

Dr F. St. George Mivart's report to the Local Government Board on the general sanitary circumstances and administration of the Shaftesbury Rural District and of the Borough of Shaftesbury.

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REPORTS

TO THE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD

ON

PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL SUBJECTS.

(*NEW SERIES No. 67.*)

Dr. F. St. George Mivart's Report to the Local
Government Board on the General Sanitary
Circumstances and Administration of the
Shaftesbury Rural District and of the
Borough of Shaftesbury.

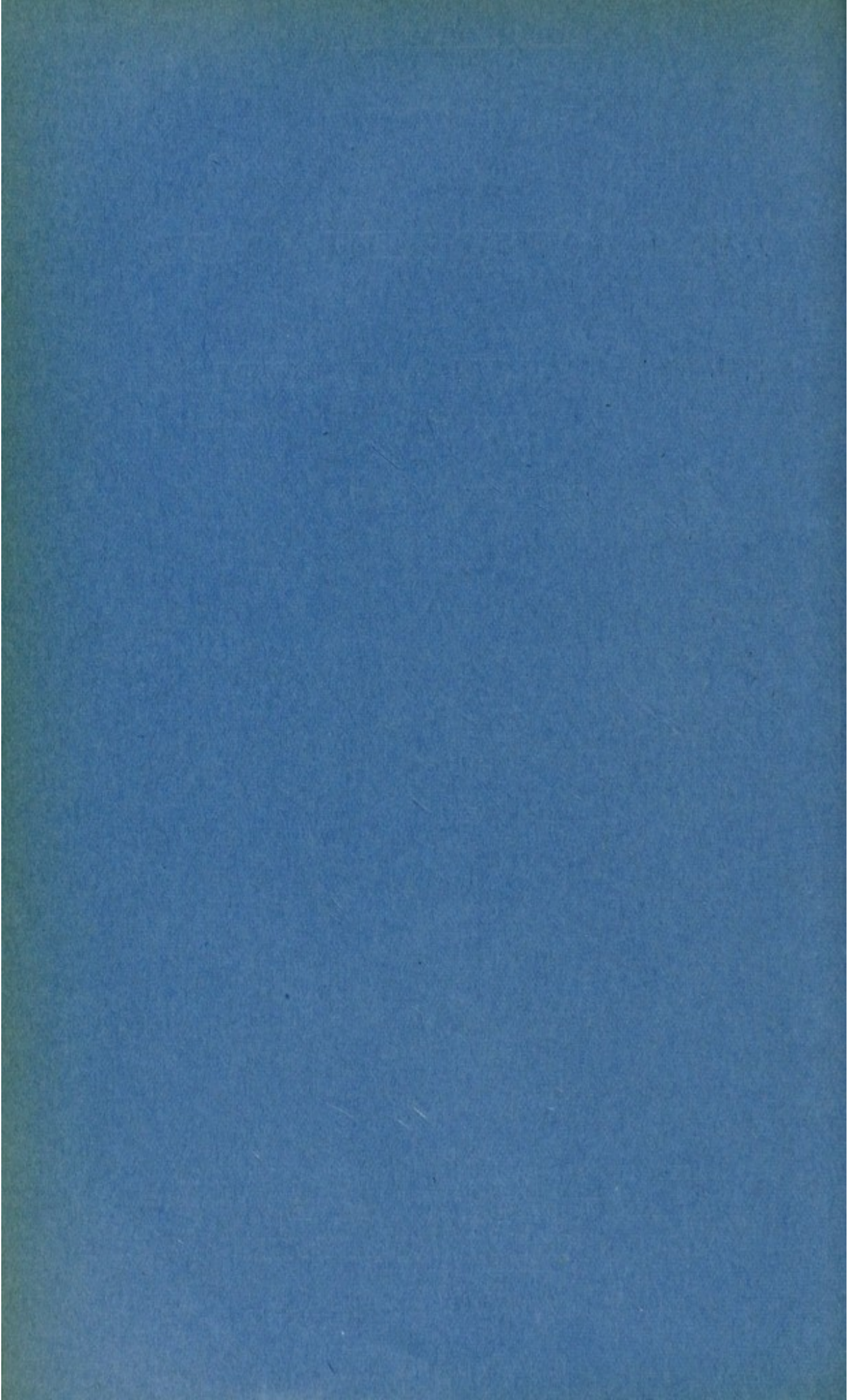


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THEODORE THOMSON,

Assistant Medical Officer,

4th April, 1912.

On several occasions during the past few years the attention of the Local Government Board has been drawn to the Shaftesbury Rural District, in the most populous locality of which, viz., Gillingham, the want of a public water supply, as well as of a system of sewerage has repeatedly been referred to by the medical officer of health, in his annual reports, as urgent.

Adverting to that officer's remarks on the subject in his annual report for 1908 the Local Government Board wrote on the 20th April, 1909, to the district council, inquiring the result of the council's consideration of these matters. The Board also asked to know the outcome of the council's deliberations as to the provision of proper accommodation for cases of infectious disease, the necessity for which accommodation Dr. Hanly has described as paramount. In reply the council said that the questions of water supply and drainage for Gillingham were being considered by the local parochial committee; the council added that "isolation accommodation" was being provided by means of "an isolated cottage" rented by them for that purpose, and that it had proved "effectual in checking the spread of small-pox."

On the 24th May, 1909, the Board again wrote pointing out that this cottage had been termed inadequate by the medical officer of health, and asking that the matter should be further considered. Receiving no answer to this letter the Board, on 30th June, wrote again and asked to be informed as to the position of the several questions at issue. On the 31st August the council wrote that they did not agree with their medical officer's opinion as to the need for an hospital, and that the questions of water supply and sewerage of Gillingham were still being considered by the parochial committee.

On the 14th December the Board again wrote to inquire as to the stage reached in these deliberations, but not until February of the succeeding year did they receive reply that these were not yet concluded. Subsequently the annual reports of the medical officer of health for 1909 and 1910 showed that the district council had not dealt with those important matters.

The inspector of nuisances and surveyor for this district having died, the council in January, 1910 decided that these two appointments should again be vested in one officer. Finally, certain complaints having been received, the Board decided upon an inquiry into the sanitary circumstances and administration of the district. The duty having been assigned to me I visited the locality in August, 1911, and later. Subsequently I was instructed to extend my inspection to the Borough of Shaftesbury.

SHAFTESBURY RURAL DISTRICT.

The Shaftesbury Rural District, occupying the north-west corner of the County of Dorset, is roughly oblong in shape. Its greatest length from north-west to south-east is about 13 miles; its greatest width is about 8 miles.

On the north western side it is bounded by the County of Somerset; along the whole of the north eastern side it is bounded by the County of Wiltshire; on its south western and south eastern sides it is bounded by the Rural Districts of Sturminster and of Blandford respectively. Near the centre of the district, the area of the Borough of Shaftesbury forms a small enclave.

The area of the rural district is 42,932 acres, and its population at the census of 1911 was 10,910; it is generally a scattered one, the number of houses in Shaftesbury Rural District is said to be 2,664, and of this number 2,354 are under £16 a year rental.

There are 21 parishes in most of which is a small village or hamlet. The largest and most populous parish is Gillingham which possesses a growing town of that name. The population of this parish showed a slight increase, viz., from 3,303 at the census of 1891 to 3,380 at the census of 1901; the population in 1911 is estimated at approximately 3,500. The rural district, which is one of singular beauty, is very undulating. Heights above Ordnance Datum vary from about 175 feet near Nyland in the west to 500 feet at Enmore Green near Shaftesbury, and even to upwards of 700 feet at Ashmore Village on the downs of Cranborne Chase.

Flowing from north to south, the river Stour traverses the district, receiving in the northern portion its tributaries, the Shreen Water, and the sluggish Lodden.*

The extreme western, and thinly populated, part of the district rests upon the Oxford Clay. Proceeding eastward a large band of Coral Rag (with calcareous grit) and one of Oxford Clay are met with successively. On the high ground near Shaftesbury is an irregular and narrow outcrop of the Gault. On the high ground in the north of the district is the Upper Greensand, meeting an outcrop of the Kimmeridge Clay at an extensive fault. It would seem reasonable to look for no inconsiderable yield of water thereabouts. Outliers of the Upper Greensand formations upon which stands the Borough of Shaftesbury, are met with between that place and Gillingham. One of these outliers forms an abrupt

* Note.—At my first visit the bed of the Lodden hereabouts was to a large extent dry, such water as remained, in pools, being offensive.

isolated hill, known as Dunccliffe, rising to a height of some 650 feet. The central part of the rural district including the town of Gillingham rests upon the Kimmeridge Clay beneath which is the Coral Rag. The extreme south eastern part of the district, containing the hamlet of Ashmore is on the chalk.

