

Report to the General Board of Health on a preliminary inquiry into the sewerage, drainage, and supply of water, and the sanitary condition of the inhabitants of the borough of Bridgnorth, in the county of Salop / by William Ranger, Superintending Inspector.

Contributors

Ranger, William, 1800-1863.
Great Britain. General Board of Health.

Publication/Creation

London : Printed by George E. Eyre and William Spottiswoode ... for Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1853.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/smr7dcv>

License and attribution

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.

23
PUBLIC HEALTH ACT

(11 & 12 Vict. Cap. 63.)

R E P O R T

TO THE

GENERAL BOARD OF HEALTH

ON A

P R E L I M I N A R Y I N Q U I R Y

**INTO THE SEWERAGE, DRAINAGE, AND SUPPLY OF
WATER, AND THE SANITARY CONDITION
OF THE INHABITANTS**

OF THE BOROUGH OF

B R I D G N O R T H ,

IN THE COUNTY OF SALOP.

By WILLIAM RANGER, Esq.,

SUPERINTENDING INSPECTOR.



L O N D O N :

**PRINTED BY GEORGE E. EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.**

1853.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT
(11 & 12 Vict. Cap. 62)

REPORT
TO THE
GENERAL BOARD OF HEALTH

NOTIFICATION.

PRELIMINARY INQUIRY

THE General Board of Health hereby give notice, in terms of section 9 of the Public Health Act, that on or before the 20th day of November next, being a period of not less than one month from the date of the publication and deposit hereof, written statements may be forwarded to the Board with respect to any matter contained in or omitted from the accompanying Report on a preliminary Inquiry into the Sewerage, Drainage, and Supply of Water, and the Sanitary Condition of the Inhabitants of the Borough of BRIDGNORTH in the County of Salop ; or with respect to any amendment to be proposed therein.

By order of the Board,

C. MACAULAY, *Secretary.*

Whitehall, 23d September 1853.



LONDON: PRINTED BY GEORGE E. EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOOD
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
THE NEW MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

I N D E X.

	Page
OPENING of the INQUIRY - - - - -	5
PERSONS PRESENT during the INQUIRY - - - - -	5
GENERAL DESCRIPTION of BRIDGNORTH - - - - -	5
LOCAL GOVERNMENT - - - - -	6
STATE of the BOROUGH previous to the INQUIRY - - - - -	6
POPULATION, NUMBER of HOUSES, &c. - - - - -	8
POOR'S RATE ASSESSMENTS and RETURNS - - - - -	9
MORTALITY - - - - -	10
MEDICAL EVIDENCE—	
Evidence of W. Thursfield, Esq. - - - - -	13
„ Sydney Smith, Esq. - - - - -	13
„ Alfred Mathias, Esq. - - - - -	13
PERSONAL INSPECTION of the DISTRICT - - - - -	14
PRIVY ACCOMMODATION - - - - -	16
THE CONDITION of the ROADS and HIGHWAYS - - - - -	17
THE SEWERAGE and DRAINAGE - - - - -	18
THE WATER SUPPLY - - - - -	21
THE BURIAL GROUNDS - - - - -	26
CONCLUSIONS - - - - -	29
RECOMMENDATIONS - - - - -	30

APPENDIX.

Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry - - - - -	31
The Corporation Accounts - - - - -	32
Report on the Condition of St. Mary-street and Pound-street in 1849 - - - - -	34
Mortuary Returns - - - - -	35
List of the Places where Cholera prevailed in 1849 - - - - -	39
Scale of Charges for the Water Supply from the New Works - - - - -	40
General Conditions of Supply - - - - -	40
Mr. Giles's Report on the Water Supply in 1849 - - - - -	41
List of Slaughter-houses in Bridgnorth - - - - -	42
List of Friendly Societies in Bridgnorth - - - - -	42

INDEX

1	General Introduction
2	Statement of the Inquiry
3	Statement of the Inquiry
4	Statement of the Inquiry
5	Statement of the Inquiry
6	Statement of the Inquiry
7	Statement of the Inquiry
8	Statement of the Inquiry
9	Statement of the Inquiry
10	Statement of the Inquiry
11	Statement of the Inquiry
12	Statement of the Inquiry
13	Statement of the Inquiry
14	Statement of the Inquiry
15	Statement of the Inquiry
16	Statement of the Inquiry
17	Statement of the Inquiry
18	Statement of the Inquiry
19	Statement of the Inquiry
20	Statement of the Inquiry
21	Statement of the Inquiry
22	Statement of the Inquiry
23	Statement of the Inquiry
24	Statement of the Inquiry
25	Statement of the Inquiry
26	Statement of the Inquiry
27	Statement of the Inquiry
28	Statement of the Inquiry
29	Statement of the Inquiry
30	Statement of the Inquiry

APPENDIX

31	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
32	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
33	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
34	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
35	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
36	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
37	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
38	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
39	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
40	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
41	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
42	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
43	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
44	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
45	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
46	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
47	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
48	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
49	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry
50	Copy of the Petition for the Inquiry

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT (11 & 12 Vict. c. 63).

Report to the General Board of Health on a Preliminary Inquiry into the Sewerage, Drainage, and Supply of Water, and the Sanitary Condition of the Inhabitants of the Borough of BRIDGNORTH, in the County of Salop. By WILLIAM RANGER, Esq., Superintending Inspector.

2A, Pall Mall, London,
31st March 1853.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE the honour to lay before you the following Report on the sanitary state of the borough of Bridgnorth in Shropshire, where a Preliminary Inquiry has recently been held in obedience to your directions, and in accordance with the provisions of the Public Health Act.

OPENING OF THE INQUIRY.—The inquiry was begun at the Town Hall, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of the 9th March 1853, and was continued during that and the next two days, on each of which I devoted a portion of the time at my disposal to a personal inspection of the town, and more particularly of those quarters of it which were or had been the seats of disease.

The petition to your Honourable Board for the inquiry, which is given at length in the Appendix (page 31), was signed by 153 ratepayers; and as the entire number of this body is not more than 650, it will be seen that the signatures to the memorial are considerably in excess of the required proportion of one tenth.

PERSONS PRESENT DURING THE INQUIRY.—Robert Harrison Esq., mayor; Henry Slater Richards, Esq., and Joshua Sing, Esq., justices of the peace for the borough; John J. Smith, Esq., town clerk; Arndell F. Sparkes, Esq., clerk to the Board of Guardians; John Henry Cooper, Esq.; W. Thursfield and Alfred Mathias, Esqrs., surgeons; Thomas Deighton, Esq.; George Parson, Esq.; H. Child, Esq.; Hubert Smith, Esq.; Messrs. Homfray, Cooke, Rowley, Brown, Gitton, Edkins, Abbott, Wedgwood, &c. &c.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.—The town of Bridgnorth, which forms the subject of the present Report, is not co-extensive with the Parliamentary borough of the same name, but comprises the two parishes of St. Mary's and St. Leonard's only. The river Severn divides Bridgnorth into two portions, the

Upper and Lower Towns. The former has an elevated position on the western bank of the river, which rises to a height of 180 feet above the level of the stream. The Lower Town, on the opposite side of the Severn, lies low.

The rock on which the Upper Town (comprising three fifths of the whole of Bridgnorth) stands, is of the new red sandstone formation; the Lower Town, on the contrary, is scarcely above the flood level of the Severn, and is erected on the low alluvial soil of that stream.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—Previous to the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act the town was governed by a prescriptive corporation, who possessed many privileges granted by various charters, and confirmed by one of King James I.

The present corporation, styled “the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the borough of Bridgnorth,” is composed of the mayor, four aldermen, and twelve councillors; the names and salaries of their officers being as follows:—

	£	s.	d.	
The recorder - - - -	40	0	0	per ann.
The town clerk - - - -	100	0	0	”
The clerk of the peace - - - -	}			Paid by fees.
The coroner - - - -				
The borough treasurer - - - -	25	0	0	per ann.
The town crier - - - -	12	0	0	”
The gaoler, who is also inspector of nuisances - - - -	9	0	0	” and house free.
The inspector of weights and measures -	Paid by fees.			

The income of the corporation arises from real and personal estate, funded property, borough rates, lighting rates, and receipts for the prosecution and maintenance of prisoners. The annual amount of income, on the average of the last five years, is 1,419*l.* The annual expenditure, on an average of the same period, is 1,404*l.* 4*s.*

Further particulars relating to the income, the expenditure, and the property of the corporation will be found in the Appendix (page 32).

There is no Local Act in force for the sanitary improvement or regulation of the town, the byelaws of the corporation being the only enactments on this head.

STATE OF THE BOROUGH PREVIOUS TO THE PRESENT INQUIRY.—Before entering on the more immediate subject of the present Report, it is incumbent on me to make some allusion to the condition of the borough since 1849. In that year the cholera visited the district, and raged with such severity that no less than 75 persons out of a population of about 6,000 fell victims to the disease.

This circumstance, coupled with the fact that the then

average rate of mortality was very high, and that sickness was very prevalent in certain parts of the town, induced the inhabitants to direct their attention to the state of the town, with the view of agreeing upon certain improvements to remedy the evils under which it was suffering.

With this object a meeting was summoned by the Mayor on the 7th September 1849, when it was determined to appoint a committee who should devise such means as they considered necessary for arresting the prevailing epidemic.

This committee, as soon as it was appointed, divided the town into 18 districts, the various members of the committee being required to visit each of them, and obtain information on the condition and necessities of the poor and the state of their dwellings, and to collect subscriptions.

This was accordingly done, but it is not necessary for me to go at length into the subject matter of these various reports. It is sufficient to state that in one and all of their districts there was found to be that general prevalence of disease, and that general absence of good sanitary regulations to which I shall hereafter have occasion to allude at greater length. I have, however, given one of these reports *verbatim* in the Appendix (see page 34), in order that your Honourable Board may see that a very narrow and searching inquiry was made into the condition of those portions of the town which had suffered from the visitation of cholera.

