[Report 1905] / Medical Officer of Health, Aylesbury U.D.C.

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1905.

Aylesbury Urban District Council.

To the Chairman and Councillors of the Aylesbury Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Annual Report. The statistics include the whole of the year 1905, but the remainder of the Report chiefly refers to matters dealt with since my appointment at the beginning of August.

Area of District	3,301 Acres.
Number of inhabited houses	2,253
Average number of persons per house	4.10
Population (Census 1901)	9,244
Estimated to middle of 1905	9,380

		Per 1,000 of population.
Deaths registered in 1905	130 —	13.85
Corrected death-rate	110 —	11.72
Births registered in 1905	218 —	23.24

		Per 1,000 births registered.
Infant mortality ,, ,,	8 —	36.69

		Per 1,000 of population.
Deaths from Zymotic Diseases	4 —	.42

STATISTICS FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

Births.

		Per 1,000 of population.
1901	253	28.37
1902	246	26.47
1903	243	26.06
1904	235	25.70
1905	218	23.24

Deaths.

1901	148	16.22
1902	142	15.28
1903	160	17.16
1904	168	17.95
1905	130	13.85

Infant Mortality.

		Per 1,000 of population.
1901	23	113.86
1902	29	117.78
1903	27	111.00
1904	37	153.19
1905	8	36.69

Zymotic Death-rate.

		Per 1,000 of Population.
1901	13	1.40
1902	9	.96
1903	20	2.13
1904	18	1.92
1905	4	.42

Census of children under 14 years of age resident in Aylesbury on 30th June, 1905, as compiled by the Staff in Attendance Department of the Education Committee:—

Number of children between the ages of	2 & 3 years — 178
" " " "	3 & 4 years — 157
" " " "	4 & 5 years — 175
" " " "	5 & 6 years — 152
" " " "	6 & 7 years — 213
" " " "	7 & 8 years — 188
" " " "	8 & 9 years — 185
" " " "	9 & 10 years — 174
" " " "	10 & 11 years — 178
" " " "	12 & 13 years — 190
" " " "	13 & 14 years — 166
Total	2,130

On reference to Table I. appended to the report, it will be seen that there were 218 births, the average for the previous ten years being 230.5, the rate per 1,000 living being 23.24. Male births were 102; Female, 116.

The deaths numbered 130, which is equal to a death-rate of 13.85 per 1,000 living—the lowest recorded since 1898. Twenty-one deaths of non-residents took place in public institutions in the district. Deducting these, leaves the number of nett deaths at all ages belonging to the district, 110, equal to a death-rate of 11.72 per 1,000 living—a favourable rate compared with the records for the previous ten years. A remarkable feature is the extremely low infantile mortality, the deaths of only 8 children below the age of one year having been registered. This gives the very low rate of 36.69 per 1,000 births registered; the average for the previous ten years being 28.2 deaths, or a rate of 124.4. I attribute it to the absence of very hot summer weather with a corresponding absence of infantile diarrhœa; and possibly also to the practice of boiling milk being carried out more generally, and also to more care being taken as regards cleanliness by dairymen and cowkeepers.

The deaths from Zymotic Diseases numbered four only: one from influenza, one from diarrhœa, and two from puerperal fever. There were no deaths caused by small-pox, measles, scarlet fever, whooping cough, diphtheria, or typhoid fever. Eight deaths were due to consumption of the lungs, and four to other tubercular diseases. Various forms of cancer accounted for thirteen deaths, twelve being caused by it in 1904. Bronchitis, pneumonia

and pleurisy caused eighteen deaths, the average for ten years being 26.9. Heart disease caused nineteen deaths, the number last year being twenty-eight.

Infectious Diseases Notification Act.

Twenty-seven cases of infectious disease were notified; this compares well with an average of 43.7 for the previous ten years. They were: Erysipelas, 12; diphtheria, 4; enteric fever, 4; scarlet fever, 5; puerperal fever, 2. It was not found necessary to move any of these cases to the Isolation Hospital, as they could be efficiently isolated and nursed at home. Two of the enteric fever cases contracted the disease out of the town; one of the two others occurred in a house where the drains were found very defective. The source of the scarlet fever cases was difficult to trace, but at the time there were suspicious cases in neighbouring villages. One of the puerperal cases occurred in the practice of a midwife; the other was a case of placenta prævia with instrumental delivery. Both proved fatal.