In the town of Gillingham are several important industries, viz., two milk factories; bone crushing and grease extracting works; a bacon factory, where, on the average, upwards of 500 pigs are killed weekly; a timber yard, a brewery, and various smaller concerns. But in this, as in the other parishes, the inhabitants are mostly engaged in businesses connected in one way or another with agriculture.

A very large and increasing trade is carried on in milk. There are milk factories in the parishes of Motcombe, Gillingham and Fontmell respectively. A large quantity of milk is sent thence, and is also exported directly by farmers, to dealers in London and suburbs, to Salisbury, Portsmouth, Bournemouth and other places. Some farmers also send milk to factories at Shillingstone and at Semley outside the district. Thus it may be estimated that in one way or another, the average daily output of milk from this district is not far short of 10,000 gallons.

The rateable value of the district at Lady Day, 1911, was £83,686; the assessable value was £63,754. The district has no public debt.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Roads.—There are 144 miles of district road, of which 140 miles are said to be metalled and 4 miles unmetalled. It was difficult to ascertain the normal condition of the roads in the rural district at the time of my visit, when after the prolonged drought, the surfaces were frequently badly broken up. The general opinion, however, seems to be that previous to the drought, a marked improvement had lately been effected. The practice of this council with respect to the repair and maintenance of highways is unusual. The roads are not repaired and kept in order by the council's own men. Tenders for the performance of the work as well as for the supply and haulage of material are advertised for every year. Commonly one contractor is appointed for each parish; but exceptionally one contractor may have charge of the roads in several parishes. From a list supplied to me it would seem that 144 miles of road have involved the preparation of 116 contracts. I am unable to express opinion as to the cost of such contract road repairing as compared with the cost of repairing by the council's own men. But I am disposed to think that, in spite of a busy period when the contracts are being got out, the system as at present worked makes less demand upon the surveyor's time than would be the case had he the entire supervision of the work of road repair by the council's own men.

Housing of the Working Classes.—Much of the smaller cottage property is fairly substantially built of stone or brick and either roofed with slate or well thatched, and though many of the old cottages, all without damp course, are damp, they are not otherwise

unsatisfactory. But a large number of other cottages are out of repair and were much dilapidated. Gutter-spouting and down pipes are absent or defective, causing delivery of water on the unpaved ground at the foot of house walls. A few cottages have recently been fitted with corrugated iron roofs, boarded within. The bedrooms of some of these houses were found intensely hot. In winter, doubtless, the cold must be felt with equal intensity. Cottages for the poorer working classes are scarce in the district generally, but in the most populous parish, Gillingham, the scarcity has now become acute, and is the cause of considerable hardship. Rents are high, and rising higher, with the result that miserable squalid hovels appear to be tolerated in order to provide shelter.

In Gillingham I found that cottages, containing "one room up and one down," the latter being perhaps divided by a screen or partition, command rents of 2s. 3d. and 2s. 6d. per week, with a tendency to increase. In many such cottages as these, the bedrooms, and often the entire cottage, are without any back window, or even without any outlet at the back. Bedrooms usually have one small window only. When there are two bedrooms only one has a fireplace, and the rooms almost invariably communicate either by means of a doorway, unprovided with door, or they are screened merely by a wooden partition not reaching to the ceiling. Roofs of bedrooms were frequently found altogether unceiled or only partly ceiled. A favourite form of ceiling consists of canvas or sacking whitewashed over. Numerous bedrooms were seen covered in only by the bare thatch, which harbours dust and vermin.

Bedrooms are often of low pitch—even less than 6 feet. Staircases were quite commonly found not only very steep and tortuous, with risers as high as 8 inches and treads as narrow as about $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, but defective and broken as well. In such cottages as these a sudden outbreak of fire would probably mean loss of life.* Overcrowding is very prevalent and little or nothing is done to check it, as no further accommodation appears to be available. Satisfactory housing conditions are to be found, however, in some of the large estates in the district. Undoubtedly the worst houses were met with in Gillingham parish generally, both in the town and in the localities known as Peasemarsch, Milton, Madjeston, Ham, and other places; but miserable overcrowded cottages were met with at Buckhorne Weston, Sutton Waldron, Enmore Green and elsewhere. In many of these cottages inhabited by families, the ordinary decencies of civilisation cannot be observed.

It would be easy to give a long list of miserable dwellings but a few will suffice:—

G.'s cottage.—Living room 5 feet 10 inches high; bedroom (reached by a dangerous staircase) traversed by beams at height of 4 feet 9 inches. Height between these beams, averages 5 feet 10 inches. Roof mostly unceiled—partly ceiled with whitewashed canvas.

* *Note.*—In cottages having staircases like these, when a death occurs it is necessary, I am informed, to bring down the body before *rigor mortis* occurs as neither staircase nor window will allow passage of an ordinary adult sized coffin.

S.'s cottage.—Over living room and sort of scullery is a room divided into two compartments, by boarding 6 feet 6 inches high, but communicating above partition. Roof entirely unceiled and of bare thatch. There had been 3 cases of diphtheria here—2 fatal.

B.'s cottage.—Occupants are father, mother, and 7 children. Accommodation comprises living room, bedroom over it, and 2nd floor attic. Attic, reached by dangerously steep stairs (having two upper treads broken), is 15 feet 6 inches by 7 feet 6 inches by 5 feet 9 inches high, with bare rough stone walls, unceiled and defective roof, and only one window, measuring 2 feet by 1 foot. Four children sleep here viz.: boy 13, and three girls aged 11, 10 and 5. In lower bedroom 12 feet 6 inches by 15 feet by 6 feet 6 inches high the father, mother and baby sleep in one bed, and two children under 10 in another. This room has a tiny back window, but fireplace seems permanently closed. House stands in close-built situation—a high wall is close to the front windows and door. No back exit.

G.'s cottage.—At foot of and close against a steep bank. In bedroom 12 feet by 11 feet 6 inches by 6 feet high sleep five children—this room has side window 18 inches square in addition to front window 2 feet 5 inches by 1 foot 2 inches. In bedroom 11 feet 6 inches by 6 feet by 6 feet high the father and mother sleep. The front window measures 2 feet 5 inches by 1 foot 2 inches, but there is no means of ventilation at the back. No fireplace to either room. Stairs dangerously steep. There had been four cases of diphtheria here. Infant 14 weeks old died in Blandford Hospital.

Group of cottage property, C. G.—Three roughly built stone cottages, inhabited as two. Roofs of corrugated iron matchboarded within.

Cottage No. 1.—Two bedrooms, as entrance has been formed into bedroom of No. 2. Bedroom floor is not ceiled beneath—the boards are so wide apart that upper and lower rooms are in free aerial communication through the floor.

Cottage No. 2.—In living room landlord carries on small business of dairying and butter making. Floor of this room is in part bare earth.

Cottage No. 3 was locked up and could not be viewed, but chickens are allowed entrance here at night.

At the back of these cottages, in a yard space only 9 feet wide, narrowing to about 3 feet, was a sentry box privy, a blocked drain, a run containing seven chickens, and a lean-to closet with pit against outbuild of cottage No. 3. The yard is unpaved and slopes towards the back doors so that filth must be washed into cottages during rainy weather.

In Turners Lane, Gillingham.—Two squalid cottages, empty at the time, were being papered and prepared for letting. Accommodation, one room up and one down. Roof thatched. Room upstairs partly unceiled. No drainage. No water supply.

At Newbury.—C. G.'s cottage, rent 2s. Stairs peculiarly difficult and dangerous, owing to projecting beam, give entrance

to two bedrooms communicating through doorway without door. Average dimensions of two bedrooms are 15 feet by 7 feet by only 5 feet high. Under the same roof, this dwelling adjoins Y. S. cottage. Here a step ladder gives access, through ceiling, into a loft used as a bedroom. One window at extremity. When visited on a brilliant summer day this place was almost dark and the air close and offensive.

