

[Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Westminster, The United Parishes of St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster].

Contributors

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ST JOHN, WESTMINSTER

1857-1861 (incomplete)

WESTMINSTER

Parishes of St Margaret

and St John.

MOH reports
and Board
of Works reports,
containing reports
by MOH

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METROPOLIS LOCAL MANAGEMENT ACT.

R E P O R T

ON THE

SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE PARISHES OF

ST. MARGARET AND ST. JOHN,

WESTMINSTER,

DURING

APRIL, MAY, AND JUNE, 1857,

BY

BARNARD HOLT, F.R.C.S.

Medical Officer of Health.

METROPOLIS LOCAL MANAGEMENT ACT

R M P O R T

OF THE

SANITARY COMMISSION

OF THE DISTRICT OF

MARGARET AND ST JOHN

WESTMINSTER

BY

ERLE, MAY, AND JONES

BARRETT & CO. LTD.

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REPORT
ON THE
SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE PARISHES OF

St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster,

DURING APRIL, MAY AND JUNE, 1857,

BY

BARNARD HOLT, F.R.C.S.

Medical Officer of Health.

To the Members of the District Board of Works.

GENTLEMEN,

The number of Births registered during the previous three months was 512, and the Deaths 337; while the Deaths for a similar period in 1856, amounted to 397, and the average for the previous ten years, to 426. From the present return, however, must be deducted 15 as belonging to other Parishes, which reduces the number to 322, and if the average of the previous 10 years be raised with a view to comparison for increase of population, the numbers will be 468: the Deaths now returned are consequently less by 75 than for the same period last year, and 146 less than would have occurred if the average rate of mortality had prevailed

in these Parishes. The following Table will show the Births and Deaths in each Parish, arranged as to sex.

ST. MARGARET.					ST. JOHN.				Total both Parishes 1857.	Deaths in 1856.	Deaths in 10 Years Average.
Births.		Deaths.		Births.		Deaths.					
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.				
April	36	36	26	26	57	40	32	20	104	130	135—9
May	46	30	33	36	55	62	33	34	136	162	158—6
June	25	28	32	21	53	44	28	16	197	105	131—7
Total	107	94	91	83	165	146	93	70	337	397	426—2

The present method of compiling the Death-Register, renders it impossible to ensure accuracy as to residence. In the foregoing numbers there were in the

WORKHOUSE.	HOSPITALS.	PRISONS.	BARRACKS.
45	Westminster 30 Scots Fusileers 2 Coldstream Gds. 4	House of Correction 6 Millbank Prison 3	Wellington 2 Hyde Park 1

The majority of cases in the Westminster Hospital, are returned without any address, and as patients are admitted from all parts of the kingdom, I have no doubt the death rate of these Parishes is unfairly increased; yet, the present return must be considered a great source of congratulation, and affords a good exemplification of the healthy state of the Parishes.

The illness return from the out-door poor has not been forwarded with sufficient accuracy, to enable me to give the precise numbers, I therefore prefer postponing any analysis until the next Report. A reference to the Table of Diseases, shows a marked decrease in the deaths from whooping cough, for while in the previous three months they were 46, the present numbers but 22; the same diminution is noticed in diseases of the chest, bronchitis and pneumonia, for the previous three months, numbering 106, while in the present they only amount to 55; the deaths above seventy years of age are nearly the same, but those under one year are 26 less.

During the last quarter the following houses have been inspected, and although they are situated in the more respectable portion of the Parishes, the same defective drainage is found to exist; 71 open privies and 67 cesspools being detected in 251 houses, giving very nearly the average I have already alluded to in my former Reports.

Summary of Houses inspected by the Medical Officer of Health, assisted by the Sanitary Inspectors.

Streets—Regent Street, Grey-Coat Street, Tothill Street, Cowley Street, Barton Street and College Street.