The committee having thus collected and made public much valuable information respecting the condition of the town, a further public meeting was held towards the close of 1849, when the following resolutions were passed:—

“1st. That the defective state of the sewerage and drainage in the parishes of St. Mary Magdalene and St. Leonard in the borough of Bridgnorth, coupled with an excessive mortality of the inhabitants and the late ravages of the cholera, demand that the most efficient measures should be adopted to improve the sanitary condition of the above parishes.

“2d. That a committee be appointed to make inquiries, obtain information, and report generally upon the measures required for the improvement of the sanitary condition of the aforesaid parishes.

“3d. That it be an instruction to such committee to inquire as to the supply of water afforded to the town from the river Severn, and whether it be desirable to adopt the provisions of the Public Health Act, and to report their proceedings to this meeting.”

These instructions were complied with, and the committee presented to their fellow-townsmen a very full, able, and, I believe, accurate report on the condition of the town, its average rate of mortality, the nature of the water supply, the sewerage, the house drainage, the prevalence of nuisances, and, in fact, on all those points to which it was necessary for me to turn my attention during the recent inquiry.

In addition to this statement of the existing evils and defects, the committee also took into their consideration the best means of remedying the one and supplying the other ; the conclusion they arrived at was to recommend the application of the Public Health Act to the town, which they did in the following words :—

“Your committee are of opinion that the most efficient, as also the most economical measures, for improving the sanitary condition of the parishes of St. Mary and St. Leonard, will be found in the provisions of the Public Health Act, and they, therefore, beg to recommend its adoption.

“At the same time should the inhabitants generally desire that a survey and estimate be first prepared, for the guidance of the town in the ulterior measures to be adopted (which may be done at a cost of about 60*l.*, to be raised by subscription), your committee can see no objection thereto ; and in such case they would recommend that Mr. Giles, the author of the able Report on Lincoln, be the engineer employed.”

The concluding recommendation of the sanitary committee led to the appointment of Mr. Giles, who, in May 1850, made a very full and excellent report on the condition of the town and the best means for its improvement.

In the course of the present Report I have been largely indebted to the printed statement of this gentleman, as well as to that of the sanitary committee, and in some instances I have preferred to quote extracts from both these documents rather than to insert my own remarks, because I consider it due to the authors of both the one and the other report to give their statements that prominence to which they are entitled by the priority of their publication.

Since the date of Mr. Giles's report, no steps have been taken for the application of the Public Health Act, as considerable opposition to the measure was manifested by some of the inhabitants. During the latter portion of the past year, however, a public meeting was again called on the subject, when it was finally determined to draw up a memorial to your Honourable Board for an inquiry under that Act. It is upon this memorial that my recent visit to Bridgnorth and my present report thereon were made.

POPULATION, NUMBER OF HOUSES, &c.—The population of the town, according to the Registrar-General's returns, was—

In 1841 - 6,198 - - In 1851 - 6,172

There are about 1,450 houses, of which 1,100 are in the Upper Town, on the west of the river, and 350 in the Lower Town, on its opposite bank.

The average number of inmates per house is about 4·5.

The rateable value of the property in the town is about 14,000*l.*

POOR'S RATE ASSESSMENTS, &c., and AMOUNT of PAUPER RELIEF.

Return of the Number of Assessments to the Poor's Rate in the Borough of Bridgnorth.

Parishes.	Date of Rate.	Amount of Rate. £ s. d.	Total number of Assessments in rate of the under-mentioned rateable values.											Total number of Assessments in rate.	Gross number of Persons assessed in rate.	Number of Assessments in rate of the under-mentioned annual rateable values, made on the owners instead of the occupiers, under the Act of 13 & 14 Vict. c. 99., or any other general or local act.						
			Under 1l.	1l. and under 2l.	2l. and under 3l.	3l. and under 4l.	4l. and under 5l.	5l. and under 6l.	6l. and under 7l.	7l. and under 8l.	8l. and under 9l.	9l. and under 10l.	10l. and above.									
St. Leonard -	3 May 1851	298 13 4	26	145	159	18	3	2	4	23	7	29	211	627	632	26	145	159	18	3	2	5l. and under 6l.
St. Mary Magdalene }	11 July 1851	228 7 9	19	37	81	167	89	64	23	41	26	14	181	742	595	5	25	71	162	84	49	4l. and under 5l.

The following return of the amount of out-door relief given in the town of Bridgnorth, during the three years ending Michaelmas 1852, was furnished by Mr. *S. Abbott*, the relieving officer :—

			£	s.	d.
In the year	1850	-	-	844	5 6
"	1851	-	-	686	7 1
"	1852	-	-	685	14 8
			<hr/>		
			£2,216	7	3
			<hr/>		

The number of paupers during the last year was as follows :—

St. Leonard's	-	-	173	} 320
St. Mary Magdalene	-	-	147	
The Union-house	-	-	-	377

The latter contains all the paupers of the Bridgnorth Union, which comprises 28 parishes, exclusive of those in the town.

The population of the union is 15,608, and its acreage 68,076 ; whilst the town has but 6,172 inhabitants, inclusive of the inmates of the workhouse, the total extent of the two parishes of St. Leonard's and St. Mary's being only 831 acres.

The annexed return shows the cost of the paupers in the workhouse, for the year ending Michaelmas 1852.

		No. of Paupers.	Total Cost.			No. of medical orders given for attendance.*
			£	s.	d.	
St. Leonard's	-	173	209	18	0	43
St. Mary's	-	147	181	6	8	53
Rest of the Union		193	294	10	0	

MORTALITY.—The following statement of the mortality of the district from 1845 to 1852 is compiled from the returns of the Registrar General and the Superintending Registrar of the district :—

	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.	Total.
Deaths from all causes -	164	178	199	189	258	988
From epidemic and contagious diseases - -	20	34	44	53	112	263

The above table embraces the year 1849, during which 75 persons died of cholera. During these five years, therefore, the average mortality was 32 per thousand, and the deaths from zymotic diseases about 26 per cent. of the whole.

* The paupers who are known to the medical officers are often relieved without an order. The orders are given chiefly in Union cases.

If the year 1849 be excepted, the proportion becomes 29·5 per thousand, and that of the zymotic diseases 20·7 per cent. of the whole deaths.

From 1850 to 1852, the mortality was as follows :—

	1850.	1851.	1852.	Total.
From all causes	190	147	149	486
From epidemic and contagious diseases	66	26	27	119

Or, on an average, 26 per thousand annually; the deaths from epidemic and contagious diseases being in the proportion of 24 per cent. of the mortality from all causes.

From these statements it will be seen that, comparatively speaking, the mortality in Bridgnorth during the last three years has been less than during the three years preceding the attack of cholera in 1849; but, even now, the average mortality of the district is excessive, particularly when it is considered that the town is of limited extent, and without any unwholesome trades or manufactures to account for such an extremely high rate of mortality.

In proof, I may be permitted to refer to the tables of mortality (see Appendix, pp. 35–38) which Mr. Giles has inserted in his report. By these it will be seen that up to 1849, when the average mortality of Bridgnorth alone was 31·5, that of the Bridgnorth Union, which embraces the town and several neighbouring parishes, was only about one half of that amount.

Whilst drawing attention to the actual mortality of the town, it may be useful to show the amount of sickness in certain portions of it, as compared with others.

The return in question, being made from the book of the medical officer of the district, necessarily embraces only such cases of sickness as have occurred amongst the poorest of the population, who are compelled to apply to the parish for sick relief. But though the information is thus limited in extent, it shows in a very striking manner how certain places, such as the Cartway, Friars-lane, or Waterside, present, year after year, the same large amount of sickness from every cause, as well as from zymotic diseases.

In former years, as well as at the present period, equal liability to disease was manifested in the same quarters as those which are now the most unhealthy. This is made clearly apparent by a return (see Appendix, p. 39) of the cases of cholera and diarrhœa in 1849. From this it will be seen, that out of 330 cases of diarrhœa and 63 of cholera in 12 different streets and lanes, 199 of the former, and 34 of the latter occurred in the Cartway, Friars-street, and in Severn's-side, in each of which places the houses are crowded

together, and built against the sandstone rock which rises from the river-side; the dwellings themselves being small and badly constructed, whilst their situation precludes anything like good ventilation.

It is not requisite for me to make further allusion to these localities at this point, as I have mentioned them at greater length in my remarks on the personal inspection of the district.

A SUMMARY, furnished by W. Thursfield, Esq., of the cases of Out-door Medical Relief from January 1850 to December 1852, distinguishing between those from all causes and those arising from diseases of the Zymotic class alone.

	1850.		1851.		1852.		Total for the three years.	
	Jan. to Dec.		Jan. to Dec.		Jan. to Dec.		Jan. to Dec.	
	All causes.	Zymotic diseases.	All causes.	Zymotic diseases.	All causes.	Zymotic diseases.	All causes.	Zymotic diseases.
Cartway -	63	12	64	22	67	20	194	54
Friars-lane -	38	18	39	17	68	19	145	54
Waterside -	17	6	24	14	21	7	62	27
Northgate -	7	1	7	2	3	-	17	3
Raven-street -	5	1	5	2	23	7	33	10
Pound-street -	5	1	5	1	10	3	20	5
St. Leonard's -	4	-	1	-	-	-	5	-
St. Mary's-street	2	-	5	-	7	1	14	1
Listley-street -	-	-	4	1	-	-	4	1
High-street -	-	-	-	-	5	-	5	-
Church-yard -	-	-	1	1	1	-	2	1
Church-steps -	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-
Church-lane -	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
	143	39	156	60	205	57	504	156

In a subsequent part of the Report, the evidence of the witnesses and the various statements I received during the inquiry will show what is the actual condition of those localities where the sickness is so uniformly in excess of that of some of the other streets. And if these statements concur in representing the localities in question as amongst the worst in point of situation and arrangement, and the most neglected as regards sanitary improvement, it follows as a natural and legitimate inference, that the extension of remedial measures where begun, and their introduction where not yet commenced, will have a marked effect on the health of the population, and reduce to a considerable extent the exces-

sive amount of sickness and mortality that now prevails in many portions of the town of Bridgnorth.

