ANNUAL REPORT for 1900 of the MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH

to the

BARTON REGIS RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

January, 1900.

Gentlemen,

Having, in my last Annual Report given you the Acreage, Population and Rateable Value of each Parish in my Sanitary District, I shall not repeat these particulars, which as regards populations will probably be much altered when the period arrives for taking a new census.

I will therefore take each parish in its Alphabetical order noticing its Sanitary condition under the headings of, Water Supply, Housing of the Working Classes, and increase, or otherwise, of house accomodation, Drainage, and Notification of Infectious diseases.

I may notice here that since May, 1898 Byelaws have been in force for the whole of the rural district of Barton Regis, and that since that date before any one can commence building a dwelling house he must deposit with the Clerk, or Surveyor to the Council detailed Plans of such house shewing, (amongst other things) the dimensions and situation of every earth closet, water closet, privy, ashpit, cesspool, and well with the proposed water supply, and drainage, and the proposed system of ventilating such drains, and until these have been approved by the Council as according with these Byelaws, the building cannot proceed.

FILTON. Which was formerly a quiet agricultural village with a small stationary population is now in consequence of the extension of the boundaries of Bristol and the making of the new Railway rapidly developing into a residential suburb during the year 12 houses have been built, and Plans deposited for 62 more, so that we may soon expect a considerable increase in population, and rateable value.

Water Supply. The Bristol Water Company bring their Mains to Filton, and there is no lack of pure water, formerly the want of water was very much felt and storage tanks had to be resorted to, the remains of which may still be seen attached to some of the houses, the supply of pure water is the more needful, as Filton consists mostly of grassland and supplies Bristol largely with milk.

Housing of the Working Classes. Just at present during the building of thenew Railway there is a heavy pressure upon the house accommodation but we have had no special complaints and no cases of serious overcrowding have come to my knowledge, as soon as some of the houses in course of construction are fit for use the pressure will be relieved.

Drainage. There is no regular system of drainage in the parish, and the new houses have to drain into sesspits, I have not had occasion to complain of any insanitary fault.

Notifications. Three notifications reached me from Filton during the year, one of Diphtheria, and two of Erysipelas.

Henbury. has not so far been affected by the extension of the boundaries of Bristol, and is too far from the line of the new Railway to be influenced by it, consequently we find that no new house has been erected though plans for 4 have been deposited.

Water supply. The Bristol Water Company comes through the village, and there should not therefore be any difficulty about water, but unfortunately some of the outlying hamlets have cause to complain, to wit, Lawrence Weston, and Brentry.

Housing of the Working Classes Though there are still some houses which need improvement I have not, as in former years, had occasion to report any house structurally defective, or seriously out of repair.

Drainage. I may say the same of the drainage no complaint has been made to me. But an outbreak of Fever took place in one of the large houses in Henbury, which at the moment seemed to point to something radically wrong with the drainage, 3 of the servants developed Typhoid Fever almost at the same time. We carefully inspected the premises which had recently been drained after the most modern and approved system, and found everything in perfect order, the water was from the Bristol Company, and the milk used above suspicion, but we found a grease trap connected with the drain from the Scullery filled with accumulated filth, which was not only putrescent but alive with worms, and other organisms and this appeared to have induced the fever.

Notifications. 9 Notifications have reached me in the year - 2 of Erysipelas - 4 of Scarlet Fever, and 3 of Typhoid Fever.

A small outbreak of Scarlet Fever occurred at Henbury and Westbury towards the end of the year, the origin of which did not appear, it commenced in a Farm House where 3 children were attacked, Thence it spread to another Farm.

house when three more were victims and lastly to a third Farm house when only one child suffered, but the connection between the cases was evident, the children of the second family met the children of the first family at a small Dame's school, which both attended before the nature of the complaint was recognised, and the children of the second family paid a visit to the third family also not knowing they were suffering from an infectious disease. The disease in each case was very light, the chief importance attaching to the outbreak was that each farm supplied Butter and Milk to the public, the butter was sold to a retailer in our own District, the Milk being conveyed to Bristol.