Open privies	71
Cesspools	67
Defective drainage	55
Requiring water to closets	25
Dust-bins to be erected	28
Pavements requiring repair	10
Cleansing and limewhiting	5
<hr/>	
Number of houses inspected	261
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Notices have been issued in all these cases.

In 36 instances the works are completed.

In 25 the work is delayed, the owner being abroad.

In 41, the works are in hand.

In addition to the above, 63 houses have been inspected by Mr. Crow, 37 by Mr. Wood, and 12 by Mr. Smith.

An examination of the above, shows that in 25 instances the closets are without any water supply; and to this may be added 7 others, where all the requirements have been complied with, excepting the water supply. I therefore think it my duty to urge upon the Board the necessity of enforcing this necessary improvement, which the 81st section of the "Metropolis Local Management Act," empowers them to do, as without it, the pipe drains are constantly obstructed, and become a greater nuisance than existed before any alteration was made.

Some months since it became necessary to apply to the Magistrate respecting several houses in Vincent Row. In consequence of the lease having but a very short term, the Magistrate declined making any order; the lease has now expired, and it is therefore necessary the defective drainage should be immediately remedied.

One of the greatest evils in these parishes consists in the overcrowding of rooms, and the indiscriminate intermingling of the sexes, I have frequently witnessed scenes precisely similar to those so graphically described by Dr. Letheby, Medical Officer of Health for the city of London; and in the hope of being enabled to remedy this evil, I wrote to that gentleman requesting to be informed by what authority he acted, when he informed me, his power was derived from a Sewers' Act, only applicable to the city. As a single example, I will mention a room in Tothill street, inhabited by 8 persons, the dimensions being 12 feet by 6, and 5 feet high. If any remedy could be applied to this most crying evil, I feel quite assured the death rate would be still further diminished. During the last month, I have had occasion to attend the Police Court three times in reference to the seizure of *bad meat*, detected in Strutton Ground, through the vigilance of Mr. Wood, and I am happy to add that the conviction and penalty has had its attendant good, there now being a remarkable difference in the quality of the meat offered for sale.

The establishment of cow-houses is likely to become a monster nuisance, if regulations as to cleanliness and ventilation are not stringently enforced. There are 5 cowhouses in St. Margaret's, and 17 in St. John's, containing in the aggregate 289 cows. I feel bound to state that the greater number are cleanly, and the cows healthy; although in some instances, the ventilation is insufficient, and the arrangements altogether incomplete. I have cautioned the offending parties, and suggested the requirements, which, if not carried out, will be

duly reported to your Board. Mr. Bower having complained to me that his premises are saturated with water after every heavy rain, I beg in conclusion to suggest, that the matter be referred to the Surveyor for his consideration.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your faithful Servant,

BARNARD HOLT.

July, 1857.

AGES AND CAUSES OF DEATH DURING APRIL, MAY & JUNE

ST. MARGARET'S.

DISEASES.	Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 10.	10 to 20.	20 to 30.	30 to 40.	40 to 50.	50 to 60.	60 to 70.	70 & upwards.	Total.
Small Pox.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chicken Pox .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever .....	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Whooping Cough	3	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Diarrhoea	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	2
Dysentery .....	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Cholera .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Fever.....	..	2	..	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	5
Bronchitis and Pneumonia.....	7	6	..	2	2	2	3	1	4	1	28
Pleurisy .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Croup .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Phthisis.....	1	..	1	1	7	6	5	4	2	1	28
Hydrocephalus and Convulsions..	9	5	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
Apoplexy and Epilepsy	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	2	1	1	6
Marasmus and Atrophy	4	1	1	3	..	..	..	1	..	..	10
Violence, Privation & Prem ^e Birth	2	1	..	1	..	..	2	..	1	..	7
Rheumatic Fever.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Pyæmia.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other Diseases—chiefly Chronic	2	1	1	1	3	9	9	9	6	19	60
Total	30	24	4	10	13	18	21	18	14	22	174

AGES AND CAUSES OF DEATH DURING APRIL, MAY & JUNE.