C. B.'s cottage.—Peasemars Lane. In bedroom, 11 feet 6 inches by 10 feet 3 inches by 8 feet high, sleep five children under ten. Window does not open, but room communicates with another bedroom above a roughly boarded partition.

W. C.'s cottage.—Peasemars Terrace. Four children under ten sleep in bedroom with 690 feet cubic space. Window does not open; cottage has no back window or outlet.

The above are cited as fair specimens of prevalent bad housing; other examples could be given.

I heard of only six *back-to-back houses*, viz., at Common Mead. At one of these there was overcrowding, six persons, viz., two adults and four children under ten, sleeping in a bedroom having 1,128 cubic feet air space. Overcrowding of houses upon area is not a feature of the district. There is a little close building at Gillingham town, and the absence of building byelaws still permits of this. Thus recently in the High Street, the owner of a row of small houses has been enabled to erect in their front gardens a row of lock-up shops, a few feet from the front windows and doors.

The scarcity of cottage accommodation at Gillingham is generally admitted and is undoubtedly interfering with the development of the place. This matter should receive the very serious consideration of the district council. If private enterprise has failed to provide further housing accommodation, as would appear to be the case, they should lose no time in availing themselves of the powers possessed by councils of rural districts to erect cottages under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890. Although the council may not be able to erect cottages in the town itself, there is land within reasonable distance on which houses could be built. I am assured that whenever a decent cottage is likely to fall vacant a great number of people are after it at once. A supply of cottages at from 3s. 6d. to 5s. per week would set free a number of cheaper dwellings which would then be available for some of the poorer labourers unable to pay more than from 2s. to 3s. per week.

Water Supply.—This inspection was made during the worst period of the drought of 1911. It is consequently a little difficult to deal fairly with the question of the water supply of the district, some parts of which have had to endure, in this respect, distress hitherto unknown to the present generation.

The only place in the district having an efficient and practically public water supply is Motcombe, which enjoys a service provided by owners of the Motcombe estate. The water of the united flow of five springs, rising—four of them in pasture land—on the steep slope of Shaftesbury Hill, is collected and carried to a closed reservoir holding 33,000 gallons. The flow is, I am informed, at the rate of 15 gallons per minute, and was maintained during the

drought. From the reservoir a constant supply is piped, not only to the village but to a number of farms in Motcombe parish and a few outside it.

There are several public wells in Gillingham (all of which failed this summer) and elsewhere. At Bourton, Kington Magna, Fontmell Magna, and elsewhere, are public taps supplied with water piped from springs which have been tapped by property owners for the use of villagers. With these exceptions supplies are drawn wholly from private wells, some of which perhaps may be described as in semi-public use, or are derived from streams or from rain-water, which is often defectively collected and stored. The piped supplies above mentioned seem, with one known exception, to be of fairly good quality. The question of the extension of the supply of water to 13 additional houses in the straggling village of Kington Magna has created a serious difficulty. The water it is proposed to lay on—already in use in a part of the village—comes from a spring rising on a hill high above the village, but, as far as can be judged without excavation, not more than 110 ft. from a foldyard in which masses of manure are heaped up, and about the same distance from Kington churchyard. From the foldyard to the presumed source of the spring the ground falls steadily in direct line. At present, in the first part of its course, the water flows through a rough stone box drain laid only a few feet distant from the boundary wall of the graveyard of Kington church, from which also the ground falls at a steep gradient. Samples of this water recently taken by the medical officer of health were found on analysis to be contaminated by organic matter. He accordingly condemned this source of supply, pointing out that the sanitary circumstances of this spring being unsatisfactory, and chemical analysis having shown the water contaminated, he could not do otherwise. The intense drought prevalent for so long before the samples were taken had, by stopping soakage, probably rendered the samples less unsatisfactory than would be other samples taken after a period of heavy rain. He urged the council not to undertake a responsibility that no medical officer of health could bear in like case. He expressed the opinion that the only possible method of proving this supply would be to trace the spring to its source, and take a sample from thence after a period of rain; and that if the water was again found unsatisfactory, this source of supply should be abandoned, unless some method could be found of protecting it. The council, however, after a discussion, decided to disregard his report and complete the work, a contract for which had, it seems, been signed without taking his advice.

There is reason to believe that, failing this source, a supply could be obtained elsewhere for this part of Kington.

The hamlet of Ashmore, standing at a height of some 700 ft. above Ordnance Datum, has long been in straits for water. At the time of my visit drinking water was being brought from Well Bottom, nearly a mile distant in a deep valley. There are several rain-water tanks at Ashmore, but the small quantity of water then remaining in them did not seem to be fit for drinking. Tanks and wells need careful examination to see that no contamination occurs, either directly from the surface of the ground or by soakage. The

openings should be of cement-set brick or stone, well raised above the surface. The question of the water supplies of Ashmore should not be left to the parish council, but should be dealt with by the district council who should take skilled advice on the subject.

The town of Gillingham is undoubtedly hindered* in its development by want of a water supply. In normal times the inhabitants obtain water from public and private wells. Before the close of my inspection most of these had run completely dry, and during my stay at Gillingham I had personal experiences of the hardships there endured in consequence of the drought.

Practically all the private wells in Gillingham parish that I could examine were dry-stained and their surroundings were mostly unsatisfactory. In Gillingham town I found that a number of persons habitually use, for household purposes, water dipped from the river. Statements were made to me that in some cases river water is actually used for drinking. I was unable to obtain clear evidence of this in more than one instance, viz., at Cross Roads, Milton, where drinking water has to be obtained from the Shreen, 350 yards distant. It is a grave danger that in hot weather pails of river water which, however clear it may be, is grossly contaminated by excreta and filth of all kinds, should be left standing about in houses. When no other water is available children cannot be prevented from resorting to it to slake their thirst. Instances were quoted to me where this had occurred.

During the height of the drought the district council had to undertake the daily distribution of water in Gillingham by means of water carts.

With regard to the procrastination† in obtaining a public water supply for this town, the district council should bear in mind that they cannot devolve their responsibility to parish councils and parochial committees. Now, it seems, the district council have a scheme for a supply from springs at Stourhead, about six miles distant and at a height of about 600 feet, whence water would flow by gravitation. If these springs, when properly gauged, are found to yield sufficient quantity, it is to be hoped that not a moment will be lost in tapping them. Presumably, the rural district council have for some good and weighty reason decided that a water supply for Gillingham cannot be brought from Mere, less than five miles distant. The parish of Mere (Wilts.) has, apparently, abundant water to spare. In bringing it to Gillingham no special engineering difficulty would be encountered.

In several other parts of the district, such as Sutton Waldron, Stour Provost, West Orchard, Enmore Green, etc., owing either to the failing of water in their wells, or to the absence of wells, cottagers are compelled to obtain water from a distant source, or by dipping it from ditches or ponds.

One of the worst instances of this was at Madjeston, where the

* *Note.*—The surveyor informed me that several persons had inquired whether they could erect houses and wait for the public water supply which it is believed will be provided hereafter.

† *Note.*—In November, 1909, the district council decided to take no action upon a resolution presented by the Gillingham parish council asking for a water supply, because the resolution was only passed by a majority of one.

inhabitants of a number of cottages habitually get drinking water by dipping it from a shallow ditch into which the water of a small spring issues from beneath the high road. This dipping place is without any sort of protection and is polluted by filth from the road, as also by the drainage of a farm yard and some cottages a short distance above. Many farms and cottages are without any supply of drinking water at all other than that brought back from Gillingham or elsewhere in milk churns that, on their outward journey, have conveyed milk to the milk factories. As regards the two Gillingham factories the water sent out seemed to be the waste water used for "cooling" purposes. After it has passed through the cooler it flows to a tank whence the churns are filled and despatched to those who depend on such supply.

Sewerage and Drainage.—In no part of the district is there a complete system of sewerage, but in Gillingham some sewers have been provided. These, five in number, seem to have been laid in various years, from 1885 onwards; the most recent portion being the extension in 1910 of the Queen Street sewer to Peasemars and Wavering Lane. All five sewers are entirely separate. Four of them discharge crude sewage into the rivers Stour and Shreen; the fifth, viz., the New Road and Lodden Bridge sewer, discharges to sedimentation tanks and a filtration chamber, filled with broken brick and clinker, the effluent escaping into the river Lodden. These outfall works are in a field south of Lodden Bridge. When I visited the place, during the period of drought, the tanks and filters were stagnant; but the whole arrangement seemed unsatisfactory, and I understand that there have been complaints of foul smells. These works stand in a field liable to flooding, which, I am informed, was flooded last year.

