

MISS FERBER SHIES AT CLEAN-UP ROLE

**Covered Too Many Committees
as Reporter, She Says —
Blames Public for Dirty City**

Edna Ferber proffered the olive branch to offended city officials yesterday, but declined the metaphorical broom they had offered her in the city's forthcoming clean-up campaign.

Miss Ferber, in a letter to Commerce Commissioner Walter Shirley, didn't back down on her statement last week that New York was "the dirtiest city in the world" and "a scab on the face of our country." But the novelist said it wasn't the fault of the Department of Sanitation or the city administration "alone."

"It is we, the people of New York, who litter the streets, demolish the parks, tolerate the disorder, permit the blackened air."

None the less, said the writer of "Showboat" and "Cimarron," she won't act as assistant general chairman of the Citizens Clean-Up Committee, a position offered her by Mr. Shirley last week.

Her reasons?

"Ever since my newspaper reporting days, I have fought shy of committees," she said. "I had to cover so many of them. Gun shy."

"I think a clean-up campaign beginning May 4 and continuing through May 16 is the most unavailing act since Canute tried to command the advancing waves to retreat.

Doubts 10-Day Clean-up

"New York can't be cleaned up in ten days. It can be cleaned up only when the minds and spirit and will of the people of New York want it to be. This may take months and even years."

To this, Mr. Shirley promptly and politely replied, avowing his "considerable disappointment." Like Miss Ferber, he said, he had been "disturbed" at the appearance of New York last year, upon returning from a visit to Europe.

"I heartily agree with you on the need so to indoctrinate our city's vast population in an acceptance of its responsibility," he added. "The purpose of our campaign this year is to do exactly that."

The clean-up committee of the League of West Side Organizations will confer with Commissioner Andrew W. Mulrain at 10:30 A. M. today in the Department of Sanitation headquarters, 125 Worth Street, to discuss ways of making upper Broadway more sightly.

The committee, headed by Rev. John Mulligan of All Angels Protestant Episcopal Church, succeeded last week in getting the police to force store owners to remove protruding fruit stands along Broadway from Fifty-ninth to 125th Street. The group hopes the conference with Commissioner Mulrain will result in cleaner streets and sidewalks on the upper West Side.