here, near it, more completely to hide this side of it.

The effect of the wall which surrounds the church yard is most unfortunate. It protects the lawn from being walked over, it is true, but it is just high enough completely to cut off the base of the building as seen from across the street, which greatly injures the architectural effect; and as it stands considerably out from the building it makes the building seem to be in a hollow. If this wall were reduced to one third of its present height the trouble would be remedied and the wall would serve its purpose of protection sufficiently well, especially if several groups of thorny shrubs, such as Japanese barberry were planted close to it on the inside. There would be views between these groups of low shrubs which would show the base of the building going down to the ground. While it produces a disagreeable architectural effect to hide all the base of a building with an outlying band of stonework, it is, on the other hand, almost equally unfortunate to show the entire base line of a building baldly down to a smooth lawn surface without any softening masses of foliage. Imagine a beautiful Gothic church set down on a perfectly bare level grass plot. The picture would lack charm. Study of beautiful buildings in the old countries will usually show that masses of foliage form an important part in giving the charming effect. These considerations apply also to the west end of the church and to the treatment of the street wall there, if it can not be reduced

in height. The porch stands out very prominently from the mass of the building and is unrelieved by any masses of foliage near it. In coming up South Street it seems particularly bare. One large white pine placed inside the church yard and near the corner of this porch would in time form a fine composition with it. To start with, three pines should be planted, the two poorer to be thinned out later on. Then the planting of spruce and hemlock off the northwest corner of the Church, recommended also for the Soldiers' Monument, will help greatly toward the desired effect. After these things are done the wall still remains bare and all too prominent. If this wall is not reduced in height an improvement could still be made by moving the sidewalk over to the edge of the roadway and by planting a group of shrubs between this new sidewalk and the wall.

THE CHINESE FOUNTAIN

The Chinese Fountain is a feature that should be made to relate to Main Street, and to be most effective from that point of view. To accomplish this the fountain should be given a background and the maple tree in front of it should be removed. This tree is already in a decrepit state. The background should be chiefly of evergreens, such as hemlock and white spruce, which should extend up to the south point of this triangle. Holes filled with very good soil should be made for these trees. The addition of a hawthorn near the fountain and of some bold groups of Japanese iris at the margin of the basin will enrich the picture. Three white spruces should be planted in the strip of grass between the roadway and the sidewalk on the west side of this triangle. This will continue the evergreen effect of the hemlock hedge and the Norway spruces that exist already on this

side of the street. This and other plantings suggested for this vicinity will make this part of Main Street very attractive.

THE PLAYGROUND AND TROLLEY STATION

Public playgrounds for the children are of ever increasing importance to the nation. As the open country becomes more and more taken up and enclosed and the population gathers into the cities the vital necessity of playgrounds increases. Therefore each community should provide them and improve them in the most thorough and substantial manner. The Stockbridge playground provides the space for the children to play, but the development of this playground is still to be undertaken. The concrete waiting room and the walls enclosing one corner of the playground have been carried out in the right spirit of providing improvements of as lasting a character as possible; and in good taste. It would add to the good appearance of the playground if the cast iron fence on the west side were replaced by a continuation of the parapet concrete wall which would end in two gate posts set ten to twelve feet apart at the carriage entrance to the grounds. The simple iron fence on the south side of the carriage entrance could be continued to the gate posts and join them. A permanent drain and some filling are needed at the northwest corner of this playground. The wires, especially the high tension wires at the playground, should be placed underground. In the hedge row that borders the street a row of good shade trees should be developed by selecting young trees in the hedge row and thinning out the rest.

APPROACH TO THE STATION

The trolley tracks, which parallel the road on the west side, are decidedly ugly, yet they could be easily

Church stands out bare and unadorned. Not a single shrub is growing anywhere around the building to give it a sense of union with Mother Earth or the appearance of having stood there for many years. Some masses of strong growing shrubs such as lilac and philadelphus should be planted about this building, especially at the corners. Also the strip of town land extending southward from the church to the corner of Main Street should be planted with large growing evergreens. On the west side of this square there is a row of large imposing white pines. It would be very effective to have a corresponding row of white pines on the east side. Even though such a row of newly planted white pines on the east side could never overtake those on the west side in size, yet it would be better to have even small ones planted now as in ten years the effect would be much better than without any. White pines can be bought ten feet high which will produce an immediate effect. With pines on both sides of this square the Edwards Monument would have a good evergreen background as viewed from Main Street coming and going.