The sewers have little or no ventilation. The Queen Street sewer has an automatic flushing arrangement which was not working at the time of my visit. The sewers are flushed at intervals, as the weather requires, by means of a water cart. A builder of Gillingham receives £2 per annum for attending to the Lodden outfall works, and a further sum of £5 per annum for generally supervising the other sewers.

In Gillingham a number of houses are drained, either separately or by small groups, into the rivers Stour and Shreen. The courses and outfalls of these drains are not always known, but numerous nuisances arise from them in various ways.

House drainage is unsatisfactory.

Frequently drain openings are defectively trapped. It was common to find the opening of a slop gulley covered with a sack to prevent escape of foul smell, and many complaints were heard on that score.

In other parts of the district, where houses have drains of some kind, these drains seem to empty into brooks or ditches. Escape of slop liquids into roadside ditches was frequently met with. In at least one instance nuisance was being occasioned by the drainage from water closets into a road-side ditch.

Excrement disposal in the town of Gillingham is effected for the most part by means of hand-flushed hopper closets draining to the sewers; by closet pails; or by pit privies. The hand-flushed

hoppers are found in the houses of the more well-to-do. Some of the hoppers were defective or displaced, and many were in a filthy condition. During the season of fly prevalence, especially in time of drought, there is danger in the faecal matter generally found adherent to the pans of hand-flushed closets—especially if such pans are close to the doors and windows of cottages.

In this district, where a flowing stream is found at a convenient distance it seems the custom to place the closet beside it, or, indeed, actually projecting over it so that excreta fall directly into the water. Three such riparian closets were seen in the centre of Gillingham close to the bridge in the main street, one of them being in sight of foot passengers. In other parts of the parish, privies without proper pits, were seen on the banks of rivers.

In some cases, hand-flushed closets are inside houses. Near the Post Office at Gillingham, a hand-flushed closet in foul condition was in a sort of cupboard adjoining the "living room." At two cottages, close to High Street, there were hand-flushed hopper closets in the scullery. In numerous instances pit privies were found placed against the walls of dwellings; bad specimens of this were met with at Enmore Green. In other cases pit privies were seen in out-buildings adjoining dwellings. In many instances the amount of closet accommodation for the inhabitants of rows or groups of cottages is very scanty. Sometimes such accommodation is afforded in the form of several wooden compartments, back to back, or side to side, under one roof and over a common pit. I found in one place 36 persons had to resort to three closets of this kind. At a group of three cottages of a better class the inmates have the use of two privies only, built of planks—one privy being reserved for males and the other for females.

It is the usual custom apparently that closet pails and privy pits are emptied by householders. The contents are disposed of on garden ground, often much too small for the purpose, or apparently common to several cottages. In some places I saw faecal matter lying upon refuse heaps within a few feet of dwellings. An objectionable and sometimes dangerous method of excrement disposal is by means of deep "soakaway" cesspools. Two cesspools of this kind have been sunk for the drainage of six new houses—which were being completed at the time of my visit—in Bimport, on the outskirts of Shaftesbury. This street forms part of the town of Shaftesbury, but its western end, on which the houses have been erected, is in the parish of Alcester, belonging to Shaftesbury Rural District. The houses in question have water closets with flushing apparatus, and also bath-rooms. The cesspools are said to be more than 20 feet deep and unlined. It is a serious matter that new houses with soak-away cesspools for excrement disposal should be allowed to be inhabited. But in the absence of building bye-laws the council are, at present, powerless to prevent it. Other similar and even deeper pits are said to exist on Tout Hill, above Enmore Green; certain water supplies of which latter place probably owe their contamination to this.

Refuse disposal.—In no part of the district is there any public

collection of refuse; indeed, with the exception of Gillingham, there is no parish where this can be regarded as necessary, although in many places refuse was observed lying about. But in the parish of Gillingham collections—many of them enormous—of refuse in back yards insufficient for the purpose seem to be the rule.

The district council should at once undertake a contract for the removal of house refuse in Gillingham town; moreover, such public scavenging should, for the present, extend to pails and privies.

There are no *common lodging houses* in the district nor any *tenement* houses other than the block in Queen Street, known as Portland Cottages, and already referred to.

There are five *slaughterhouses*—all of which I visited; they are not registered. All were unsatisfactory. The premises in Gillingham are badly situated, especially those in Back Lane, where nuisance was being caused. Clark's slaughterhouse and premises at Stour Provost were found to be in a neglected and offensive state. The buildings are dilapidated. Offal of all kinds, bones, excrement, blood, and filth, were found lying about under conditions indicating gross carelessness. There is no water supply whatever, and water for such cleansing as may be thought necessary has to be brought from a distance. Meat of animals killed here is said to be sent to the London market. These premises, should receive attention from the district council. It is a question whether throughout the rural district slaughterhouses could not be registered and urban powers should be obtained so that bye-laws may be adopted to deal with these places.

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.—As already mentioned a very large trade in milk is carried on in the district. Regulations under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order, 1885, were adopted in 1907, but there seemed to have been no serious attempt to enforce them even in regard to registration. At the time of my visit there were 130 cowkeepers registered; and on these premises about 3,380 cows are kept. But there were at least 75 unregistered cowkeepers, sellers of milk, on whose premises in the aggregate nearly 2,000 cows are kept. Among these unregistered sellers of milk were members of the district council. In addition to the above there were four cowkeepers selling no milk, but making butter and cheese. There were also seven cowkeepers not necessarily requiring to be registered. A table is appended showing, for each parish, the number of cowkeepers registered and unregistered, as far as was known, and the number of cows kept by each at the time of my visit. A detailed and valuable report was prepared by the medical officer of health, Dr. Hanly, in February, 1910, on the milk industry in the district. Therein 198 establishments are described after a careful inspection made in each case by Dr. Hanly himself. This report included a tabular statement, giving for each farm the average number of cows; also the number of sheds; the nature and condition of walls, light, ventilation and drainage; the approximate cubic space per cow; the water supply and the locality to which milk is sent. A copy of this report, which was printed at Dr. Hanly's own expense, was sent to every member of

his council. I confirmed the accuracy of this report as regards upwards of 60 premises which I inspected.

Milkshops in any ordinary sense of the term are only found in Gillingham; milk is rarely kept for retail, as butter and cheese are made in large quantity.

Most of the dairies which I visited were clean, but in many instances they serve also as larders and even as storerooms. In some of the dairies I saw drain openings. Two milkshops in particular were very objectionable. One was a living room 11 feet by 9 feet 9 inches by 7 feet high in which a cat was kept and also a dove in a cage. Another was a dirty ill-lighted scullery in a small house. Milk pans, one containing milk, were standing on the floor, and beside them a bicycle, wheels in air, was being cleaned. A mass of miscellaneous articles was lying about, including dirty boots and clothing.

A few cowhouses and foldyards were well kept and many others had excellent features; but for the most part they were unsatisfactory, and the condition of many was bad.

The chief defects of the buildings are:—

- (a) Foul condition of walls and floors.
- (b) Want of ventilation and light.
- (c) Deficient cubic space.
- (d) Defects or absence of drainage.

As regards (a), the walls in most cases wanted limewashing; in not a few cases they were filthy. A feature of cowsheds in this district is the narrow windows with their greatest length horizontally. The practice of throwing out dung and filth through these into the yard is very common. Where this is done the walls, especially near the windows, become encrusted with dung.

Floors are frequently uneven or broken; often also they were so foul as to show that section 5 (3) of the Regulations (daily cleansing) had been neglected.

As regards (b), windows are generally small and often had become fixed owing to want of opening. In his report, the medical officer of health has condemned the outlets serving alike for lighting, ventilation, and for throwing out dung, and has objected to ventilation through apertures fitted with shutters because, when closed, they exclude light as well as fresh air. The atmosphere in sheds roofed with corrugated iron was often excessively hot.*

(c) Though in many sheds cubic space is satisfactory and even in excess of the requirements, in many others it is as little as 350 cubic feet per cow, or less. In a small shed at an important farm, cows standing in two rows, tail to tail, were so crowded that though their heads were close to the walls there was little more than space for a man to pace between the rows. In many sheds overhead space is curtailed by lofts, by stores of hay and fodder, particles of which, with adherent dirt, constantly fall into the milk pails.