In accordance with my usual practice, I append to my remarks on the mortality of the district the evidence of the medical men who attended during the inquiry.

On the present occasion the information so given is of too general a character to allow of any deductions being drawn from it; indeed it may be said that, contrary to my usual experience in other places, the statements of the medical men as to the extent and character of the prevailing diseases led me to expect a more favourable condition of things in this respect than my inspection of the town and my subsequent examination of the mortuary returns of the district have since revealed to me.

MEDICAL EVIDENCE.—*W. Thursfield, Esq.*, stated,—

“That he was the medical officer for the parish of St. Leonard’s. The prevailing disease was influenza; but he had cases of fever in the Cartway, Friar-street, and the Union-house. These streets were supplied with water from the corporation works. He was unable to state the nature or extent of the privy accommodation, as he had not given his attention to this subject. The state of the ventilation was not satisfactory to him as a medical man, but even the worst houses had, more or less, the means of being supplied with fresh air. There were about 28 common lodging-houses in the town, all of them, generally speaking, too densely crowded with occupants; this evil, however, was likely to be lessened, as the Common Lodging House Act had been recently put in operation. There was a considerable Irish population in the town; and there were, he regretted to say, too many of the lower classes badly clothed and badly fed. In many cases also the people were extremely dirty in their habits.”

Sydney Smith, Esq., said,—

“That his practice was confined exclusively to the infirmary, where about three fourths of the cases were those of persons living in the town. His patients were, for the most part, of the poorest class; and in many cases he considered that illness was brought on amongst them by the want of food and clothing. During last year there had been fever and scarlatina, and low fever was then prevalent; in the course of his visits he met with many nuisances of various kinds that had a tendency to produce disease.”

Alfred Mathias, Esq., stated,—

“That he was the medical officer for St. Mary’s parish, and that he had filled the office for about 18 months. Diseases of the zymotic class were rare, and he had had only five cases of typhus fever. In many cases the backs of the houses in the low-lying part of the town were exceedingly damp, in consequence of the damp from the high ground above them. During floods the lowest part of Bridgnorth was below high-water mark; his own house

stood near the river, and sometimes he had had as much as 5 feet of water in his cellars, not from the river, but from the soak waters of the upper district.

"He had made inquiries into the state of the privies in Underhill-street, and found that the house drains ran along the surface of the kitchen floors.

"He considered that the quantity of water supplied from the works was sufficient, but he had heard complaints that its quality was not good ; it was too hard.

"As regarded the houses, he considered that the ventilation of those of the poorer classes was very indifferent, particularly in the sleeping-rooms.

"He thought that the lodging-houses were as good as places of this kind generally were ; the price of a bed ranged from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a night."

PERSONAL INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.—In obedience to the instructions of your Honourable Board, a considerable portion of the time spent on the Bridgnorth inquiry was occupied in inspecting the poorer quarters of the town, which were in this, as in other cases, those chiefly remarkable for excessive mortality.

In the general description of the district it has been stated that the town rises almost abruptly from the river, and that the rock on which its upper portions are built is of red sandstone, and of a very porous character. At the foot of this rock, and in some cases in the rock itself, are to be found many of the poorer dwelling-houses. In this quarter the houses are built into or against the sandstone rock, which is charged with the storm-water of the higher district, and what is worse, with the liquid refuse poured in from the defective drains or the numerous cesspools of the Higher Town ; consequently, the walls and floors of the houses below are saturated with moisture, from which a most unwholesome dampness is constantly arising. To this source of unhealthiness must be added the want of ventilation, which is a natural consequence of building houses in a situation where the fresh air can only reach them in front. It will thus be seen that, apart from all defects in their construction or their internal arrangement, the dwelling-houses in such streets as the Cartway, Friar-street, Severn-side, and the like, are built in so unfavourable a situation that, even under the best sanitary regulations, these localities will probably never enjoy as good a state of health as that of which the higher part of the town is capable. But if this be so, it furnishes an additional argument in favour of the necessity of a speedy change in the internal condition of the dwellings in the unhealthy localities.

I do not think it necessary to go into detail upon this

portion of my subject, because it would be invidious to describe the condition of certain properties, and perhaps run the risk of omitting others which are as bad or worse. I prefer, therefore, to state in general terms that, with but few exceptions, can any of the dwellings of the poorer classes in these parts of Bridgnorth be termed healthy habitations.

I have already alluded to the want of natural ventilation, but in other cases, when there are the means of obtaining a supply of fresh air, I found that there was a general absence of any arrangements for the purpose. In many cases the windows, especially in the bed-rooms, are not made to open. The defect has been alluded to by the medical gentlemen in their evidence, as they state that disease is in some instances aggravated, and in others that recovery is retarded by the close and bad atmosphere of the dwellings of the poor.

There is also a great want of decent privy accommodation, and this is most observable in the older portions of the town. Sometimes the privies are erected at the back of the houses, one having to serve for four, five, six, or more dwellings, but they are frequently in and sometimes under the houses themselves; in either case there are no facilities for readily emptying or cleansing the soil-pits, so that many of them are filled to overflowing; thus if the privy be situated outside of the house, the surface of the yard or garden where it is built is saturated with offensive matter; and if it be in the house itself, a constant and unhealthy exhalation is rising from the soil-pit and poisoning the atmosphere breathed by the inmates. The latter arrangement is, of course, the most objectionable, and its effects are seen in the more than ordinarily unhealthy condition of those dwellings where the privy is in the house itself.

With regard to the supply of water, there have been great facilities afforded to owners and occupiers of the poorer description of houses by the establishment of the new waterworks, under the direction of the Town Council, who have adopted a very moderate scale of charges for houses under 5*l.* value. But the benefits of a constant and unlimited supply of water are greatly diminished for want of a legislative enactment, like that of the Public Health Act, to require every house to be supplied with water. In the present instance, also, the number of houses supplied is less than it otherwise would be, in consequence of the alleged bad quality of the water; the demand for water from private consumers is, however, weekly increasing, and this demand may be expected to become still greater as the quality of the water grows better.

With regard to the house drainage, few or none of the poorer quarters of the town are supplied with any facilities in this respect. Here and there a covered drain, laid close to the surface, may be found to carry off the slop and waste water, but such instances are rare ; I need hardly say that anything like a general system of proper drainage to carry off every species of house refuse is quite unknown in any part of the town. In the better quarters of Bridgnorth covered drains carry off the waste water, and cesspools receive the more offensive refuse. Amongst the poor the privy-pit, or some neighbouring open ditch or cesspool receives the latter, and the surface of the ground near the house absorbs the former.

Some of the dwellings are made additionally unwholesome and unhealthy in consequence of the inmates often having pigs in close vicinity to themselves. What with the want of means to get rid of the animal refuse, and the too general carelessness as to keeping the pigsties at all clean or decent, many of these places were in a most filthy state, and the smell from them added to the other causes of unhealthiness so prevalent both within and without doors. In some instances also the peculiar formation of the town,—house rising above house so rapidly,—has caused the upper room windows of a house to be almost on a level with the pigsty and manure-heap in the premises behind ; so that if the windows open at all, they receive, instead of fresh air, the poisonous and stinking effluvia from manure-heaps and dirty pigsties.

The following evidence on the nature and extent of the privy accommodation shows how much improvement is called for in this particular, intimately connected as it is with the health and comfort of the population.

PRIVY ACCOMMODATION, &c.—Miss *Bagnall* stated,—

“That she had been very ill, in consequence of an offensive privy in the immediate neighbourhood of her kitchen premises. Her house in Listley-street was untenable, and had been so for some years, in consequence of the state of a tan-pit and several privies which adjoined her property.”

J. H. Cooper, Esq., said,—

“That he used to live in a house close to the spot Miss *Bagnall* had alluded to, but he had suffered so much inconvenience from the nuisances near it, that he had been obliged to go and reside elsewhere.”

Hubert Smith, Esq., town clerk, observed,—

“That privies were generally used ; there were but few water-closets, for want of means to carry off the soil ; in High-street,

however, there were several houses provided with waterclosets, which discharged their contents into cesspools."

The Rev. *W. K. Marshall*, incumbent of St. Mary's, said,—

"That the privy accomodation was very defective, particularly in the older portions of the town; and that, in many of the poorer houses, the privies were in the most offensive and unhealthy state."

Mr. Parson stated,—

"That in some cases the privies were within the dwelling-houses, and that in all such cases the health of the inmates was very bad."

THE CONDITION, &c. OF THE ROADS AND HIGHWAYS.—
Mr. J. Brown stated,—

"That he was the acting surveyor for the highways, to which he had been appointed by the vestry. He had filled the office in St. Mary's for six, and in St. Leonard's for about seven years. There were from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles of highways in the former, the parish repairing about 1 mile of turnpike, and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of highways in St. Leonard's.

"There was one $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ annual rate levied for St. Mary's, which produced 41*l.* 2*s.* 5*d.*; for St. Leonard's, two $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ rates, which in three years, each produced 41*l.* 5*s.* 5*d.* He was the collector of the rates; there were now but four persons excused from payment, as the Small Tenements Rating Bill had made a great difference in this respect.

"The above particulars related to those portions of the two parishes which lay beyond the limits of the town.

"As regarded Bridgnorth itself, he acted as the surveyor for the corporation, who repaired the streets in both the High and the Low Town. The total length of the public roads so repaired was—

In St. Leonard's	-	-	-	1,880 yards.
In St. Mary's	-	-	-	3,899 „

5,779

Or about $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

The corporation also employed him to scavenge the streets, but he did not cleanse the private yards or entries; he received 29*l.* a year, and the refuse so collected, which produced about 15*l.* a year, so that his annual pay from the corporation was about 44*l.* He received 8*l.* a year from each of the out-parishes of St. Leonard's and St. Mary's; he made out the rates and collected them also; he had also acted as inspector of nuisances under the corporation for the last two years, and for this he was paid 5*l.* annually."

The particulars as to the cost of maintaining and scavenging the roads in the town during the last three years will be found in the accounts of the corporation expenditure (Appendix, page 33.)