I put all parties under stringent orders as to their connection with the Butter and Milk, warned the retailer of the Butter, and the Medical Officer of Health of Bristol of the existence of the disease, and so put an end to the outbreak.

Shirehampton. including Avonmouth is one of the parishes where building is extending largely. 37 houses have been completed and plans have been passed for 19 more.

The Village has now become an increasing workman's suburb.

Water supply. Shirehampton is well supplied by the Bristol Water Company, and it is the individual's fault if good water is anywhere not abundant.

Housing of the Working Classes. Many of the old houses are badly built and dilapidated, but only one has come under my distinct censure, A house at Lower Shirehampton which I reported to you as overcrowded and from structural defects unfit for human habitation.

Drainage. The village has a Sewerage system of its own, which is now working well, the Tank at Lower Shirehampton has given us no more trouble.

Cemetery. The new Cemetery which I inspected and reported on in the early part of 1897 is now in regular use, and the water has not proved a difficulty. More burying accomodation is badly required on this side of Bristol the only public cemetery is Arno's Vale in Somersetshire, and to get there the public are obliged to pass through the heart of the City.

Notifications. 19 Notifications have reached me from Shirehampton, including Avonmouth. 7 of Erysipelas, and 11 of Scarlet Fever but there is nothing worthy of remark about any of them.

Stoke Gifford. is the only parish in the District in which no house has been built, and no Plans deposited with your Surveyor during the year, its time has not yet come - before long building must take place and that rapidly for the number of men employed in Stoke now is vastly in excess of what was the case three years ago, and the pressure upon the house accomodation is consequently very great.

Water Supply. The water supply is still primitive, the West Gloucester Company's pipes run to Stoke House at the Southern extremity of the parish, and also to the new brickworks connected with the railway, but have not yet been brought into the village, or to benefit any of the ordinary dwelling houses.

Housing of the Working Classes. As I notice above the demand for labor has very much increased, and the number of houses has stood still, consequently the pressure upon these existing houses has been very heavy, a few temporary Huts have been erected; but not at all equal to the number of Men employed, and I am carefully watching that no serious overcrowding takes place, I am glad to say that hitherto none has come to my knowledge, and I have not had occasion to find fault with the condition of any of the houses.

Drainage. The drainage of Stoke has always been primitive, but I am glad to say sufficient for the population, I have had no complaints made to me, and have had no occasion to make any.

Notifications. Stoke Gifford bears the palm for not having yielded any notification of any infectious disease.during the year.

Westbury-on-Trym. is the most important parish in the Union, and here building is making most rapid progress, during the year 75 houses have been completed, and plans deposited and passed for 70 more, which are now in progress. Westbury includes Stoke Bishop and Sneyd Park, both wealthy residential localities.

Water Supply. The Bristol Water Company's Mains run through the district and afford ample opportunity of securing a good supply of pure water; nevertheless from time to time it comes toorr notice that persons are using well water unfit for consumption, and our attention is generally drawn to the fact from the occurrence of illness, upon 2 occasions during the year I have had drinking water analysed and been obliged to report it unfit for use, in both instances the presence of Typhoid Fever directed my attention to it.

Housing of the Working Classes.

The nest of cottages called Chapel Yard has again and again been before you, I reported them in the early part of the year as unfit for human habitation by reason of their dilapidated condition, in consequence of your action, some improvement has been made just enough to raise them above the level of condemnation, but still they are as I said in my Quarterly report for July, "a "disgrace to the village"

Drainage.

In my last annual report I called attention to the necessity existing of a suitable scheme for the disposal of Westbury Sewage other than on to the Canford Farm which had become little better than a public nuisance injurious to the health of the village, several plans had been proposed none of which had satisfied the requirements of the Local Government Board, and at the time of drawing up my report the matter was still "sub judice". In a letter dated March 1898 the L.G.Board had declined to sanction the conveyance of crude sewage into the river Avon at all, and required the sewage to be chemically treated and purified of its solids, the clarified effluent being discharged into the river only on the ebb tide, not later than one hour and a half before low water. The L.G.Board further required that precipitation tanks, and storage tanks of capacity sufficient to contain the sewage during the time it was not allowed to pass into the river should be provided. Plans embodying these viers were submitted in August 1898, and finally approved by the L.G.Board, and since then the work has been in active progress.