The utility of notifying cases of erysipelas appears to be very doubtful, and I recommended that this disease should be struck out and phthisis inserted, but it appears that the Local Authority have not the power to delete diseases from the Act, and when the proposal to make phthisis a notifiable disease was brought before the Council it was decided not to include it. I consider that in the interest of the public health it should be notifiable, or at any rate that notice should be given to the Health Authority when a death occurs from this disease, in order that the room should be disinfected.

Disinfection.

This is carried out by vapourizing tablets of formalin by means of a container over a spirit lamp, ten to fifteen tablets being used for each 1,000 cubic feet of space. I have recommended that a spraying apparatus should be obtained, to be used in addition to the fumigation.

At present, articles of bedding, etc., which cannot be properly disinfected by fumigation are destroyed, and the value paid to the owner. A steam disinfecting apparatus would obviate this. Possibly when a refuse destructor is provided a steam chamber might be constructed in connection with it.

Isolation Hospital.

This has fortunately not been opened for the reception of cases during the year, but it has been kept in readiness, the caretaker paying a weekly visit for the purpose of airing the bedding, etc.

The present accommodation consists of a main building containing two wards, each with four beds, and a detached ward holding two beds. The Council have erected another detached ward, giving two additional beds. The main

wards are now heated with hot-water pipes instead of stoves. A coach-house has been built at the back of the Hospital to accommodate the new ambulance van. A wide porch has been erected in front of the entrance door of the Hospital; and the matter of laying on a supply of Chiltern Hills water is now under consideration by the Council. The provision of a separate Small-pox Hospital is under consideration.

Ambulance Van.

The Council have had a new and satisfactory ambulance van made, containing a stretcher and accommodation for attendants.

Scavenging and Dust Yard.

The scavenging is efficiently carried out by the Council's men, but the provision of a metal-covered receptacle for each house would prevent some of the refuse being distributed about the streets.

The Dust Yard is too near the town, and the fumes from the burning refuse prove a nuisance to neighbouring houses. Rats are also complained of. A destructor outside the town would be a great improvement.

Sewage Works.

These are acting very satisfactorily. The analyses of the effluent continue good. The crude sewage is first screened, then run into settling tanks, from which it flows over a sill into a channel. It then goes to the regulating tank, and from there to the bacteria beds of coke breeze. There are six of these—three high level and three low level. It stands two hours in these beds, sometimes passing through two. It then goes to the engine house, and is pumped to the irrigation field, passing through it to a ditch at the lower end, and the effluent then passes along a channel to the stream.