* *Note.*—In a patched up wooden shed (10 cows) roofed with corrugated iron and unventilated, save through doors, in which milking was taking place, the air was almost unbearably hot as well as offensive. The milker's face and arms were streaming with sweat, drops of which could be seen steadily falling into his milking pail as he worked.

(d) Not a few cowsheds were found to be without drainage. In many others it is defective ; in many it is badly contrived, even at farms well provided in all other respects, and where the drainage system had recently been remodelled.

In numerous instances, and even at one of the best farms in the district, pigs are apparently kept in the same sheds as milch cows.

As regards foldyards, the general condition is bad, as is also, in most cases, the drainage of these places, and there is want of proper tanks. Manure is accumulated with liquid filth in vast quantities close to the openings of sheds. In two instances, I saw cows plunging through this in order to enter the sheds to be milked, their udders trailing in the filth. Where the dung is thrown out through the windows of the sheds it was found piled up in heaps, reaching to, or even above, the level of the window sills.

There is frequent want of water at farms. At some farms, the property of a Cambridge college, in the parish of Stour Provost, farmers are obliged, all through the year, to fetch water in churns from a long distance. I heard bitter complaints as to the difficulty and hardship thus caused.

Milk churns seem to be efficiently cleansed and scalded at the factories, but at farms where there is no wholesome water, or even no water at all, churns cannot be properly rinsed out before they are refilled with a fresh supply of milk.

The filthy condition of drinking places for cattle in this district is noteworthy. Even where good troughs have been provided, the water in them was often dirty. Owing to the drought the insanitary condition of the cattle ponds was evident. It made evident the fact that the frequent recipient of a large part of the drainage of foldyards, and also, sometimes of cowsheds, is the cattle pond, where it is not the nearest water course or roadside ditch.

I was not satisfied that reasonable care is generally taken to secure that milkers hands are washed and the udders of cows cleansed properly before milking.

At a few farms, however, every possible effort is being made to secure cleanliness and good conditions. Structural defects, for which the farmer can in no way be blamed, often render these almost impossible to achieve.

There are about 15 *bakehouses* in the district. Cleanliness needs to be attended to, and limewashing needs to be enforced. The water supplies for use in bakehouses are not satisfactory.

The only *offensive trade* I could hear of is the bone crushing &c. works at Gillingham. In this factory bones are crushed, the fat &c. being extracted by means of benzine. Although I was assured that all these processes are conducted in air-tight cylinders, there seems to be no doubt that a stench is at times diffused from this place over the locality. Nuisance from offensive effluvia likewise arises, at times, from the Gillingham Bacon Factory. Whether this nuisance—which occurs intermittently—is due to the collection and treatment of blood, subsequently sent to a manure factory ; to the collection and treatment of the “runners” (intestines) which are put into water for 2 or 3 days, the water escaping down the drains ; or to the occasional accumulation of offal, cannot be positively stated.

Nuisance in connection with the *keeping of animals* is not a feature of this district. Here and there nuisance was found occurring through the keeping of fowls in confined backyards close to the doors and windows of cottages. Pigstyes placed against the walls of houses, especially farm houses, were also seen.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

The Shaftesbury Rural District Council consists of 29 members ; of these 22 are tenant farmers, practically all engaged in milk businesses in one way and another, and two are agents of local estates. Meetings are held monthly at the Union workhouse, subsequently to those of the Guardians of the Shaftesbury Union. This arrangement must undoubtedly involve fatigue, as all the councillors are guardians and there is no sanitary committee.

No part of any adopted Act of Parliament is in force in the district, nor are there any byelaws. The only regulations in force are those adopted in October 1907 with respect to dairies, cowsheds and milkshops. The council's attitude with regard to these regulations is shown by the following extracts from the minute book :—

Meeting on June 30th, 1910.—"With reference to the inspection by the sanitary inspector of cowsheds, it is suggested that the tenant and agent should be with him when he makes his visits, and he is directed to arrange for this to be done if possible."

Meeting on July 28th, 1910.—"Mr. Gibbs brings forward his motion with respect to air space for cows as specified in part 2 of the regulations made by this council under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Orders, and moves that 500 cubic feet be the air space allowed for each cow in cowsheds within the area of this council instead of 800 feet, and same is unanimously adopted."

If the former proposal be acted upon, surprise visits to milk farms, which should be an essential feature of such inspections, will be at an end ; and if the inspector is not to visit a milk farm except under these conditions, it will be almost impossible for him to secure necessary improvements in these farms.

The *medical officer of health* is Dr. Thomas Francis Hanly who was appointed in January 1907, and now receives an annual salary of £100, half of which is repaid from county funds. He is also district medical officer and public vaccinator for the Gillingham district of the Shaftesbury Union. He resides at Gillingham and is engaged in private practice. Although only so recently appointed Dr. Hanly has an excellent knowledge of his district, and in addition to his exhaustive report on milk premises has accomplished much useful work. His advice would be valuable to his council if they were more ready to act upon it.

The *inspector of nuisances* is Mr. Henry Woodham, Associate of the Royal Sanitary Institute who was appointed on 1st January, 1910, at an annual salary of £100, half repayable from county funds. At the same time he was appointed to a similar office in the Borough of Shaftesbury at an annual salary of £30. The Board

unwillingly assented to his undertaking the duties of surveyor, also, in both these districts. As surveyor Mr. Woodham receives an annual salary of £100 from the rural district, and £20 from the borough. These four appointments occupy his whole time. Considering his very brief tenure of office, and the absence of guidance in the shape of books and papers from his predecessor, who apparently kept no record, Mr. Woodham has a very fair knowledge of all those parts of his district which thus far he has been able to visit. He is certainly capable of doing valuable work with ordinary encouragement and support from his council.

Practically nothing has been accomplished under the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909, and there seems to be some little confusion regarding the procedure to be followed. Mr. Woodham has inspected some forty cottages, the resulting data being entered upon cards. With regard to seven of these inspections he communicated in the first instance with the owner's agent. This gentleman, however, objected, pointing out that the communication should have been addressed to the council. Accordingly this was done and a committee thereafter was appointed to view the property in question. The objection taken by the agent was correct, but in communicating directly with him Mr. Woodham's aim was to secure a more speedy result if, as might have been the case, the agent was willing to put the houses in a satisfactory state without being formally requisitioned to do so. I fail to see why the inspector acting under the direction of the medical officer of health should be forbidden thus to communicate direct with the owner or agent for a cottage if he is forbidden to inspect milk premises without previous communication with the agent. But, however this may be, no result seems to have followed the labours of the committee in question.

From the minute book I learn that at a meeting on 26th January, 1911, a councillor "complained of the house to house inspection at Fontmell Magna that had recently been made by Mr. Woodham, their inspector. He considered that some of the demands made by the inspector were unreasonable and outside his authority." The council, however, did not adopt the view of the complaining councillor.

The action of the council seems weak in regard to water supplies pronounced by the medical officer of health to be contaminated and defective. One instance should be cited :—

At a meeting on 15th December, 1910 "the surveyor reported that two new houses were about to be occupied at Milton and they had no water supply. He had called the owner's attention to the fact that the necessary certificate had not been granted for occupation. The chairman said the owner of these cottages had called on him regarding the matter, and pending a water supply being provided at Gillingham they proposed fetching their water supply in churns. Under the circumstances the council decided to instruct Mr. Woodham to issue the necessary certificate."

The inactivity with regard to contaminated supplies is the more incomprehensible since they do not stint analyses of water; a large number of analyses, many of which were unfavourable, have been made by Messrs. Richardson & Son, of Leicester,

Prevention of Infectious Disease:—The council have undertaken the free supply of diphtheria antitoxin to practitioners in the district, a supply of this serum being kept by the medical officer of health. By way of providing hospital accommodation for *infectious diseases*, the council are renting on a yearly tenancy, at £17 10s. per annum, two small semi-detached cottages in about half an acre of land at Foyle Hill, about a mile from Shaftesbury, on a by-road to Marnhull. This place could only be used for one disease at a time. Each cottage contains two rooms “down” and three “up.” It has no drainage. There are two closets, one a pail and the other a pit privy. There is no bath; indeed, a bath would be useless as the water supply (from a spring) already condemned by the medical officer of health as contaminated, is insufficient in quantity. This “hospital” is not even to be kept ready for patients’ reception; and, even if it could prudently be used at all, the practical advantage of it may be gauged by the following extract from the minutes of a meeting on August 24, 1911: “The question of the advisability of keeping the new cottage vacant was considered, but it was eventually decided to allow the present tenants to remain, subject to their agreeing to vacate the house at 24 hours’ notice, if required.” So that a case of malignant scarlatina or one of diphtheria, perhaps hourly expected to need tracheotomy, would have to wait at least 24 hours for admission.