THE CATHOLIC CEMETERY

Too often when buildings or monuments of stone are erected the opportunity is neglected to enhance the beauty of the structure by planting a setting of evergreen trees and shrubs in connection with the structure. This idea was brought out above in discussing the Episcopal Church. It applies also in regard to the monumental entrance to the Catholic Cemetery. If a group of Norway pines were planted between the arch and street on each side of the driveway they would in time soften the hard lines of the stone work and when grown to large size would add a quality of picturesque-

east side of Elm Street, trees of the same kind and size should have been planted on the west side. It will be impracticable now to make trees on the two sides equal in size but they can be of the same sort, at any rate.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND TOWN HALL

These two buildings were set back from the roadway 205 and 185 feet respectively. For some unknown reason advantage was taken of this space to plant a grove of trees in front of these buildings so that they are almost completely shut off from Main Street. This is certainly a wrong treatment for them. A Town Hall above all buildings should not be hidden away, and this particular one with its tall columns and simple style of architecture is in keeping with the best of the attractive old houses in the town and should therefore be plainly visible. The Congregational Church was evidently placed with the definite intent that it should end the vista of Church Street, and this purpose should not have been defeated by letting a mass of trees grow up in front of the building.

The people of the town must be courageous in this matter and liberately cut down some of the large trees in order to let both of these buildings become more visible than they now are. It would be well at this time to make a plan for this piece of land to show the best arrangement of roads and paths necessary for these two buildings and the parsonage, and also to show just where trees should be planted and just where open views should be maintained. Such a plan, if adopted by the town, would tend to prevent further mistakes, even if departed from in some minor particulars.

THE METHODIST CHURCH

On the other hand the Methodist

hidden by planting in well prepared beds shrubbery which will grow 5 to 7 feet tall. The view over the meadow and hills beyond should not be hidden; therefore the shrubbery must not be such as would grow above 7 feet high. The willows, which are already planted here, will grow much too high. They have served their purpose by giving a quick effect, but they should be removed to give place to the better kinds of shrubs which were planted among them. The overhead wires on the bridge should be put in a conduit on the floor of the bridge or just under it.

THE RAILROAD STATION

In the matter of planting, the railroad station has already received considerable attention. The planting of pines and birches on the banks should be encouraged. It would be well to add a few white spruces, in these plantations, so that in case any pines are killed back the spruces will be there to take their places.

A Colorado blue spruce in a prominent triangle between the drives near the station should be removed, because it is all out of harmony with the rest of the planting, being too conspicuously exotic and vivid in its coloring.

ELM STREET

A few sugar maples should be planted on the west side of Elm Street so as to balance the maples on the east side, because the existing trees are too far back in the lots on the west side. As large trees as possible should be moved in, so that the difference in size between the trees on one side and those on the other will not be unduly pronounced. This is a conspicuous example of the ill effect due to failure to follow consistently a comprehensive plan in regard to the treatment of each of the village streets. When the maple trees were set out on the

ness to this entrance in decided contrast to its present bareness. A few woodbines (Virginia creeper) could be planted to clamber on the arch itself with good effect.

BERKSHIRE ELECTRIC STREET RAILWAY

As before stated, it is a noticeable feature of Stockbridge that the street railway has been kept off the old Main Street. A considerable amount of convenience has been sacrificed to preserve the beauty of this old and most attractive part of the town. It is safe to say that as time goes on it will be more and more realized that this is a blessing to the town even from the materialistic point of view. Manufacturers will probably never come to Stockbridge; Pittsfield is too near at hand; and, if the street railway had been put in Main Street, the damage to the fine residential properties would probably never have been compensated for by increases in values elsewhere in the town.

The Street Railway touches the main built up part of the town at only one point, namely on South Street near the river. Some of the people in densely built up cities are content to walk several blocks to a car line, so it cannot be unreasonable in a sparsely built up town to expect people to walk twice as far to the car line; still it should be considered now whether as a matter of convenience the town should not provide another cross street from Main Street to the car line in order to add to the accessibility of the trolley cars. Such a street might run from the junction of East Street, Vine Street and Main Street to the river, or from the junction of East Main Street and Main Street southward to the car line crossing the river by a bridge.

GLENDALE

Some planting is needed in places along the chief street in Glendale. There are several kinds of trees on this street and it seems best to accept this characteristic, and add still more to the variety of the trees by planting different kinds where there are gaps. The existing line of spruce trees in one locality are too handsome to be removed as would be necessary to execute the opposite idea of uniformity. Glendale is more distinctly in the country and more countrified than is the heart of Stockbridge, so there is less call for formality in the street planting there.

