

**[Report 1901] / Medical Officer of Health, Axbridge R.D.C.**

**Contributors**

Axbridge (Somerset, England). Rural District Council.

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1901

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Dr. LECHE, medical officer of health, presented his annual report, which was as follows:—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.—I beg to present my annual report for the year ending 31st December, 1901. Area, 102,282 acres; population, 23,723. Census 1901. Geology—Limestone, sandstone and conglomerate rocks; peat, marl and sea shingle in marshes. Occupation—agriculture.

	1901.	1900.	1899.
Birth-rate per 1,000	22·2	20·4	21·3
Death-rate	17·7	15·0	15·9
Zymotic	1·30	0·8	0·8
Infant mortality	107·9	99·8	121·5

*Water Supply.*—The South Marsh and Winscombe water supplies are plentiful and good in quality. The drainage of Worle is under consideration, a Local Government Board inquiry being held concerning it on September 25th to discuss the matter of water supply and drainage. At Cheddar the stream and settler dipping pool are much polluted by sewage. Active measures are, however, in operation for a good water supply. The drainage of Milton is bad. The hamlet will shortly be annexed by the Weston-super-Mare Urban Authority. Pig-keeping on a large scale, especially at Lympsham, has occupied the serious attention of the Board. Scavenging executed individually.

*Prevalence of Disease Notification.*—Cases notified, 167; diphtheria, 93; scarlatina, 32; enteric, 8; erysipelas, 34. The scarlatina was of a mild sporadic variety, and caused no deaths. The cases of enteric were widely scattered, the 2 deaths being in unhealthy subjects. Schools were closed at Mark for scarlatina, one case being in the schoolhouse; at Allerton, for whooping cough; at Blagdon, for measles; at Cheddar and Milton for diphtheria. In July 7 cases of diphtheria occurred in Cheddar, 3 of whom died. The weather was very hot, and water scarce. This outbreak lasted 3 weeks. In October 17 cases of diphtheria occurred in Cheddar, with two deaths. In both outbreaks the cases of origin lived in houses where the water and drainage were bad, and the disease not being recognised at first, the children went to school, and soon spread it among others. The milk supplies were from various sources. The secular and religious schools were closed, numerous inspections made, leaflets of advice and disinfectants issued. The schools and houses disinfected. The latter outbreak lasted a month. Cheddar is sewage soaked, and the stream is polluted, and privies are universal. The wells are shallow. Except in two cases the water supplies of the above were impure. Fifty-one cases of diphtheria occurred at Milton Kew-toke, in November. Many of the cases were mild and not recognised by the poorer classes, and spread rapidly among the school children. A specially trained nurse from Bristol was engaged to live in Milton and attend the cases. This she did in a highly satisfactory manner, and was greatly appreciated. All schools and meetings were closed, numerous inspections made, much soiled clothing and bedding burnt, and all precautions taken. The milk was from various sources, no one being suspicious. Six deaths occurred. Deaths from zymotic disease, 31; whooping cough, 7; diphtheria, 14; diarrhoea, 8; enteric and other fevers, 3; 30 died of phthisis; 54 of bronchitis; 64 of heart disease, and 24 of cancer. Isolation Hospital—None. Disinfection means—Formic Sulphurators used, disinfectants supplied. Dairies, etc., inspected. Housing of working classes—Two cases of overcrowding abated.

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