I heard of no *ambulance* of any kind, and there is no disinfecter.

Cases of infectious disease have at times been sent to the isolation hospital belonging to the Blandford Rural District, being conveyed thither on the Blandford ambulance. I have referred to the Blandford isolation hospital in a previous report to the Board on the Borough of Blandford Forum. This hospital is not large enough to allow other districts to rely on finding accommodation for their cases.

The *Midwives Act* is administered by the county council. Only two midwives are on the register.

SANITARY REQUIREMENTS OF THE DISTRICT.

An unusually long list of important questions now awaits the active consideration of this district council, among which the following may be regarded as the most pressing :—

1. A sanitary committee should at once be formed; the minutes of its meetings should be kept in a separate volume.
2. Systematic attention should be given to the water supplies of the district, and expert advice should be taken as to the possibility of devising schemes whereby places such as Ashmore, Stour Provost, Enmore Green and Buckhorne Weston can be supplied with water. Very careful attention should be given to the subject of water supplies at milk farms. The district council should seriously undertake the provision of an adequate and wholesome water supply for the town of Gillingham.
3. The district council should at once have search made for leaking cesspools in those parts of their district wherein

cesspools are known to exist. In respect of those parishes in which such cesspools are found, the council should, if necessary, obtain urban powers under Section 47 of the Public Health Act, 1875 ; (3) of this section will furnish them with means to deal with such nuisance.

4. The district council should forthwith undertake or contract for the removal of house refuse in the parish of Gillingham : for the present this public scavenging should extend to pail closets and privies.
5. The regulations adopted under the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order, 1885, should be much more strictly enforced. Registration of milk dealers should be insisted on.
6. The district council should forthwith proceed to obtain urban powers for their district generally to enable them to make suitable byelaws with respect to new buildings.
7. The district council should take action respecting manufactures at Gillingham causing nuisance by effluvia.
8. The district council should take steps to provide suitable accommodation for cases of infectious disease ; and they should also provide a proper steam disinfecter. These could best be furnished by combining, for this purpose, with the Borough of Shaftesbury and the Sturminster Rural District. Every possible effort should be made to effect this combination. Such hospital accommodation need not be on any costly scale, but it should be kept ready for the immediate reception of cases.
9. The district council should at once give attention to the due administration of the Housing Acts, including the question of providing houses for the working classes where the circumstances are such as to require such provision.
10. Generally more attention should be given by the district council to the reports of the medical officer of health and the inspector of nuisances. The nuisances brought to the notice of the council or, it is to be hoped, the sanitary committee, should be promptly dealt with and abatement secured.

BOROUGH OF SHAFTESBURY.

This ancient borough (locally known as Shaston) wholly comprised in the civil parish of Shaftesbury, occupies an isolated position, some 700 feet above Ordnance Datum, upon a spur of high table land, connected with the Wiltshire and Dorsetshire Downs, and overlooks the wide Vale of Blackmoor, some 200 feet below. On the southern side the escarpment is steep and is crowned by a fine promenade. The area of the borough is 156 acres.

The population, which was 2,122 at the census of 1891, had decreased to 2,027 at the census of 1901 ; the enumerated population at the census of 1911 was 1,873.

The number of inhabited houses is stated to be 443. Of these, some 374 are said to be within the limits of rent in Section 14 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1909. The number of houses rated at less than £5 is 215, and 89 are rated at more than £5 but at less than £10.

The town mostly consists of the main street, known as High Street, running nearly east and west, with smaller streets curving from it to run in a nearly similar direction. From the western end of the High Street a stone-pitched road known as Gold Hill falls steeply to St. James's, a lower-lying and poorer part of the town.

Shaftesbury is a considerable agricultural centre, and has a fairly important fortnightly cattle market, but possesses no special industries save an iron foundry. Glove sewing is carried on to some extent by home workers, but the industries of button making, weaving, and glove making, which used to exist, seem to have disappeared.

The town stands on a bed of gravelly loam, containing a proportion of flints and fragments of sandstone; underlying this, at varying depths, is Green Sandstone belonging to the Upper Greensand. The rateable value of the borough is £6,309. The total rates in 1910 were 3s. 3d. in the £ for poor rate and 2s. 6d. in the £ for district rate. The town clerk informs me that there is no borough rate, as the income from borough property and consols suffices to meet outlay other than for sanitary purposes. There is no public debt.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

The nearest railway stations are Semley distant about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and Gillingham distant about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles on the main line of the London and South Western Railway.

Roads.—The surveyor informs me that there are $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of main road and 3 miles of district road within the borough area. All of these are metalled. They seemed to be in satisfactory condition.

Housing.—Most of the houses are old and built of local green sandstone. As this is of a porous nature and takes up moisture to some extent from earth and atmosphere, green vegetation as well as mosses and lichen grow freely upon it.

It is a feature of many of the smaller houses that the ground floors are a little below the level of roads and footpaths. During violent rain water may thus find entrance to such dwellings. Yards are in need of paving. Such paving as exists is usually of stone sets or pitching, or, in rarer instances, partially of brick; both of these pavings are often broken and displaced. Roofs are usually of tile or slate, but there are a great many of thatch, which for the most part seems to be in satisfactory condition. There are a few corrugated iron roofs. Houses without back outlet of any kind are not very numerous in the town, although instances were met with in St. James's and especially at the row of cottages called the Pool. I heard of no back-to-back houses. Land for building is said to be very hard to get, and as in so isolated and elevated a situation building must be costly, there has been little building in the borough of late years. There is a great want of housing for

the poorer unskilled labourer earning only 15s. or less per week, especially for such as have families. It is not so much that rents are excessively high as that the number of dwellings is extremely limited.

Water supply.—Shaftesbury has a water service which was provided some sixty years ago by the Marquess of Westminster and is the property of the Motcombe estate. For houses belonging to the estate the charge for water is included in the rent, but for all other houses a rate of 1s. 9d. in the £ on the actual rental is levied. The water is derived from two wells situated at Barton Hill, which are about 140 feet deep and 6 feet in diameter. I am assured by the superintendent that they are both lined in parts with cemented brick but in parts the sides are of bare rock. The well containing the suction pipe is not closely covered in, and, though it is in a shed, contaminating matter could, without difficulty, find entrance from above. From the bottom of this well a heading about 15 yards long runs in a westerly direction to the other well. The latter, which is completely closed at the top by a dome of cemented brickwork is in an outbuilding on premises rented by a baker, and used as a coach house, stable, store, etc. The dimensions of the heading do not seem to be exactly known, but it is probably nearly 5 feet in height, the walls being bare, or at any rate only dry stoned. Water, which is obtained in the greensand, is raised from the former well by means of a duplicate set of 6½ inch pumps. Working together these two pumps would exhaust the yield of water, but by using a single set of pumps a regular supply of about 5,000 gallons per hour is obtained. The water is forced up to a closed reservoir, holding 150,000 gallons, at Little Content, and thence flows by gravitation to all parts of the town.

The daily consumption is estimated at from 60,000 to 70,000 gallons. The service is not constant. A general supply is given from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. (on Sundays until 2 p.m.), but, owing to the gradients, some parts of the town enjoy a practically constant supply through the water remaining in the pipes. Even during the recent drought the yield from these wells is said to have been as plentiful as usual, and there was no need to curtail the hours of supply.

Adjacent to the pumping well above mentioned is a swimming-bath to which the public are allowed access—a cement rendered pit privy being provided for the use of visitors.