ST. JOHN'S.

DISEASES.	Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 10.	10 to 20.	20 to 30.	30 to 40.	40 to 50.	50 to 60.	60 to 70.	70 & upwards.	Total.	Total of both
all Pox.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
cken Pox.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
asles .....	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
let Fever .....	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	..
oping Cough	5	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	25
rrhœa	2	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	5	7
entery .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
lera .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
er.....	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	1	1	4	9
nchitis and Pneumonia.....	8	8	1	..	2	1	2	2	1	2	27	54
arisy.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..
up .....	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
hisis.....	..	1	..	7	9	10	4	5	..	..	36	64
drocephalus and Convulsions..	8	3	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	13	29
oplexy and Epilepsy .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	2	4	10
asmus and Atrophy	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	9	19
lence, Privation & Prem ^e . Birth	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	6	11
umatic Fever .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
emia.....	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
er Diseases—chiefly Chronic	7	3	..	1	..	4	3	4	4	12	38	94
Total	43	26	5	10	14	16	9	12	9	19	163	337

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METROPOLIS LOCAL MANAGEMENT ACT.



R E P O R T

ON THE

SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE PARISHES OF

ST. MARGARET AND ST. JOHN,

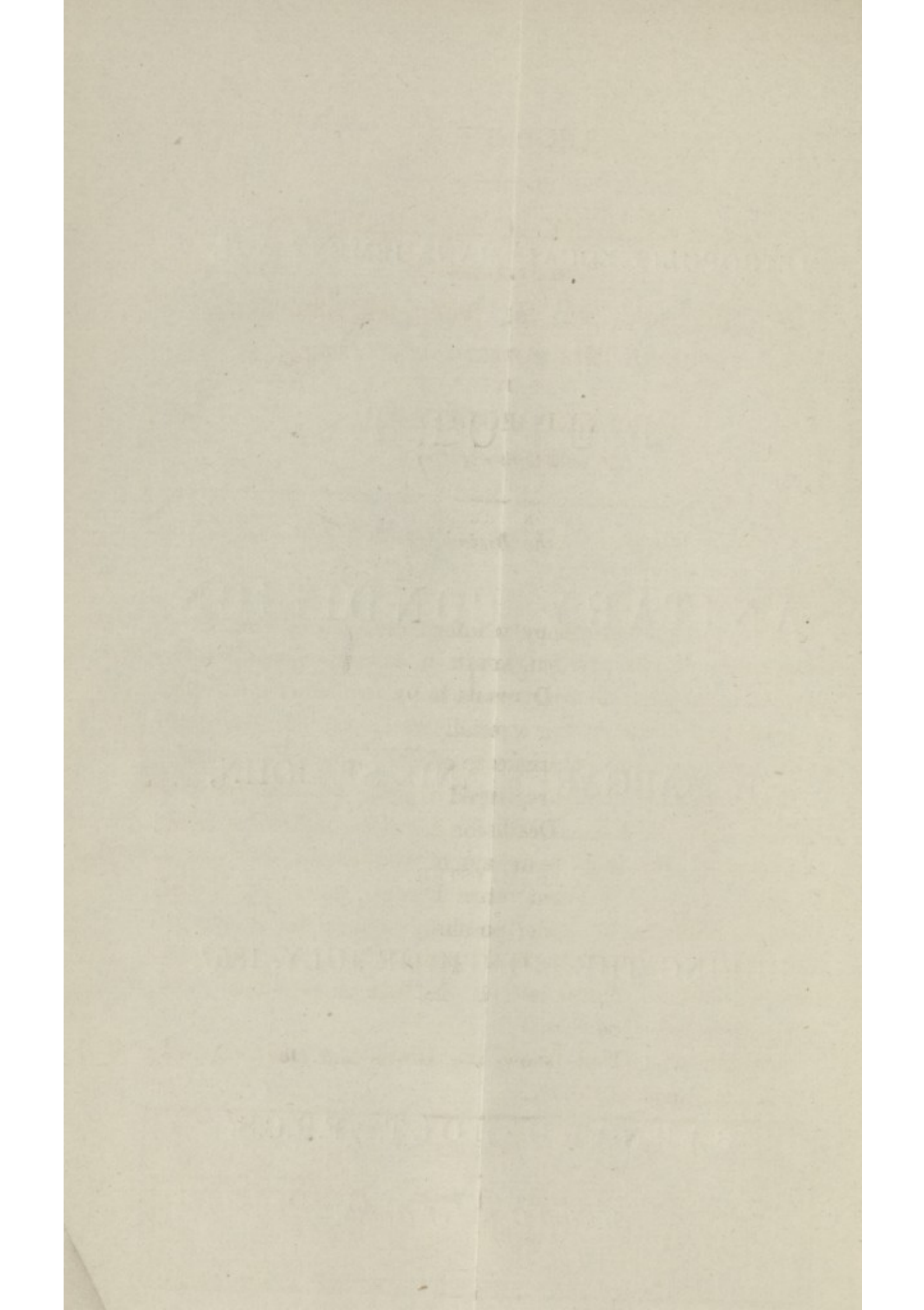
WESTMINSTER,

DURING THE MONTH OF JULY, 1857,

BY

BARNARD HOLT, F.R.C.S.

Medical Officer of Health.



REPORT

ON THE

SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE PARISHES OF

St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster,

DURING THE MONTH OF JULY, 1857,

BY

BARNARD HOLT, F.R.C.S.

Medical Officer of Health.

To the Members of the District Board of Works.

GENTLEMEN,