THE SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.—As both the sewerage and drainage of Bridgnorth remain in precisely the same condition as when Mr. Giles drew up his report in 1850, I do not think I can possibly describe them in better language than that which he then used.

Mr. *Giles* says, in the 5th page of his report,—

“The system of drainage at Bridgnorth may be described as ‘surface’ and ‘cesspool.’ All washings and house drainage are discharged by means of surface or covered drains into the open channels of the streets; the solid and more offensive portions of the town drainage is deposited in privy cesspools dug in the porous rock, and thus urine and other fluids are absorbed, which appear again at lower levels in the form of dampness or pestilential gases.

“The periodical and frequent cleansing of the cesspools appears much neglected, as indeed is usually the case when surface and cesspool drainage is adopted.

“The drainage from the houses, stables, piggeries, &c., being led into the open street channels already mentioned, and these flowing sluggishly to the lower levels, becomes a constant source of nuisance to the inhabitants.

“In a few instances, the street channel drainage is received by gratings into small brick drains placed at the base of inclines or declivities, but these appear to have been made for the purpose of receiving and conducting away heavy falls of rain-water, rather than accumulated discharges of filth from the dwelling-houses.

“The most important of the public drains west of the Severn convey the drainage of the upper levels to a ditch in the Oldbury Valley, south-west of the town; for many years this ditch has been used as a public open sewer; at various points in its course towards the Severn, the sewage is, or has been arrested by a series of large open manure-pits, into which it was made to flow, and deposit the solid matter held in suspension. This process is continued until the pits one after the other are filled, when they are emptied and the operation of filling again commenced. In summer and other periods, fœtid poisonous exhalations are generated and diffused by these unseemly arrangements, which may be described as of a most afflicting character to health in this locality, and to the town at large. I believe that public opinion has been loudly expressed against these mud-pits, but they are not destroyed, nor has the accumulation of filthy matter been removed from all of them.

“Besides the drains leading to the Oldbury Valley, several others of smaller dimensions conduct the sewage to the Severn, at points where outlets have been found convenient. One other drain, having its summit near the North-gate, passes down the Brosely-road, and finally discharges its contents into the Canern Valley.

“In that part of Bridgnorth lying east of the Severn, the surface drainage is treated in a similar way to that on the west; it is collected in the street channels, and led by them into drains which

discharge into tanks and open ditches, thus giving an opportunity for making use of the solids as manure; the surplus fluids are conducted to the Severn.

“The few covered drains in or about the town are very irregular in size and construction; they appear to have been constructed at different periods; there is no adequate means for flushing or cleansing them, and their irregularity of level and structure impounds the heavy matter which enters; they may, therefore, rather be described as a series of elongated cesspools, than as drains to carry off offensive sewage matter.”

In confirmation of the correctness of the remarks made in the last paragraph of the above quotation, I may insert the following list of the main sewers, which was prepared by Mr. *Brown*, the surveyor to the corporation, at the time of the inquiry.

Direction, &c. of the Culverts.	Dimensions, &c.
<i>High-street.</i> —	
Culvert across the bottom to Listley-street. Remainder of the street has no culvert.	20 yards long. 16 inches by 18 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
<i>Pound-street.</i> —	
Culvert from Whitburn and Salop streets.	109 yards long. 16 inches by 20 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
Culvert down Squirrel-bank to the watercourse in New Town.	120 yards long. 18-inch barrel.
<i>Listley-street and St. Mary's-street.</i> —	
Culvert runs into the Pound-street sewer already described.	23 yards long. 16 inches by 20 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
Culvert from the head of Listley-street to New Town carrying the water from the tan-yard, and the houses in its course.	104 yards long. 16 inches by 18 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
The remaining portions of Listley-street, and St. Mary's-street have no culverts.	
<i>New Town.</i> —	
Culvert from the head of New Town to the watercourse.	184 yards long. 16 inches by 18 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
<i>West Castle.</i> —	
Culvert from Bank-street along a portion of West Castle.	102 yards long. 16 inches by 18 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
Culvert to New Town, uncovered in some parts. No culvert in the remainder of West Castle.	110 yards long. 16-inch barrel.

Direction, &c. of the Culverts.	Dimensions, &c.
<i>East Castle.</i> —	
Culvert to join that in West Castle, but none throughout some portion of this district.	50 yards long. 9 inches by 9 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
<i>Cartway.</i> —	
Culvert at the head of this street.	42 yards long. 14-inch barrel.
Culvert from the Cartway down Bank-steps.	60 yards long. 14 inches by 14 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
Culvert from the bottom of Cartway to the Severn.	58 yards long. 20-inch barrel.
<i>Stoneway-steps.</i> —	
Culvert to the Severn.	198 yards long. 18 inches by 14 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
<i>Bridge-street.</i> —	
Culvert.	50 yards long. 10 inches by 9 inches. Flat bottom, arched top.
<i>St. John's-street.</i> —	
Culvert from St. John's-street across Mill-street to the Severn.	146 yards long. 20 inches by 20 inches.
No culvert in the remaining portion of either of these streets.	Flat bottom, arched top.
<i>Bernards-hill.</i> —	
Culvert to Grierson's and Law's-yard.	90 yards long. 15-inch barrel.
<i>Church-street,</i> <i>Back-lane, near Northgate,</i> <i>Whitburn-street,</i> <i>Salop-street,</i> <i>Friars-street,</i>	None of these streets are provided with any description of culvert.

The whole of the above-mentioned culverts are formed of brick and mortar, and their united lengths amount to 1,466 yards, whilst the whole length of the streets in Bridgnorth, which are under the inspection of the corporation authorities, is stated by Mr. Brown, their surveyor, to be 5,779 yards.

It will be seen, therefore, how very partial and imperfect is even the best of the main sewerage now existing. And when it is considered that some of these sewers are partially unsound, and that all of them are more or less imperfect in action, and in the nature and position of their points of out-fall, it is not assuming too much to consider that Bridgnorth is at this moment suffering from whatever evils neglected or imperfect sewerage arrangements may or do bring upon a town; and that such will continue to be its condition until the present system of main sewerage and house drainage has been thoroughly revised and re-organized.

THE WATER SUPPLY.—I have been favoured by Henry Marten, Esq., the engineer to the present waterworks, with a full description of them, as well as of those which formerly supplied the town, and I beg, therefore, to give Mr. *Marten's* report at length.

“In the early part of 1851, the corporation of Bridgnorth desired me to report upon the state and proposed means of improving their works. In accordance with these directions I examined into the then existing means of water supply, and found them to consist of a water-wheel on the western side of the Severn, below the town, and working four small pumps of 5 inches in diameter, and 2 feet stroke each. At the time I gauged it the wheel was working under the most favourable circumstances, and throwing up about 24 gallons per minute, or 42,840 gallons per diem. Whenever the water in the river rose either higher or fell lower than the level of the top of the float boards of the wheel, this quantity of water was materially diminished, and at times the wheel was at a complete stand-still.

“From this wheel the water was forced through a 4-inch pipe into a small leaden cistern on the Castle-walk, capable of containing about 6,500 gallons, but, owing to its defective state of repair, never allowed to carry more than 5,000 gallons.

“From this tank the distributing pipes were laid, the mains being from 3 inches to $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch in diameter. These were laid in the principal streets in the Upper Town, but there was no supply to the Lower, neither was there any service for fireplugs. The water was pumped direct from the river without any filtration, and the works also being situate below the town, the water pumped up was often exceedingly dirty and unfit for domestic use, being contaminated with gas refuse, sewage, &c., although in its natural state generally of very fine quality.

“I reported that these works were very inefficient, and could never be made capable of affording a sufficient supply of water to the town. That a place of the size and importance of Bridgnorth, containing upwards of 1,200 houses, should not have a supply of less than 96,000 gallons a day—about 114,000 gallons in summer and 78,000 in winter. That this should be distributed on the constant system, under high pressure, throughout both the Upper and Lower Town; and that a proper system of fireplugs should be laid down. I estimated these works, without going into details, at about 4,000*l*.

“After some time spent in the consideration of this report, I again met the council towards the end of 1851, or the beginning of 1852, and was informed that they had determined to give a constant supply of water to the town, and were anxious to commence the necessary works.

“After a careful consideration, it was determined,—

“1st. That the old wheel should be abandoned.

“2d. That it would not be prudent to carry out the Cantern Brook scheme, from which the town could be supplied by gravitation, on account of the hard quality of the water, somewhat similar to the conduit water.

"3d. That the water should be drawn from a well, and tunnel under the Severn.

"4th. That the site of the pumping station should be on the eastern side of river, near the high rock above the town. That the engine should of 15-horse power, and capable of raising about 150,000 gallons in 10 hours.

"5th. That the reservoir should be covered, and capable of containing 250,000 gallons, and that it should be constructed on the Hermitage Hill, about a quarter of a mile from the works, at an elevation of 250 feet above the river, and 110 feet above the High Town.

"6th. That there should be a complete system of pipage laid down for affording a constant supply from the reservoir, and that there should be about 50 fireplugs distributed over various parts of the town.

"These works have been carried out, and are now in operation. The only exception is in reference to the the tunnel under the river. This was not executed, as the quantity of water draining into the engine-well, sunk adjoining the Severn, was found to be so great that it was impossible to continue the tunnel as at first proposed.

"The water from this well is apparently of good quality, and remarkably bright, but it is said, by those who have had the greatest experience in its use, to be much harder than the water taken direct from the Severn. The testimony on this point is so strong and so respectable that I shall not be surprised if your analyses of the two waters show a remarkable difference in their chemical constituents ; and it has been determined, should your analyses of the waters account for this alleged remarkable difference, and your report determine such a course, to coffer out the water entering from the well and pump through an artificial well direct from the Severn. I believe, however, that a great proportion of the hardness of this water will be found to be due to its storage in the new reservoir, which, for a time, will throw a considerable amount of lime into the water, and I hear lately it is becoming much softer."