The water is agreeable to taste and is regarded as wholesome in the light of the most recent analyses, copies of which are appended.* These analyses were made some months since in consequence of a cloudiness having been remarked in the water; suspicion was thereby occasioned that the water was being contaminated either by leakage in some way from the swimming-bath, or from the drain leading to the dead end of an adjacent sewer. The latter being examined and found to be of shallow depth and unsatisfactory gradient, have now been rectified. Since then there has been no complaint, and possibly leakage from the local drain may have been responsible for the turbidity observed. But it seems desirable that the surroundings of the well should receive careful examination

* See Appendix.

from time to time, and that analytical control should be maintained. From the above described water service a supply of drinking water is provided everywhere in the borough either by pipes laid into the houses or by taps within reasonable distance. There are a few wells but they are not resorted to for drinking purposes.

Sewerage and Drainage.—The greater part of the town is sewered. The sewers were laid at various times, most of them by the owners of the Motcombe estate, a very small part being due to other private agency. An area on the north side of the town, in the vicinity of New Road, has been sewered by the corporation. Precise information concerning the older sewers cannot in all cases be obtained, but the main sewers seem to be brick culverts, 2 feet in diameter, the smaller sewers being 12 inches and 9 inches glazed pipe. It seems that large pits were placed here and there, in the course of these culverts; some have been found 10 feet or 15 feet deep. These are unlined or merely dry-steined, and apparently intended to act as "soak-aways" as well as sedimentation pits. The situations of all these chambers are not known, but whenever found they are abolished and the course of the sewer rectified. It is believed that, in point of fact, nearly all these pits have now been done away with. I am informed that, owing to the gradients of the sewers and the fact that they convey surface water as well as sewage, flushing is not needed. In two instances, however, sewers are flushed from branch pipes from water mains; the flushing is given by means of sluice valves. The sewers have been laid in a tortuous manner in inconvenient situations along the backs of houses, under buildings, through private gardens, and in other places where access to them cannot readily be had. There are three outfalls: the northern outfall, said to be of 6 inch pipe, in a field at Payne's Place farm, beside the Gillingham road; the southern main outfall upon grassland at Holyrood farm; and for a smaller system of sewers in the Salisbury Street locality, a third outfall upon allotment gardens just south of Salisbury Street at the borough boundary. The outfall sewers are apparently smaller than the main sewers. There is no treatment of sewage. When I visited the outfalls there was no evidence of nuisance, nor did I hear any complaint. I understand, however, that some inconvenience is caused after periods of heavy rain. House drainage is often unsatisfactory. In some instances shallow open gutters are provided for slop liquids. At "the Pool" an open brick gutter at the surface of the ground, only 6 feet from the doors, takes the slops from a row of nine houses to discharge through a hole in a wall upon adjoining allotment gardens. This slop drain is much complained of, as also is a drain in St. Andrew's Yard. Frequently gullies were found to be fitted only with bell traps.

Excrement disposal.—It is unsatisfactory that in a small borough like this the sanitary officer has not made record of the number and varieties of closet accommodation. I am informed that notwithstanding the existence of sewers the most general form of closet is still the cesspit privy. These seem to be very general in the older houses in the outlying parts of the town; but they are also met with in the central streets. In places where the houses stand upon sloping ground with pit privies at the back and on a higher level it

is not unlikely that the pits may overflow and part of the contents be carried, in rainy weather, down to the houses.

Pit privies are, also, in many instances, much too near to dwellings; in fact, in some cases, they are placed against the walls of outbuildings connected with dwellings. A filthy pit privy was found placed, together with a pigstye, against the back wall of a house at "the Pool." Pail closets are not very common, nor are there many hand flushed closets. Houses of the better class are mostly fitted with water closets having proper flushing apparatus; but in a great many cases there is no knowledge at all as to the manner in which they are drained.

Apparently in former times there were a number of "soak away" cesspools of great size—apparently 5 feet or 6 feet wide and as much as 30 feet deep, and to these pits groups of houses were drained. Some of these pits, receiving water closet and slop drainage, still exist in various parts of the borough, such as the neighbourhoods of Bimport, Magdalen Lane, Pine Walk, &c. They do not need emptying, and there can be little doubt that very serious contamination is occasioned to underground water supplies on the lower slopes of Shaftesbury Hill by the incessant soakage of the cesspool contents. The water supply to the Shaftesbury Rural District isolation cottages on Foyle (the ordnance sheet calls it "Foul") Hill may possibly owe its contamination (see page 16) to this cause.

The abolition of leaking cesspools and catchment pits should at once receive the serious attention of the town council. Failing this a proper modern system of sewerage may be required for the borough. That such a system will sooner or later be necessary is evident.

Refuse removal and disposal.—Since January, 1910, the town council have contracted for the weekly removal of dry refuse. An open cart is employed. The refuse is disposed of in a disused quarry, adjoining allotment gardens on the south side of the town at Great Lane. This tip is rather too near to houses; but at the time of my visit no nuisance was observable and the surveyor assures me that he has received no complaint. It was mentioned to me that the contractor for refuse removal had intimated his intention not to tender for the work again next year. In spite of the weekly removal of refuse a quantity of it was observed stored in pits in various parts of the town; and in numerous instances refuse was seen heaped up in back yards.

The storage of refuse and also of manure in large open pits holding in some cases, apparently, several tons, was frequently remarked. Attention should be given to the premises of a marine store dealer where I found in a roughly stone-pitched yard an enormous collection of skins and bones, and also of refuse. This place seems to be a depot where bones are collected for despatch to the bone-crushing works at Gillingham. The business of storing these commodities seems hardly a suitable one for the centre of the principal street of Shaftesbury, and may properly be controlled under powers relating to offensive trades.

Nuisance in connection with the *keeping of animals* is not now a

feature of the town. This is a marked improvement since 1906 when the medical officer of health was called on for a special report respecting pig keeping in the borough. There is, however, some apparent nuisance from keeping chickens and ducks in small spaces close to back doors. There are two *common lodging-houses*—both of which are registered. Both were found clean. In each house is a room allotted in one case to two, and in the other to three married couples, with insufficient screening between the beds. At one house there is only a single pit privy, and at the other a single hopper closet, flushed by hand, for the use of all inmates. It would be advisable that byelaws should be framed for these places.

Dairies, cowsheds and milkshops.—There are no dairies or cowsheds in the borough area, nor is there any milkshop properly so called. I could hear only of one or two shops in which milk is retailed, and in these, apparently, not as a regular practice. Milk is brought into the town from five farms in the surrounding rural district, and from one in the Tisbury Rural District, and is sold from the carts.

Of the three *slaughter houses* in the borough two are registered. Two of these places are much too close to dwellings and I heard complaints of the nocturnal noises made by animals awaiting slaughter. Arrangements for the disposal of manure, blood and offal were defective. At two slaughter houses the floors were broken into holes and crevices which were seen full of blood. When visited at 10.30 a.m. the premises of one butcher were still in a filthy condition from the killing on the previous day, or earlier. Four churns of blood were awaiting removal; intestines, etc., were soaking in water; and there was a collection of offal, bones and raw hides. The stone-pitched floor of the fasting pen and passages were in a disgusting condition. These premises are too closely surrounded by other buildings. It is clear that the existing byelaws respecting these places are not strictly enforced.

I am informed that there are six *bakehouses*. Those seen are old and ill-constructed, and for the most part not very cleanly kept. At one, there is no sanitary convenience for the workers, who have to avail themselves of the convenience at the neighbouring cattle market. Another bakehouse is in a basement very badly lighted by recessed windows which are mostly below ground-level, and so arranged that dirt cannot fail to enter freely from the street when they are open for necessary ventilation. These premises were ill-kept as well as dark and close. At the bottom of the stairs, in a passage leading to the bakehouse, I saw a pail of milk and also pots of jam, &c., standing uncovered and exposed to the entrance of flies and dirt.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

The town council consists of 16 members who meet once quarterly, or "when required." There is a sanitary committee of 12 members who meet, also, "when required"; this, I was given to

understand, being at such times as the sanitary inspector has a report to make to them; on the average there seem to be about twelve meetings annually. I am informed that any report by the surveyor and inspector of nuisances to the town council is in writing; but reports to the sanitary committee are verbal. From the minutes of the town council meetings it seems that that body do not, under ordinary circumstances, deal with sanitary matters other than those of a public nature. As to the way in which nuisances are dealt with by the sanitary committee it is not possible to judge, as the minutes of these meetings are extremely brief. From the minutes of a meeting (date not recorded) between August, 1908, and January, 1909, it appears that a committee of five members was appointed to inspect and report upon the row of miserable dwellings called "the Pool," but I cannot trace any further reference to this committee or its doings. The condition of the place in question when I saw it seemed to indicate that the committee's labours had been unfruitful.