I am happy to inform you, that although the temperature of the present month has ranged considerably above the average, and Diarrhœa has consequently been very prevalent and in the young especially fatal, yet the death-rate of the united parishes, continues to exhibit a gradual decrease.

The number of Births registered in July was 213, and the Deaths 135; while the Deaths for the same period in 1856, amounted to 178, and the average of the previous ten years to 168-8. From the present return however, must be deducted three, as belonging to other parishes, reducing the number to 132; and if the average of the previous ten years be raised with a view to comparison for increase of population, the numbers will be 184.

The following Table shows the Births and Deaths in each Parish, arranged as to sex.

ST. MARGARET.						ST. JOHN.						Total of Births in both Parishes.	Total of Deaths in both Parishes.	Deaths in 1856.	Deaths in 10 years average.	Deaths less than 1856.	Deaths less than 10 years average.
Births.			Deaths.			Births.			Deaths.								
M	F.	Total.	M	F.	Total.	M	F.	Total.	M	F.	Total.						
41	35	76	38	25	63	76	61	137	42	30	72	213	135	178	184	43	49

It will thus be seen that the Deaths in the present return are 43 less than for a similar period in the previous year, and 49 less than the average of the previous ten years.

The following deaths occurred in the undermentioned places:—

WORKHOUSE.	HOSPITALS.	PRISONS.	BARRACKS.
8	Westminster 10 Coldstream Gds. 2	House of Correction 3 Millbank Prison 1	Hyde Park 1

An examination of the table of diseases shows a very favourable general return. As with the exception of Diarrhœa, there is no disease to which special reference need be made; and although the Deaths from Diarrhœa are 28 more than the previous month, it will be seen that 25 out of that number died under 1 year of age,—infants being generally unable to resist the exhaustion attendant on an attack.

Hooping cough has almost subsided; only one death being registered as attributable to that cause.

During the month the following Streets and Houses have been inspected.

Summary of Streets and Houses inspected by the Medical Officer of Health, assisted by the Sanitary Inspectors.

Streets—York Street, Ship Court, Smith's Place, Artillery Square, Symonds Buildings, Fisher's Court, Pump Court, and Montpelier Row, Knightsbridge.