POLLUTION OF THE RIVER

The pollution of our streams by sewage from cities and towns is a stinging disgrace to our present civilization. This disgusting delinquency of our municipalities makes our pride in our advancement hypocritical indeed. This method of sewage disposal is revolting, unsanitary and economically wrong. There is no excuse that can make it right for one town to pollute the stream that flows down to and through the next town, when there are other well known and efficient methods of disposing of sewage. By using suitable land for sewage filtration beds and properly managing them the sewage can be disposed of in a sanitary manner without annoyance to anyone. The large amount of water can be returned to the streams practically pure and the incidental residual solid matters can be treated and then returned to the land to keep up its fertility. Our streams should be beautiful and clean, well stocked with fish, and should be places of recreation for the people and sources of water supply to the towns along their banks, not filthy eye-sores. The Housatonic River at Glendale is a disgusting sight. It is practically nothing better than an open sewer most of the

year. The people of the town should engage in a crusade to have this cease abolished and they should never cease their efforts until the good cause is won.

Yours respectfully,

Harold Hill Blossom,
for Olmsted Brothers.

ONE MILE OF SHADE TREES

The Massachusetts Forestry Association for the Revival of Tree Planting in Massachusetts has offered the following Prize:—One mile of street or road will be planted to shade-trees at least seven feet in height, by the Massachusetts Forestry Association in the town or city which properly plants this spring the greatest number of shade-trees on its streets in proportion to its population based on the census of 1910.

WASTE ON THE FARM

The picture on the cover of our main section was taken in Stockbridge. We have more than a score of similar pictures. They are only too typical of farms all over New England. The Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station gives the annual depreciation of mowers, property cared for, as 7.80%, of rakes the same, of tedders 4.84%, of wagons 4.89%, and so on through the list of farm implements and machinery. We have consulted various successful farmers and machinery dealers, and they all agree that the annual depreciation of such machinery which is uncared for and left out all winter in the storms and thaws, is close to 50%. On \$1000 worth of farm machinery, then, the normal depreciation each year is less than \$100, while the depreciation on unhusked machinery is \$500.

In a letter just received from the University of Minnesota, Prof. J. L. Mowry, of the department of Agricultural Engineering, says:—

"A man who will house his machinery as a rule has something in the way of a shop and

he will grease the polished surfaces and paint the elements made of wood, which other men neglect entirely.

"Take your mower for instance. This machine may be made with care and a small amount of repair to serve for eight or ten years, or three or four times what the manufacturer ordinarily considers the life of a machine. This machine is made almost entirely of steel and iron.

"Take a harvester. The protected and repaired machine, as it would be repaired by the careful and progressive farmer, has been known to last fifteen and sixteen years, as against the same machine in the same neighborhood going to ruin in three years. The difference in this case is not due entirely to the implement being housed but to the extra care and protection in the way of oil and paint which the more thrifty man will apply consistently simply because he is more thrifty.

"There are implements upon which it is useless to spend a great deal in the way of protection,—such machines as are made of steel with few or no oscillating or sliding parts. On the other hand a wagon may be ruined in two or three years, being made entirely of wood, while the careful man will get twenty years out of the same set of trucks.

"There is of course a great difference between a shed which is a shed and one which is merely a shelter from rain but which furnishes no protection against a snow storm or against the nightly roosting of fowls. Such a shed is really worse than none because the action of droppings is so much more severe than that of the rain that the latter is much to be preferred."

A "shed which is a shed," however, can be built on any small farm for a sum not exceeding what it will actually save the farmer in two years. Thousands upon thousands of dollars are literally thrown away by carelessness on New England farms every year. Why isn't Stockbridge a good place to begin the stopping of this waste?

It is now generally agreed that the only practical soil tests for fertilizer needs must be experimental rather than laboratory. For that reason, STOCKBRIDGE would like to print in the April issue the results of experiments made in various parts of the town, as a possible guide and help to others in the same regions. If those who have made experiments, in any part of town, will send us brief re-

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sumes of results, before the fifteenth of the month, we shall be grateful.

WHO HAS A COPY?

James L. Ford, author of "Dr. Dodd's School", which is a record of life in the Reid-Hoffmann school of Stockbridge, and now unfortunately out of print, informs us that in our January article about Stockbridge publications of the past we neglected to mention "The Edwards' Place Gazette", which Mr. Ford, then a school boy here, was instrumental in founding, he thinks in 1867. "There were probably about eight or ten numbers issued," he says, "and I don't remember much about them, except that the first number was suppressed by the faculty, because it contained some revolutionary remarks about the dining room."

We should like to see a copy of that first number. Has anybody got one?

The first issue of STOCKBRIDGE (600 copies) has been exhausted. We cannot supply any back numbers. February numbers may still be had. We are printing 1000 copies of the March issue, so that all who desire them may have duplicates of the Olmsted report.

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