In addition to the supply obtained from the new works, it it necessary to notice that known as the conduit water, of which an analysis is inserted at a subsequent part of the Report. This water, which supplies the town on the west of the river only, is derived from the Oldbury spring, a source free to the whole of the inhabitants. The water, which is very limited in quantity, flows into a tank at the Town-hall, and from thence to six public taps from which the people procure it.

As allusion has been made at the conclusion of Mr. Marten's report to the statements respecting the hardness of the water, I think it advisable at this point to insert the evidence of at least one witness on the subject.

Mr. *Parson* stated,—

"That when the town council resolved on making new water-works, it was decided that the supply should be taken from the

Severn ; this however had not been done, for in sinking the shaft a spring of hard water had been tapped, of a different quality to that of the river water. He was the agent of a gentleman who owned 100 cottages, into which the water from the new works had been laid ; but the occupants complained it was so hard they could not wash with it. In some parts of the town, as in Underhill-street, for instance, there were shallow wells attached to the houses, from which the occupants obtained their ordinary supply of water."

During the inquiry I was furnished by Mr. Marten with three analyses of the Severn water, made at two different periods ; the former by H. Medlock, Esq., and the latter by T. H. Henry, Esq. ; the analyses having been made in November 1851, and August 1852.

A further analysis of a sample of Severn water by P. H. Holland, Esq. was also made in May 1853 for insertion in this Report, and as the question of the quality of the water has become unusually important in the present instance, I have arranged the analyses in parallel columns.

RESULTS of Four Analyses of the Severn Water.

	H. Medlock, Esq.		T. H. Henry, Esq.	P. H. Holland, Esq.
	Nov. 1851.	Aug. 1852.	Aug. 1852.	7th May 1853.
Carbonate of lime -	4.62	2.81	3.58	4.3
Sulphate of lime -	2.66	2.49	1.63	4.8
Nitrate of lime -	-	Traces.		
Carbonate of magnesia -	0.85	1.23	1.40	1.6
Chloride of sodium -	3.42	1.88	2.11	2.6
Chloride of potassium -	Traces	Traces.		
Silica, iron, alumina, and phosphates.	0.62	0.21	0.42	1.0
Organic matter -	1.72	0.92	1.92	4.8
	13.89	9.54	11.06	19.1
Solid residue obtained by evaporation.	13.81	9.87	10.40	18.95

Almost the only difference in any of the above quantities is that detected by Mr. Holland, under the head of organic matter, the presence of which in larger quantities in one sample than another is obvious. Indeed, the last-named gentleman, in his remarks upon the sample in question, says,—

"The water from the Severn was not quite clear; vegetable matter separated by filtration, and an appearance of vegetation, showed itself after a few days exposure to the air. The water had a flat taste, but no colour or smell ; lead exposed to it for three weeks became covered with a crust of very slightly adherent carbonate."

In addition to the sample of the Severn water, I was supplied with two samples from the new waterworks, which have also been examined by Mr. Holland. The following are the results :—

“Analysis of the Water of the Bridgnorth Waterworks.

	Grains per gallon.
Carbonate of lime - - -	10·5
Sulphate - - -	3·1
Carbonate of magnesia - -	4·1
Chloride of sodium - - -	29·2
Silica, iron, alumina, and phosphates -	1·1
Organic matter - - -	5·8
	<hr/> 53·8
Solid residue obtained by evaporation -	<hr/> 53·1

Hardness before boiling - -	17 degrees.
„ after boiling - -	12 „
„ after the addition of lime water	10½ „

It will be seen from this analysis that Mr. Marten was quite correct in his supposition that a remarkable difference would be found between the water of the Severn and that of the new works, as the two samples are evidently those of distinct sources.

Speaking of the two samples from the new waterworks, Mr. *Holland* says,—

“The first specimen was not quite clear, it contained a few whitish particles, removable by filtration, had no colour nor smell, but a distinct and unpleasant saline taste. This water, after standing a few days exposed to the air, deposited flakes of vegetable matter, whence it is probable that in warm weather it may contain visible animalcules; lead exposed to its action became slowly covered with patches of carbonate, which were easily detached; scarcely any lead was dissolved by the water, but if this water be used there is a risk of the poisonous carbonate of lead being diffused in it.

“The second specimen of this water was clear, but had the same saline taste, the same hardness, and the same constituents, except that it contained very little less common salts.”

The next water to be noticed is that from the Oldbury spring, and known as the conduit water.

Of this Mr. *Holland* has given the following analysis :—

	Per gallon
Carbonate of lime - - -	4·8
Sulphate of lime - - -	3·7
Carbonate of magnesia - -	4·0
Chloride of sodium - - -	3·6
Silica, alumina, &c. - - -	traces.
Organic matter - - -	3·
	<hr/> 19·1
Solid residue obtained by evaporation -	<hr/> 19·6

Hardness before boiling - -	11½ degrees.
„ after boiling - -	5½ „
„ after adding lime water -	4½ „

Of the above sample, Mr. *Holland* remarks,—

“This water was bright, and very nearly clear; it became perfectly so after standing a few minutes. It had a very slight saline taste, but no colour or smell; was pleasant to drink, and contained flakes of vegetable matter. It underwent no apparent change after standing three weeks exposed to the air in a warm room; and from this circumstance it may be suspected that the flakes previously observed were accidentally introduced—had become covered with a thin crust of firmly adherent carbonate.”

Since I received the foregoing report, I have been furnished with a second, also by Mr. *Holland*, after his examination of a second sample of the conduit water.

“SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT on a second specimen of water sent from Bridgnorth in a stoneware bottle, labelled “Water taken from the public conduit, May 7th, 1853.”

“This specimen of water differs somewhat from the former specimen purporting to be from the same source. It is somewhat harder, and contains 3·4 grains per gallon more of solid matter. The analysis of the two specimens are thus compared.

	First specimen.	Second specimen.
	Grains per gallon.	Grains per gallon.
Total solid residue obtained by evaporation - - -	19·6	23
Silica, iron, alumina - - -	a trace.	a trace.
Carbonate of lime - - -	4·8	11·1
„ „ magnesia - - -	4·	2·1
Sulphate of lime - - -	3·7	4·24
Chloride of sodium (common salt) - - -	3·6	1·02
Carbonate of soda - - -	-	1·3
Organic matter - - -	3·	4·
	19·1	23·76
Error - - -	5 +	76
	19·6	23·
	Degrees.	Degrees.
The hardness - - -	11·5	16·6
After boiling without evaporation - - -	5·5	4·7
After removing lime - - -	3·7	2·3
After softening with lime water - - -	4·4	4·3

“It will be noticed that the water differs somewhat in quality at different seasons, probably in consequence of receiving contributions from sources which are unequally affected by the weather. The difference will, however, be but slightly material as regards the fitness of the source for a town supply, and not at all so if the process of softening by lime be adopted, for after that process

both specimens of water became very soft, clear, and bright, and in every respect superior to either of the other two specimens sent for examination. This is the case, also, though in a less degree, when the specimens are compared in their original condition."

I have thought it advisable to give due prominence to all the information I have received respecting the new works and the properties of the water of that source.

That information appears to show very clearly that the water now raised there is certainly not that of the Severn. I do not, however, consider I should be justified in passing judgment upon this matter, or in deciding the question to which Mr. Marten has alluded towards the close of the report.

The late inquiry being one of a preliminary nature, was confined to an examination of the existing circumstances and condition of the town, and the result of that inquiry establishes the fact that the new works are capable of furnishing an abundant and constant supply of water, though the benefits of such an arrangement are considerably diminished by the defective quality of the water.

I have given in the Appendix (page 40) a return of the prices charged for water by the corporation, as well as the general conditions relative to the works, all of which are extremely fair and liberal, and prove that the corporation are thoroughly desirous of doing all in their power to make the works as beneficial as possible.

THE BURIAL GROUNDS.—For the following information, relative to the burial-grounds in Bridgnorth, I am indebted to the incumbents or the officials of the several places of worship to which they are attached.

The burial-grounds are four in number, the two principal being those of St. Mary's and St. Leonard's; the others are small grounds belonging to dissenting congregations. The areas of the burial-grounds are as follow :—

	Acres. R. Poles.		
St. Leonard's, deducting walks and buildings	-	1	0 0
St. Mary's	-	0	2 12
	Yards. Feet.		
The Castle-street burial-ground	-	402	2
The Stone-way	-	322	5
		<hr/>	
	724	9	0 0 24

The following is the return of interments in the two first-named burial-grounds, there being no return from the others :—

St. Leonard's.	From 1550 to 1845	-	-	11,858
"	1846	-	-	67
"	1847	-	-	88
"	1848	-	-	58
"	1849	-	-	118
"	1850	-	-	57
"	1851	-	-	63
"	1852	-	-	71
				<hr/>
				12,380
				<hr/>

St. Mary's.	From 1610 to 1845	-	-	9,411
"	1846	-	-	80
"	1847	-	-	79
"	1848	-	-	92
"	1849	-	-	117
"	1850	-	-	59
"	1851	-	-	55
"	1852	-	-	41
				<hr/>
				9,934
				<hr/>

Both these grounds are stated by those who gave evidence on the subject to be in a very bad condition, and to be so crowded that it is scarcely possible to open a fresh grave without, to a greater or less degree, disturbing other human remains. Nor, indeed, can it be otherwise, when in one instance, that of St. Leonard's, upwards of 12,000 bodies have, within the last 300 years, been crowded into a space only one acre in extent; and in the other, that of St. Mary's, nearly 10,000 have been deposited in but one half of that area since the year 1610. Both grounds have no doubt been made use of as places of sepulture for many years before the earliest of those above mentioned, as the two churches were built long before the introduction of any general system of parochial registration.

Nor is mere overcrowding the only evil connected with the burial-ground, of St. Leonard's at least. Attention has been drawn to the unhealthy condition of some of the streets at a lower level, where the houses are rendered excessively damp by the infiltration of the moisture which finds its way from the burial-ground above through the fissures in the sandstone rock that compose its subsoil. Again, in the case of St. Mary's, there are cottages under the burial-ground itself, which is, like that of St. Leonard's, placed on a bed of sandstone.