In the above where detected

Open privies	11
Cesspools	8
Defective drainage	15
Requiring water to closets	33
Dust-bins to be erected	6
Pavements requiring repair	8
Cleansing and limewhiting	34
Number of houses inspected	<u>104</u>

Proper notices have been issued in the majority of these cases.

In addition to the above, 2 houses have been inspected by Mr. Crow, 59 by Mr. Wood, and 2 by Mr. Smith, making 167 since the last Report.

Work completed, &c., since last report :—

Completed 41—In hand 25.

The late excessive heat having in a great measure prevented sanitary inspections, and it not being advisable fresh work should be commenced, my attention has been specially directed to the overcrowding of dwellings; and in consequence of two cases of Cholera having occurred in Smith's Place, I inspected all the houses, and found them with one or two exceptions in a very dirty and unwholesome condition, imperfectly ventilated, and several of the rooms overcrowded, the sexes being intermingled in a manner most detrimental to the morals, not to say decency of the occupants.

In the lower room of No. 1, the dimensions being 15 feet by 12, was a man, his wife, and five children, the eldest 13 years of age; in the lower room of No. 2, a man, his wife, and six children; and in the lower room of No. 3, the dimensions being 15 feet by 10, a woman, her two sons, ages 22 and 20, and daughter 19; in the upper room, a man, his wife, and six children, eldest 13 years of age. Each of these houses are very imperfectly ventilated, and from the fact of their adjoining others at the back, there is no means of improving it.

A similar state of things exists in Artillery Square; the lower room of No. 1, which is 10 feet 6 by 11 feet 4, contains a man, his wife, 3 children, and a young woman aged 19, and so on. I could multiply instances in Artillery Square, Symond's Buildings, and Fisher's Court, the houses in the two latter places being in a very dilapidated, dirty, and in my opinion, unsafe condition.

In Artillery Square, Mr. Wood with the consent of the owners of the property, has prepared a plan by which the existing evils will be removed; and if the Board will give directions for properly paving the Square, a very great improvement will be effected.

I regret to state, that having, at the request of the Nuisances Removal Committee, conferred with the Solicitor respecting the overcrowding of rooms, I find there is no power of interference, excepting where the *house* is so over-crowded as to be detrimental to health, and that any *room* in a house may be dangerously over-crowded, and the sexes disgracefully inter-mixed without the possibility of a remedy.

Complaints having been made to Mr. Wood, the Sanitary Inspector by two of the rate-payers in Marsham Street, that in consequence of the manufacture of Candles, and the making of Fire-bricks from clay retorts, at the Chartered Gas Works, a greater nuisance was experienced than heretofore ; I again inspected the premises, and was immediately conducted by Mr. Evans to the portion of the works complained of.

With regard to the manufacture of Bricks, I found that the useless clay retorts were first broken and then ground, and mixed with fresh clay, this being afterwards wheeled into a shed for the purpose of being moulded ; and adjoining this shed was a kiln in which the bricks were burned.

I carefully examined the retort, and the admixture, but without detecting anything injurious to health ; from the kiln there escaped a transparent vapour, such as is incidental to the burning of coke, but that was confined to its immediate vicinity. Mr. Evans also showed me were a few Paraphine Candles had been made, but assured me it was only as an experiment, and the practice had been discontinued.

Being desirous of ascertaining the state of the surrounding atmosphere, I inspected the area of the factory, but failed to detect at that time, any thing which could either be considered a nuisance, or detrimental to health : not being satisfied with this examination, I interrogated the inhabitants, but the replies I obtained were so unsatisfactory, and so utterly worthless, that no reliance could be placed upon them. During this examination, I detected a most offensive effluvium from Mr. Mitchell's Bone Dépôt, and upon examination, found a considerable quantity of Bones, emitting a most offensive odour,

and creating an intolerable nuisance. A notice was immediately served upon Mr. Mitchell, for their removal, and I have since examined the premises without detecting any such offence.