The *medical officer of health* is Dr. H. F. S. Blucke, who was appointed in 1907 at a salary of £25, half repayable from county funds. He is engaged in private practice and resides at Shaftesbury. Dr. Blucke was unable to accompany me for other than a brief space of time on my rounds and as until 1911 he kept no journal and presents no reports other than his somewhat meagre annual report I am unable to speak as to his knowledge of his district. He was not keeping any register for the entry of notifications of cases of infectious disease.

The *inspector of nuisances* is, as already mentioned, Mr. Henry Woodham. His remuneration in that capacity as well as that of surveyor has already been set forth in my report on Shaftesbury Rural District.

The only *adoptive* Act of Parliament in force in the borough is Part III of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890. The only *byelaws* in force are those with respect to "slaughterhouses," and with reference to "nuisances"; the former were allowed by the Local Government Board in December, 1907, and the latter in February, 1911. The code dealing with "nuisances" is brief, being limited to (1) Prevention of nuisances from removal of filth; (2) Keeping of swine; (3) Removal of fæcal, &c., matter through the streets.

No action seems to have been taken under the *Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1909*.

Prevention of Infectious Disease.—The town council provides diphtheria antitoxin for the use of practitioners, a supply of the serum being kept by the medical officer of health.

The town is without *isolation hospital* or *disinfecting apparatus*. It should be recorded however that this borough has been remarkably free from zymotic diseases for some years past. During 1909 the only notification received by the medical officer of health was that of a case of erysipelas; and there was only one notification, viz., of a case of the same disease, in 1910. During 1911 down to October, the month in which I visited the town, no notification at

all had been received. The council should not allow the present happy immunity from notifiable disease to lull them into a false feeling of security and to induce them to disregard the need of making some provision for the isolation of infectious cases.

The *Midwives Act* is administered by the county council; there is no registered midwife in the borough.

Though without the resources of special industries existing, or in prospect, the locality has valuable assets in the exceptional beauty of its situation, as also in its bracing and stimulating climate. These, together with a little outlay in certain obvious directions, should make it a health resort of value. To develop this the first requisite is an active and efficient sanitary administration.

The following points should be recommended to the consideration of the town council:—

1. The administration of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909, should at once be begun, the data of the house to house visitation being duly recorded in permanent form.
2. To prevent further dangerous contamination of underground water supplies the town council should forthwith seek advice as to the best means of dealing with leaking cesspools, whether serving as means of drainage for groups of houses or as catchment pits in the course of sewers. Extensions of the existing sewers might suffice to secure the abolition of the former, and to enable the town council to put in force section 47 (3) of the Public Health Act, 1875.
3. The council should take steps to prevent the accumulation of refuse and manure. Section 49 of the Public Health Act, 1875, should be made use of for this purpose.
4. The town council should make byelaws with respect to common lodging-houses. To secure the observance of decency in rooms occupied by a plurality of married couples such byelaws should contain a clause in the sense of clause 4 of the Board's model code.
5. The question of providing an isolation hospital for the treatment of cases of infectious diseases should at once be taken into consideration. To minimize the cost of such provision the town council should endeavour to secure the co-operation of the rural districts of Sturminster and of Shaftesbury.

CONCLUSION WITH RESPECT TO THE APPOINTMENT OF A SURVEYOR ACTING AS INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.

As regards the duality of Mr. Woodham's appointment, viz., as surveyor and inspector of nuisances both in the Rural District and in the Borough of Shaftesbury, and his ability to discharge the duties thus imposed upon him, I have no hesitation in saying that the work of inspector of nuisances, in conjunction with inspections under the Housing Acts in the two districts, if it is to be efficiently performed with a view especially to remedying defects noted in this

report, is ample to occupy the whole time of a properly qualified officer. The sanitary interests of the two districts would best be served by dissociating the two offices forthwith. It may be urged that a young and active officer like Mr. Woodham could by sustained hard work still undertake both offices satisfactorily if some assistance were given him (for example in connection with the Housing duties or in the preparation of the contracts for road work). Possibly some proposals of this nature may locally be preferred to a separation of the two appointments which would entail loss of salary by Mr. Woodham. If any such proposals are made to and entertained by the Board it would be important, in my view, that they should be recognised as merely tentative.

In any case I would lay stress upon the fact that close and steady co-operation is necessary, not only between the inspector of nuisances and the medical officer of health, but also between those officers and their respective councils. The time of the sanitary officer has in the past been wasted in repeatedly reporting on a growing list of recurring nuisances. This would be entirely unnecessary if the council had decided in the first instance to take prompt and appropriate action on their reports.

It is a pleasure, as well as a duty, to tender to the officers of the Borough and the Rural District Councils of Shaftesbury my thanks for the courteous and willing help given me in making the inquiry. In a special manner my thanks are due to Dr. T. F. Hanly for the ungrudging manner in which he has met the heavy calls I have had to make upon his time. I have also to thank the Motcombe Estate Office and various residents in the localities for assistance and information.

F. ST. GEORGE MIVART.

APPENDICES.

THE CLINICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION, LIMITED.

To Dr. Blucke,
Medical Officer of Health,
3, Ivy Cross, Shaftesbury.

Watergate House,
York Buildings,
Adelphi, London, W.C.,
29th June, 1911.

* The sample of water marked , collected as and received here on 27th June, 1911, has been chemically examined, and I have been instructed to forward the following report :—

Analysis B.				Parts per 100,000.	Grains per Gallon.
Total solids (dried at 120° C.)	...	...	...	34.0	23.8
Combined chlorine	...	...	...	1.40	0.98
Equivalent to Na Cl	...	...	...	2.31	1.62
Nitric nitrogen	...	...	...	0.51	0.36
Nitrous nitrogen	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Ammoniacal nitrogen	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Albuminoid nitrogen	...	...	...	0.0034	0.0024
Oxygen absorbed in four hours at 27° C.	...	...	...	0.020	0.014
Lead or copper	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Temporary hardness (equivalent to Ca CO ₃)	...	...	...	18.0	12.6
Permanent hardness	...	...	...	6.2	4.3
Total hardness	...	...	...	24.2	16.9

* See page 19.

These results appear to be fairly satisfactory, but it is necessary to have information as to the source of the water in order to be able to express a definite opinion.

C. H. WELLS,
Director of the Association.

Under date 1st July, 1911, with reference to a sample of water received on 27th June, 1911, the data are similar, but the summary is as follows:—"Judged by chemical analysis alone, this sample is of satisfactory organic purity and not excessively hard."

C. H. WELLS,
Director of the Association.

SHAFTESBURY RURAL DISTRICT.

Dairies, Cowsheds, &c., September, 1911.

Parish.	Cowkeepers on Register.		Cowkeepers selling milk <i>not</i> on Register.		Cowkeepers not on Register (making butter or cheese).		Cowkeepers not on Register selling milk in small quantities.	
	No. of cow- keepers.	No. of cows kept.	No. of cow- keepers.	No. of cows kept.	No. of cow- keepers.	No. of cows kept.	No. of cow- keepers.	No. of cows kept.
Alcester ...	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ashmore ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	8
Bourton ...	2	60	1	100	—	—	—	—
Buckhorne ...	5	160	7	191	—	—	—	—
Weston.								
Cann ...	12	321	3	52	1	12	—	—
Compton Abbas	5	105	1	10	—	—	—	—
East Orchard ...	4	62	3	103	—	—	—	—
East Stour ...	4	144	5	123	—	—	—	—
Fontmell Magna	7	175	6	97	—	—	1	3
Gillingham ...	31	705	20	606	—	—	1	3
Iwerne Minster	4	102	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kington Magna	7	136	3	32	—	—	2	8
Margaret Marsh	3	84	—	—	—	—	—	—
Melbury Abbas	1	21	—	—	3	36	—	—
Motcombe ...	26	744	8	209	—	—	1	3
Silton ...	—	—	3	118	—	—	—	—
Stour Provost ...	14	278	8	125	—	—	—	—
Sutton Waldron	2	80	2	38	—	—	—	—
Todber ...	1	42	—	—	—	—	—	—
West Orchard ...	—	—	2	52	—	—	—	—
West Stour ...	1	49	3	115	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	130	3,272	75	1,975	4	48	7	25