The attention of the inhabitants has long been drawn to the overcrowded state of the burial-grounds, for in 1849, at the time of the cholera visitation, they came to a resolution

to establish a general cemetery. This intention, however, has not been carried into effect, so that the old system is still pursued.

Although the Public Health Act in its present form does not give the required facilities for forming a cemetery, I have still considered it necessary to draw the attention of your Honourable Board to the necessity for one in Bridgnorth, as that town presents a further example, if any such were required, how great is the need for some general legislative enactment by which the local authorities of any district may be empowered to form a general cemetery at some convenient distance from the population, and when this has been done, to close all existing overcrowded burial-grounds against future interments.

The following is the evidence I received on the state of the burial-grounds :—

J. H. Cooper, Esq., stated,—

“That the burial-grounds were in a very frightful condition, and that at the time of the cholera the town resolved in forming a joint stock cemetery. A meeting was held on the subject, but no agreement could be come to, so that they are still compelled to make use of the old grounds, and the insufficient accommodation they afford.

“St. Leonard’s is situated on the highest portion of the sandstone rock of which the town is composed, and the water filters through the natural fissures in the burial-ground, which has been used as a place of sepulture for ages, down to the dwelling-houses in the lower parts of the town. At St. Mary’s there are cottages under the churchyard itself.”

Thomas Wallater stated,—

“That he had been gravedigger at St. Leonard’s for about a year. It was the usual practice for the friends of the deceased to choose the place of interment; but very frequently their wishes could not be complied with, in consequence of his coming in contact with other coffins. These are frequently met with about four feet from the surface; the coffins are generally made of elm, and he has often taken out parts of them, but he has never seen any grave clothes brought to the surface. When bones are met with in digging for a fresh grave they are laid on one side, and replaced in the grave as soon as the mourners have departed. There is no portion of the ground without bones, and very often when digging he finds the smell so unpleasant that he is compelled to leave the grave for a time.

“A charge of 1s. a year is made for mounding up a grave; this goes to the sexton, who pays a man 4d. to do the work. He had been beadle 26 years, and assistant sexton 10 years. The digging of a common 4½-foot grave costs 8d., and that of one of 6 feet varies from 1s. to 1s. 3d.”

CONCLUSIONS.

I beg to close my Report with the following summary of conclusions, which I have drawn up after carefully revising the foregoing statements and evidence :—

I. That the town of Bridgnorth, to which the present report relates, is composed of the two parishes of St. Mary's and St. Leonard's, and is governed by a corporate body, composed of the mayor, four aldermen, and twelve councillors, who administer certain byelaws for the governance of the town, there being no Local Act in force for its sanitary regulation.

II. That Bridgnorth is and has been for some years past, remarkable for a high rate of mortality, and that during the prevalence of cholera in 1849, no less than 75 persons, out of a population of 6,000, fell victims to the disease.

That during the last three years (1850 to 1852), the average annual mortality has been at the rate of 26 per thousand, the deaths from epidemic and contagious diseases being in the proportion of 24 per cent. of the mortality from all causes.

III. That a much larger proportion of the mortality than their population would justify, is found to exist in certain streets and quarters of the town, and that the same result was observed during the visitation of cholera in 1849. That these streets are most unfavourably placed as regards their natural position, but that they are also the most neglected and the most defective as regards sanitary arrangements and appliances.

IV. That the dwelling-houses of the poorer classes, and more especially those erected in the older quarters of the town, are in a bad condition as regards privy accommodation, ventilation, house-drainage, and supply of water.

V. That with regard to the first of these defects, it is highly important that the Public Health Act, or some similar measure for the improvement of the town, should be applied, so that the public authorities may have the power of ordering a better system to be adopted in the houses of the poor.

VI. That better ventilation is much needed, especially in such places as the Cartway and Friars-lane, where the houses are built at the foot of the overhanging rock, and thorough ventilation in consequence much impeded.

VII. That a general system of house-drainage is not obtainable until one of main sewerage has been carried out. It is most essential some change should be made in Bridgnorth in this respect, because the porous nature of the rock on which the upper part of the town is seated, permits the

liquid refuse which is thrown on the surface, or collected in cesspools, to infiltrate and run down through the fissures in the rock to the dwellings situated at its base.

VIII. That a system of main sewerage is also greatly needed, to be laid below the surface at a depth sufficient to carry off the sewage from the basement stories of each dwelling; and thus to supersede the present imperfect and objectionable arrangements for carrying off the house refuse.

IX. That the town is already possessed of works for supplying it with water at high pressure, and on the constant system; but that their full benefits are not experienced in consequence of the source of supply not turning out as good as had been anticipated.

X. That the present mode of scavenging needs to be amended, so that the refuse may be removed frequently and periodically from every portion of the town; from the narrow lanes and courts as much or even more carefully than from the more open streets and thoroughfares.

XI. That the burial-grounds attached both to the parish and the dissenting places of worship should be closed as soon as provision can be made for the formation of a general cemetery, inasmuch as the existing places of burial are so much overcrowded as to be repulsive to decency, and prejudicial to, if not actually destructive of health.

XII. That most of the defects above described may be remedied by the adoption of the provisions of the Public Health Act.

I HAVE THEREFORE TO RECOMMEND,—

1st. That the Public Health Act be applied to the two parishes of St. Mary's and St. Leonard's, which form the town of Bridgnorth.

2d. That the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of Bridgnorth be, in accordance with the 12th section of the Public Health Act, the Local Board of Health for such district.

I have the honour to be,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your obedient humble servant,

W. RANGER,

Superintending Inspector.

The General Board of Health,

&c.

&c.

APPENDIX.

COPY OF THE PETITION FOR THE INQUIRY.

*To the General Board of Health under the Public Health,
Act, 1848.*

The petition of the inhabitants rated to the relief of the poor of
the borough town of Bridgnorth,—

SHEWETH,

WHEREAS by the Public Health Act, 1848, it is enacted, that from time to time, after the passing of that Act, upon petition of not less than one tenth of the inhabitants rated to the relief of the poor of any city, town, borough, parish, or place, having a known or defined boundary, not being less than thirty in the whole, the General Board of Health may, if and when they shall think fit, direct a Superintending Inspector to visit such city, town, borough, parish, or place, and to make public inquiry and examine witnesses as to the sewerage, drainage, and supply of water, and state of burial-grounds, the number and sanitary condition of the inhabitants, and as to any Local Acts of Parliament in force within such city, town, borough, parish, or place for paving, lighting, cleansing, watching, regulating, supplying with water, or improving the same, or having relation to the purposes of the said Act; also as to natural drainage areas, and the existing municipal, parochial, and other local boundaries, and the boundaries which may be most advantageously adopted for the purposes of the said Act, and as to any other matter in respect whereof the said Board may desire to be informed, for the purpose of enabling them to judge of the propriety of reporting to Her Majesty, or making a provisional order, as mentioned in the said Act.

Now, therefore, we the undersigned inhabitants of the borough town of Bridgnorth, in the county of Salop, and rated to the relief of the poor in respect of property within that borough town, and being one tenth in number of the inhabitants rated to the relief of the poor in respect of property within the same borough town, do hereby petition the General Board of Health to direct a Superintending Inspector to visit the said borough town, and to make inquiry and examination in respect thereto, with a view to the application of the said Act, according to the provisions thereof in that behalf.

(Signed by 153 ratepayers.)

CORPORATION OF BRIDGNORTH, FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

Annual Income.

	£	s.	d.
Taking the average of the last five years, the annual receipts, ending August 1851, arising from real and personal estate, funded property, and the remainder made up by borough rates 314 <i>l.</i> per annum, and lighting rates 211 <i>l.</i> per annum, and receipts for prosecutions and maintenance of prisoners, has been	1,419	0	0

Annual Expenditure.

Taking the average of the last five years, the annual expenditure, ending August 1851, has been	1,404	4	0
---	-------	---	---

Debts owing by the Corporation and a burthen on the Borough Rates.

A debt on account of the borough gaol, on mortgage of the borough rates under the Act 5 & 6 Vict. cap. 98, reduced by annual instalments from the borough rates, with interest at 4 per cent.	290	0	0
A debt incurred under the Act 13 & 14 Vict. c. 64, for improvement and widening the approach to the bridge, of great public benefit, reduced by annual instalments, and bearing 4 per cent. interest	678	0	0

The corporation property consists of buildings, land, funded property, and principal on mortgage.

Estimate of the present improvable value of such property:—

	£	s.	d.
Buildings, lands, and tenements, taken at an income of 392 <i>l.</i> 3 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i> at 25 years' purchase	9,804	0	0
Funded property, 5,303 <i>l.</i> at 100 per cent.	5,303	0	0
Principal on security	4,678	0	0
	<u>£19,785</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

N.B. One portion of the above real property consists of buildings called Pendlestone Mills, situate on the confluence of the rivers Worfe and Severn, now in lease for 75 years, at an annual rent of about 200*l.*, subject to a fee-farm rent to the Crown of about 13*l.* And, since the grant of the lease in 1838, the buildings (being then in a deplorable state of dilapidation) have been entirely removed at the cost of the lessee, and a new substantial edifice of Gothic order erected on the same site, at an estimated cost of 8,000*l.* or 9,000*l.* by the lessee, and now used as a spinning factory.

By this liberal act such property is very much enhanced in value, and eventually must yield an improved income.

The funded property and principal sums on mortgage belonging to the corporation, is chiefly the produce of sales of numerous dilapidated houses with gardens at various periods, from about the year 1800 to 1805, subject to then existing leases.

INCOME and EXPENDITURE of the Corporation of Bridgnorth, for three years, from 1850 to 1852.