I have also visited the vacant space of ground on the west side of the Penitentiary ; a complaint having been made that the refuse coal from the Gas Factory, was deposited there, and created a nuisance. Although the examination was made on one of the hottest days of the month, I failed to detect any but the faintest gaseous smell, not in my opinion either a nuisance, or detrimental to health.

A complaint having been forwarded to me, emanating from Mr. Palk, of Rutland Square, Knightsbridge, respecting a tank in the rear of his house, I have to report that I inspected the tank, and found it in a very dirty state, the water containing a large amount of organic matter, detrimental to health ; and as the tank is placed midway between Westminster and Kensington, I wrote to the medical officer of Kensington, who examined the water and joined me in a certificate respecting its impurities, recommending its being frequently cleansed and provided with with a proper cover, inasmuch as being placed in juxta position with a chimney, the water is more contaminated than it would otherwise be from exposure to atmospheric impurities.

In conclusion, I venture to suggest to the Board, that they should adopt some means by which I may be regularly furnished with the weekly returns of illness occurring amongst the In and the Out-door Poor.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your faithful Servant,

BARNARD HOLT.

August, 1857.

AGES AND CAUSES OF DEATH DURING JULY.

ST. MARGARET'S.

DISEASES.	Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 10.	10 to 20.	20 to 30.	30 to 40.	40 to 50.	50 to 60.	60 to 70.	70 & upwards.	Total.
Small Pox.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chicken Pox .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever .....	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Whooping Cough .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diarrhoea	13	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Dysentery .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Fever.....	..	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Bronchitis and Pneumonia.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3	..	4
Pleurisy .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Croup	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Phthisis.....	..	..	..	2	2	1	2	1	..	1	9
Hydrocephalus and Convulsions..	3	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Apoplexy and Epilepsy .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	2
Marasmus and Atrophy	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Violence, Privation & Prem ^e Birth ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Rheumatic Fever.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Pycemia.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other Diseases—chiefly Chronic	1	..	..	2	1	2	5	2	2	5	20
Total	19	4	5	4	3	3	9	5	5	6	63

AGES AND CAUSES OF DEATH DURING JULY.

ST. JOHN'S.

DISEASES.	Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 10.	10 to 20.	20 to 30.	30 to 40.	40 to 50.	50 to 60.	60 to 70.	70 & upwards.	Total.	Total of both Parishes.
Small Pox.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chicken Pox.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Scarlet Fever .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Whooping Cough .....	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Dysentery	12	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16	30
Cholera	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Typhoid Fever .....	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	6
Bronchitis and Pneumonia.....	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	5	9
Aneurysm.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Croup .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Diphtheria.....	2	1	1	..	4	1	1	..	..	..	10	19
Hydrocephalus and Convulsions..	10	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12	17
Apoplexy and Epilepsy .....	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	2	4
Paralysis and Atrophy	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	6
Violence, Privation & Prem ^e Birth	4	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	5	5
Rheumatic Fever .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Poisoning.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other Diseases—chiefly Chronic	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	4	3	10	31
Total	37	10	2	1	6	3	1	..	6	5	72	135

ST. LOUIS

Age	Infants	Children	Adults	Total
Under 1 year	1	1	1	3
1 to 4 years	1	1	1	3
5 to 9 years	1	1	1	3
10 to 14 years	1	1	1	3
15 to 19 years	1	1	1	3
20 to 24 years	1	1	1	3
25 to 29 years	1	1	1	3
30 to 34 years	1	1	1	3
35 to 39 years	1	1	1	3
40 to 44 years	1	1	1	3
45 to 49 years	1	1	1	3
50 to 54 years	1	1	1	3
55 to 59 years	1	1	1	3
60 to 64 years	1	1	1	3
65 to 69 years	1	1	1	3
70 to 74 years	1	1	1	3
75 to 79 years	1	1	1	3
80 to 84 years	1	1	1	3
85 to 89 years	1	1	1	3
90 to 94 years	1	1	1	3
95 to 99 years	1	1	1	3
100 years and over	1	1	1	3
Total	3	3	3	9