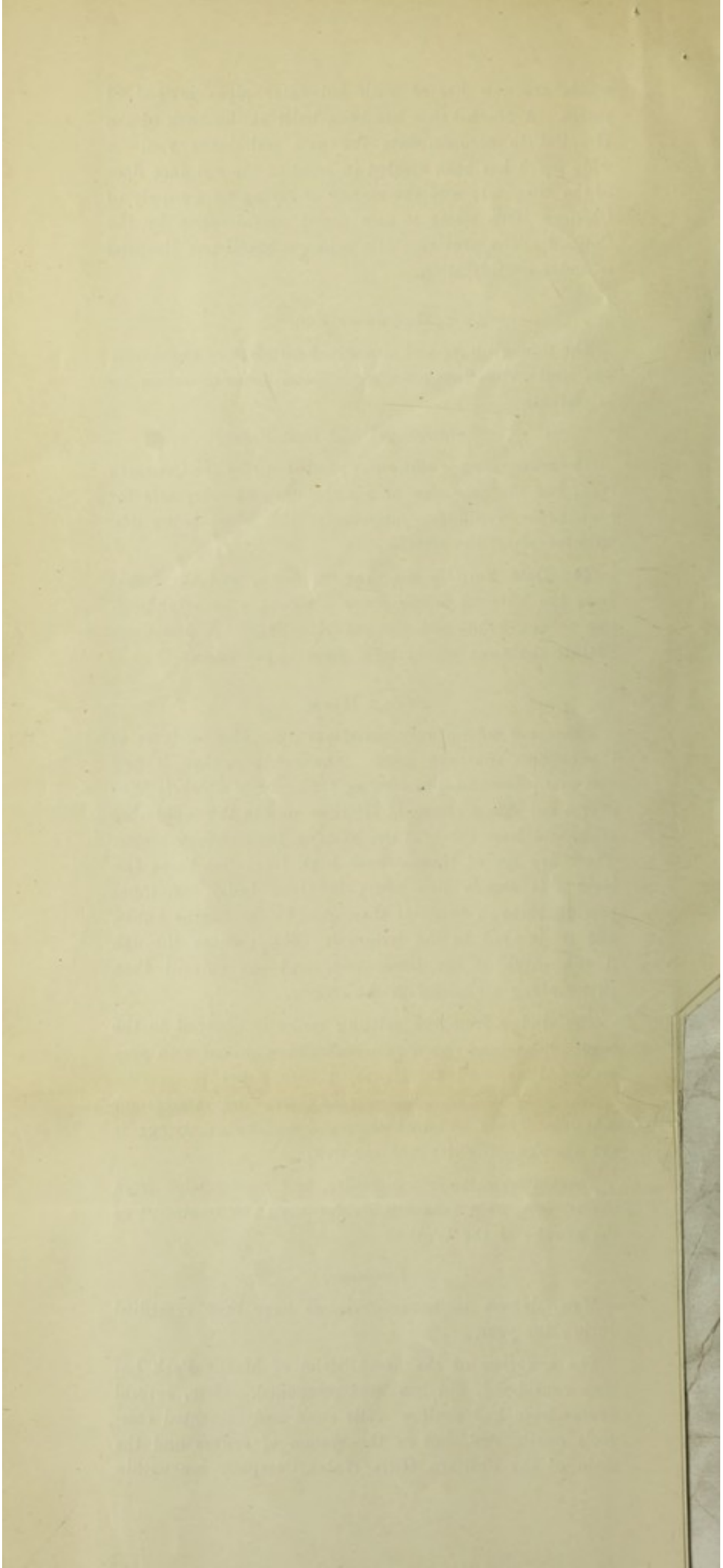
The sludge from the settling tanks is pumped to the engine house and raised to a tank above, mixed with grey ground lime, and then pressed into cakes in presses. After being broken up it is taken away by farmers for manure. Three hundred thousand gallons of sewage is the average daily dry-weather flow.

The storm water is a difficulty, and its diversion from the sewers would considerably facilitate the treatment of the sewage at the Works.

Drainage.

Many defects in house drainage have been remedied during the year.

The sewering of the new district of Manor Park has been considered, but has been postponed. Here, several houses have had shallow wells sunk and cemented cesspools constructed, but as the system of sewers and the main of the Chiltern Hills Water Company are within



easy distance, it seems a retrograde step to allow these to be made. The provision of sewers and water should precede the erection of new houses.

Many houses in the district are without automatic flushing tanks to the closets, the flushing having to be done by hand. New closets are required to have flushing tanks. If this regulation was made retrospective it would be a great improvement.

Water Supply of the District.

An abundant supply of pure water is provided by the Chiltern Hills Spring Water Company, with a constant service. It is obtained from a well 240 feet deep with a boring 260 feet deeper into the chalk at Dancer's End, Tring. The temporary hardness is removed by Clarke's process with depository reservoirs.

Lodging Houses.

There are three licensed houses in the town; they are kept clean and in good order.

Slaughter Houses.

These are scattered about in the town, and many are old buildings converted from other uses. They are kept lime-washed, and as clean as their construction allows. I have inspected all these houses.

Knacker's Yard.

These premises have had a screen erected, under the Council's order .

Factory and Workshops Act, 1901.

Bakehouses.—These are on the whole satisfactory, and kept clean. Two underground bakehouses are in use. All have been inspected by me.

Workshops and workplaces have been visited by the Inspector and myself, and generally found clean and conducted satisfactorily. Ventilation and heating, with one or two exceptions, are sufficient.

There are 89 workshops on the register, and 18 factories. A detailed table of inspections and defects is appended.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

T. G. PARROTT, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.