INCOME.				EXPENDITURE.			
1850.		1851.		1850.		1851.	
£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
To balance from last account.	- - -	- - -	- - -	To balance from last account.	11 5 0	33 10 0	- - -
Rents - - -	376 1 5	341 5 8	335 10 9	Salaries and pensions -	177 0 0	216 8 0	245 8 0
Dividends from funded property.	322 4 8	314 16 2	254 8 0	Rents, rates, taxes, and insurance.	49 3 2	53 8 4	55 7 2
Borough rates - -	256 19 0	264 10 0	299 12 3	Police and constables -	92 13 9	48 8 0	54 5 6
Lighting rates - -	135 0 0	240 3 4	355 15 0	Lighting - - -	213 19 0	192 3 0	221 15 6
Treasury allowances for prosecutions and the maintenance of criminal prisoners.	232 11 8	247 11 2	241 13 9	Administration of justice -	257 0 4	294 2 2	322 9 3
Fines on convictions -	8 2 0	25 3 6	20 8 0	Borough gaol and prisoners at Shrewsbury.	118 4 4	92 5 5	65 10 5
Sale of property, stock, &c.	1 14 0	790 1 10	4,016 18 10	Borough coroner - - -	7 6 6	17 18 8	7 9 2
Miscellaneous - -	17 10 0	8 11 0	22 13 0	Charities - - -	- - -	1 17 6	- - -
Balance due to Treasurer	33 10 0	- - -	- - -	Public works, repairs of streets, roads, scavenging, &c.	328 8 8	281 5 5	531 19 1
				Grammar school - - -	30 0 0	- - -	- - -
				Law expenses and municipal elections - -	17 0 0	21 7 6	19 3 8
				Interest & principal paid off Printing and stationery -	34 16 0	41 4 0	172 11 6
				Miscellaneous - - -	- - -	33 15 3	- - -
				Bridge property - - -	46 16 0	28 6 7	59 4 7
				New Waterworks - - -	- - -	5 5 4	50 5 1
				Balance in the hands of Treasurer.	- - -	- - -	4,000 0 0
£	1,383 12 9	2,232 2 8	6,409 8 1	£	1,383 12 9	2,232 2 8	6,409 8 1

COPY of the REPORT made by the visitors appointed by the Committee of Health to examine into the condition of St. Mary-street and Pound-street:—

“The visitors appointed by the Bridgnorth Committee of Health to St. Mary-street and Pound-street, in conjunction with Mr. Thursfield, the medical officer of the district, having been requested to make a special inspection of the localities in these streets that have suffered most severely from cholera, and to report thereon, have this day visited, and carefully inspected the houses where cholera prevailed, and also the adjoining ones.

“In Pound-street, near the top, the house in which Hannah Thomas died is found to be ill ventilated, and is entered by two steps, being below the level of the street; there is no drain, or moisture near it that seems to require one.

“In the lower end of the same street, the house lately occupied by John Evans and his wife, who both died from cholera; this house has a drain leading to the street sewer, and *within* the house a grating, *without a trap* communicates with it, and is said by Benjamin Morris, a resident in the house, to have been often very offensive.

“The adjoining house, occupied by widow Smith, has no drain, but the drain from Evans’s house passes under it; formerly there was an opening into this drain, but an offensive smell arising from it, it has for a long time been closely covered up; widow Smith has had *no* illness.

“The next house is occupied by John Davis; he had a severe attack of cholera, and his wife died from the disease; there is no drain in the house, but a wall divides the back premises from Evans’s house, and, *close* to the back door, there is an opening through the wall to convey the refuse of the house to the grating before described in Evans’s house, and any effluvia arising from that grating would be immediately carried *into* Davis’s house; and has often been complained of.

“In St. Mary-street, the houses occupied by Thomas Lloyd, where there has been one death from cholera, has a drain under it, and an offensive effluvia having been observed from the grating *in* the house, communicating with it, a trap was placed there about the time of his daughter’s death.

“At the back of Lloyd’s house is one formerly occupied by John Parsonage; himself, his wife, and one child have died from cholera *in* this house; a grating, *without a trap*, communicates with a drain, and has been observed by Parsonage’s wife and the neighbours to be at times very offensive; the water from this drain finds its way in wet weather into the cellar, and has been at times a foot deep.

“Adjoining to Parsonage’s house is one occupied by George Minshall; himself, his wife, and family have been ill, and one child has died of cholera; *in* this house there is a grating, *without a trap*, communicating with a drain, and at times has been very offensive; the water from this drain finds its way to the

cellar, where it stagnates, and is very offensive in wet weather ; it is sometimes a foot deep.

“ Under the same roof as the three houses before described, is one occupied by Thomas Halford, his wife, and daughter ; there is *no* opening in this house communicating with drainage, and *none* of the family has been attacked with cholera.

“ On each side of this block of houses are several others inhabited by persons in the same station of life ; there is no drain or opening to a drain *within* any of these houses, and in *none* of them has cholera appeared.

“ Edward Williams, occupying a house at the lower end of St. Mary-street, belonging to Mr. Brown’s trustees, has suffered from diarrhœa, and is not yet well ; at the back of his house are three privies in a bad state.

“ In the upper part of St. Mary-street, in a house occupied by Richard Overton, and belonging to T. C. Whitmore, Esq., is a drain that has openings capable of emitting effluvia therefrom *into* the house. Harriet Hughes has been ill there with cholera, and is still suffering from its effects. The drain will be put in good order as soon as it is deemed prudent to disturb its contents ; at present disinfecting agents are frequently poured through it.

“ At the lower end of Pound-street, where it joins with St. Mary-street, Listley-street, and Hollybush-road, and contiguous to the houses in which cholera has prevailed, are *nine* large gratings into the main town sewer, within a radius of about 25 yards ; from these openings very offensive effluvia is often discharged.

(Signed)

“ HENRY SLATER RICHARDS.

“ WM. THURSFIELD.

“ JOHN L. BENNETT.

“ EDWARD KENT.”

“ *Bridgnorth,*

“ *21st September 1849.*”

MORTUARY RETURNS.

I am indebted to Mr. Giles’s report for the following extract, showing the comparative mortality in the town of Bridgnorth, and in the rural districts which compose the remainder of the union of that name, from June 1844 to December 1849 :—

“ The census of 1841 gives the population of			
Bridgnorth union as	-	-	16,098
Deduct for Bridgnorth town	-	-	5,795
Leaves for rural districts	-	-	10,303

"The registered mortality in the said rural districts for $5\frac{1}{2}$ years, ending 31st of December 1849, is as follows:—

From June 1844	to June 1845	-	141 deaths.
" "	1845	" 1846	- 120 "
" "	1846	" 1847	- 197 "
" "	1847	" 1848	- 177 "
" "	1848	" 1849	- 158 "
" "	1849 to 31st Dec. 1849	-	91 "
Total			<u>884</u>

Being an average of 160·7 per annum, or 15·6 per 1,000 per annum.

"Thus the mortality in the rural districts, as compared to that in Bridgnorth town, is as 15·6 to 31·5, or one half."

Return, furnished by the Registrar General, of the mortality of the borough of Bridgnorth, from 1845 to 1851.

A RETURN of the total number of Deaths in each of the seven years ending 1845-51, with the average annual proportion to 1,000 of the population; also the total number of Deaths in each of the same years, from the zymotic class, and the number from each particular disease in that class, in the borough town of Bridgnorth.

(Population, in 1841, 6,198; in 1851, 6,172.)

	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.	1850.	1851.	Total.
From all causes - -	164	178	199	189	258	144	151	1,283*
From epidemic and contagious diseases.	20	34	44	53	112	24	25	312
Small-pox - -	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Measles - -	6	1	1	7	1	-	1	17
Scarlatina - -	2	11	12	1	7	8	6	47
Whooping-cough - -	-	1	7	-	-	-	-	8
Croup - -	1	-	-	1	6	1	-	9
Thrush - -	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Diarrhœa - -	2	2	5	7	8	3	6	33
Dysentery - -	1	-	-	3	5	-	2	11
Cholera - -	-	2	-	-	71	1	1	75
Influenza - -	-	4	-	13	2	-	1	20
Purpura and scurvy - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ague - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Remittent fever - -	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2
Infantile fever - -	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	3
Typhus, continued fever	6	12	15	15	9	5	5	67
Metria (puerperal fever)	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	5
Rheumatic fever - -	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Erysipelas - -	-	-	1	4	-	1	-	6
Syphilis - -	1	-	2	-	-	1	1	5
Noma (canker) - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Hydrophobia - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

* Average annual proportion per 1,000, 30.

The following is a detailed return of the mortality from all causes in the town of Bridgnorth during the years 1849 to 1852 :—

Causes of Death.	1849.	1850.	1851.	1852.
ALL CAUSES - - -	248	190	147	149
SPECIFIED CAUSES :—				
I.—Zymotic diseases -	125	91	26	27
SPORADIC DISEASES :—				
II.—Dropsy, cancer, and other diseases of uncertain or variable seat.	3	3	7	6
III.—Tubercular diseases - -	29	32	23	25
IV.—Diseases of the brain, spinal marrow, nerves, and senses.	21	20	20	26
V.—Diseases of the heart and blood-vessels.	4	1	7	7
VI.—Diseases of the lungs, and of the other organs of respiration.	26	18	14	9
VII.—Diseases of the stomach, liver, and other organs of digestion.	11	8	15	7
VIII.—Diseases of the kidneys, &c.	1	2	—	1
IX.—Childbirth, diseases of the uterus, &c.	—	2	2	1
X.—Rheumatism, diseases of the bones, joints, &c.	1	3	—	—
XI.—Diseases of the skin, cellular tissue, &c.	—	—	—	2
XIII.—Premature birth and debility.	—	7	—	6
XV.—Age - - -	—	14	—	27
XVI.—Sudden - - -	—	4	—	—
XVII.—Violence, privation, cold, and intemperance.	11	10	8	5
I.—Measles - - -	1	6	—	1
Scarlatina - - -	7	—	—	6
Hooping-cough - - -	—	—	2	—
Croup - - -	6	1	2	—
Thrush - - -	—	3	1	—
Diarrhœa - - -	7	12	6	8
Dysentery - - -	4	8	2	—
Cholera - - -	69	—	—	2
Influenza - - -	1	13	—	—
Remittent fever - - -	6	7	—	—
Infantile fever - - -	4	4	9	5
Typhus - - -	8	6	3	4
Metria, or puerperal fever - - -	2	—	1	—
Rheumatic fever - - -	—	2	—	—
Erysipelas - - -	2	4	—	—
Syphilis - - -	—	—	—	1

Causes of Death.				1849.	1850.	1851.	1852.
II.—Dropsy	-	-	-	1	2	2	3
Mortification	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Cancer	-	-	-	2	-	5	3
III.—Scrofula	-	-	-	2	-	-	1
Tabes mesenterica	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Phthisis (or consumption)	-	-	-	25	27	19	22
Hydrocephalus	-	-	-	5	5	3	2
IV.—Apoplexy	-	-	-	1	8	3	7
Paralysis	-	-	-	1	-	2	-
Delirium tremens	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
Epilepsy	-	-	-	2	-	-	3
Insanity	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Convulsions	-	-	-	13	4	9	8
Disease of brain, &c.	-	-	-	3	7	6	7
V.—Aneurism	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Disease of heart	-	-	-	4	1	6	6
VI.—Laryngitis	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Bronchitis	-	-	-	3	1	2	5
Pneumonia	-	-	-	8	10	6	2
Asthma	-	-	-	2	1	2	-
Disease of lungs, &c.	-	-	-	9	5	4	2
VII.—Quinsey	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Gastritis	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Enteritis	-	-	-	-	1	4	-
Peritonitis	-	-	-	2	2	-	-
Ascites	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Disease of stomach, &c.	-	-	-	3	1	7	3
Hepatitis	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Disease of liver	-	-	-	4	2	2	3
Disease of spleen	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
VIII.—Diabetes	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Disease of kidneys, &c.	-	-	-	1	2	-	-
IX.—Ovarian dropsy	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Disease of uterus, &c.	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
X.—Rheumatism	-	-	-	1	3	-	-
XI.—Disease of skin, &c.	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
XVII.—Privation of food	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Want of breast-milk	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Burns and scalds	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Drowning	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Fractures and contusions	-	-	-	-	2	3	1
Other violence	-	-	-	2	-	2	1
Merasmus	-	-	-	8	-	-	-
Causes not specified	-	-	-	-	4	-	-

RETURN showing the Number of cases of Cholera and Diarrhoea in 1849, in 12 streets and lanes enumerated below.

Name of Street, &c.	No. of House.	Diarrhoea.	Cholera.	Death by Diarrhoea.	Deaths by Cholera.	Occupation of parties attacked.	General character of locality.	To what extent previously visited by epidemic disease.	Quality of Houses.	No. living in Houses.
Cartway	Houses not numbered in any of the streets.	103	11	1	3	Weavers and labourers, with children.	Houses crowded together on hill side, and poor dwellings.	Not by cholera	Confined and dirty.	Number of inhabitants various.
Friars-street	-	73	16	1	8	As above	Houses crowded in small courts.	Do.	Newer and better houses than above.	
Severn's-side	1	23	7	1	2	As above	Houses built against the rock by river side.	Do.	Small and not ventilated from behind.	
Listley-street	-	14	1	1	1	Labourers and children	Large open street	Do.	Old houses.	
St. Mary-street	-	20	9	1	5	Weavers, &c.	Crowded houses in large street.	Do.	Crowded and badly drained.	
Raven-street	-	1	2	1	2	Joiner and post-boy	Large street	Do.	New cottages.	
New Town	-	26	-	1	1	Weavers and labourers	Low street near open sewers	Do.	Good cottages.	
North Gate	-	9	-	1	1	Labourers, &c.	High healthy situation	Do.	Do.	
Churchyard	-	7	-	1	1	Weavers and labourers	As above	Do.	Do.	
Workhouse	-	30	9	1	6	-	-	Do.	-	
Castle-street	-	12	2	1	1	Labourers and weavers	Large open street	Do.	Cottages, old.	
Church-steps	-	12	6	1	2	Weavers	New houses on hill side	Do.	Small new houses.	
		330	63	-	28					

THE WATER SUPPLY.

Scale of charges and general conditions adopted by the Corporation at the New Waterworks.

“ For private dwellings, with outbuildings and gardens attached ; houses and premises—

				Per Quarter.	
				s.	d.
Not exceeding 4 <i>l.</i> per annum rateable value				1	0
Above £4 but not exceeding £5				1	3
”	5	”	6	1	6
”	6	”	7	1	9
”	7	”	8	2	0
”	8	”	10	2	6
”	10	”	12	3	0
”	12	”	14	3	6
”	14	”	16	4	0
”	16	”	18	4	6
”	18	”	20	5	0
”	20	”	22	5	6
”	22	”	24	6	0
”	24	”	26	6	6
”	26	”	28	7	0
”	28	”	30	7	6
”	30 and upwards, 5 per cent. per annum on rateable value.				

“ Malshouses, 5 per cent upon rateable value.

“ Public-houses and beer-houses, 6½ per cent. upon rateable value.

“ Large consumers and trades requiring large supplies of water, by special agreement or by meter, 6*d.* per 1,000 gallons.

“ Landlords, farming several houses at and under 6*l.* rateable value, allowed a discount of 20 per cent.

General Conditions.

“ 1st. The supply of water for all purposes will be constantly laid on both day and night, so that consumers will at all times be enabled to draw a supply of pure, fresh, filtered water from the pipes.

“ 2d. No cistern for the storage of water will be necessary.

“ 3d. The corporation will, at their own cost, lay down and maintain all the lead and other branch pipes from their mains in the public highway to 6 inches beyond or within the frontage wall of the premises to be supplied, at the charge of 5*s.* per service for premises facing the street ; the cost of supply-pipes to houses and premises in courts, or lying back from the line of the street, to be by special agreement.

“ 4th. In cases where the contractor is ordered to disconnect an old service pipe from one of the old mains and connect the same with one of the new mains, he shall only charge for such connexion the expense of the ferrule, solder, joint, and cutting hole in cast-iron main.

" 5th. The internal fittings to be at the cost of the consumer, but only to be executed by the authorized plumbers, a list of whom, with their charges, is inserted below.

" 6th. No pipes must be attached to the mains or other apparatus connected therewith, nor must any alteration be made in any existing pipes or apparatus by any other than authorized plumbers, nor without due notice given to the corporation, and their sanction first obtained.

" 7th. In case of any dispute with the authorized plumbers relative to the inside work, the same shall be determined by the engineer to the waterworks.

" 8th. Parties desirous of a supply of water must sign an order to the corporation to that effect, and must undertake that the water shall not run to waste, either wilfully or by neglect, and that they will not give it away, sell it to other parties, nor use it for any other purpose, or to any greater extent than shall have been agreed upon between them and the corporation.

" 9th. In case of fire, the corporation undertake to afford, without charge, a full and ample supply of water from the fire-plugs upon their mains during the continuance of such fire. Upwards of 50 fireplugs are distributed in various parts of the town."

I think it no more than justice to the corporation of Bridgnorth and to Mr. Giles himself, to extract from his report his recommendations for the future and amended water supply of the town.

" The source from which a water supply can be most advantageously obtained has had my best attention.

" The Severn offers an all-sufficient source ; and the quality, when filtered, is unexceptionable ; a steam-engine, placed east of the river, and higher up stream than the gas-house, would raise water into high-level filtering basins, near the Wolverhampton-road ; from this elevated reservoir of filtered water, pipes would lead it to every part of the town for distribution. With the view of avoiding heavy annual costs of working a steam-engine and machinery, I have surveyed and levelled several small streams in the vicinity of Bridgnorth, hoping to find a supply sufficiently elevated to deliver without the aid of pumping ; I have succeeded in finding one, viz., Cantern Brook, which possesses these qualifications. The quantity of water flowing from it in the summer months is not at all times equal to the requirements of your town ; it would therefore be necessary to dam up the stream at a point above Cross-lane Head, and there form two basins capable of holding collectively three months supply of water. All surplus water not required for the town would flow down the Cantern Brook as at present.

" The greater portion of this supply would be rain water, therefore soft, and admirably adapted for general use. Filter beds should be constructed to render the water perfectly clear ; from them a main would be laid alongside the Cantern valley, at levels giving a gradual fall until the intersection of the Broseley-road ; thence to North Gate, and distributed over the town.

"Having very carefully considered these two propositions, and calculated the original and working expenses of each, I am prepared, both from its simplicity of design and comparatively low rate of annual cost, to recommend the adoption of Cantern Brook supply."

Mr. Giles estimated the first cost of the two schemes as nearly equal, but there was much difference between the annual working expenses; that for the supply from the Severn being taken at 394*l.*, and those for that from the Cantern Brook at 140*l.*

The following is a list of the Slaughter-houses in Bridgnorth, together with their situation and the names of the persons who occupy them:—

B. R. Cureton, High-street.
 Charles Brawn, High street.
 J. Reynolds, } Royal Oak Inn, High-street.
 V. Boaler, }
 E. F. Bowen, Bell Inn, High-street.
 George Barker, Whitburn-street.
 William Perry, Ash Inn, Salop-street,
 Thomas Roberts, Listley-street.
 Abram Payne, St. Mary's-street.
 F. Miles, Cartway.
 William Rowley, Cartway.
 Thomas Maun, Mill-street.
 John Maun, Bridge-street.
 John Hall, Fox-street.

I was not furnished with any statements relative to the condition of the slaughter-houses.

Friendly Societies in Bridgnorth, with the amount of their Deposits in the Bridgnorth Savings Bank on the 20th November 1852.

		£	s.	d.
Bridgnorth District of the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows, No. 784	- - -	506	6	8
Bridgnorth United Tradesmen and Mechanics Society		42	14	2
„ New Friendly Society	- - -	101	10	3
„ United Friendly Society	- - -	51	10	0
„ Loyal Order of Reformed Odd Fellows :				
No. 1 Lodge	- - -	62	4	0
No. 2 ditto	- - -	33	7	6
No. 3 ditto	- - -	50	0	0
No. 4 ditto	- - -	15	5	0
		160	16	6
		<hr/>		
		£862	17	7
		<hr/>		