The Sewer commences near the "White Lion" in a 12 inch pipe joining the existing Sewer in Trym Road thence it passes along "High Street" to the Green in an 18 inch pipe, it is here joined by many branches and becomes the Main Sewer with a 24 inch pipe, passing down Canford Lane through Canford and Redhouse Farms it reaches Coombe Lane, whence it crosses the fields to Stoke Road and running under Sea Mills Lane arrives at the disposal works, where it is joined by the existing Stoke Bishop Sewer.

The disposal Works situated in Sea Mills Wood consist of a gauging chamber, a grit chamber, a mixing house (for adding chemicals) and 3 Precipitation Tanks, with Aetators, and Tidal Storage tank. from which the clarified effluent is discharged at suitable states of the tide into the river. This consitutes a very complete system of Sewage Disposal, and when finished will be a great benefit to this rapidly increasing village.

The Local Government Board very wisely requires that the land of Canford Farm which has been used for filtering sewage shall not, for 3 years from the time of its ceasing to be so used, be sold for building sites, but shall be again deep drained, the surface thoroughly broken up, ploughed and cropped.

tifica-tions. 22 Notifications have been received from Westbury during the year, 1 of Diphtheria, 1 of Membran ous Croup, 2 of Erysipelas, 13 of Scarlatina, and 5 of Typhoid Fever.

Intercourse has been almost revolutionised by the railway works passing through its midst though its character has not much altered, it now joins the boundaries of Bristol for a considerable distance, and supplies much labor to the City, a number of men and boys work habitually in the Stone Quarries of Stapleton and Fishponds, and others are employed further in the town.

ater upply. The West Gloucester Water Company runs its Main through the village, and no one need want pure water; as a matter of fact there are very few houses in the parish not supplied by the Company for previously the water supply was not good, the wells shallow, the supply uncertain, and liable to be contaminated by sewage in consequence of the fissures in the pennant rock.

ousing of the orking lasses. Building does not go on rapidly, 3 houses only have been completed in the year, and Plans for 8 more have been deposited and passed, a number of temporary huts were erected for the navvies when the railway first commenced and these afford accommodation for a considerable number, but the demand exceeds the supply, and the existing houses are very full, we are upon the lookout for overcrowding, but have not so far been able to convict any.

Drainage. Complaint was made to me in August by the tenant of the Flock Mill, at Frenchay of the offensive condition of the river Frome, I visited, and examined it and found that in consequence of the dry weather leaves and scum had accumulated on the top of the water, and being drawn towards the Mill Wheel by the current had been decomposed, but I could find no evidence of Sewage contamination,

Grave complaint has been made from time to time by many residents on Winterbourne Down of the smell arising at times from the Mangotsfield Sewage Disposal Works, in the early part of the year I made a special visit, and Inspection of these works, and reported to your Council, in consequence of that report an appointment was made for a Committee of your Council with your Inspector, and myself to pay a visit to the works which we did and your Inspector

and I drew up a joint report shewing that the complaints were amply justified, the result was that for a time matters were much improved and I heard no complaints, but during the last few months the matter has again and again been brought to my notice, and I have been appealed to for a remedy, I must beg your serious attention to the nuisance which ought to be abated.

Notifications. 16 notifications have come from Winterbourne, 1 of Diphtheria, 4 of Erysipelas, and 10 of Scarlatina, The latter seem a large number, but I have nothing to remark specially uponit except that at the close of the year a small outbreak took place on Winterbourne Hill in some Cottages, the tenants of which take in much tailoring work from Bristol, and I thought it necessary to warn the M.O.H. of Bristol of the danger of infection being imported in this way unless the material was disinfected on its return to Bristol.

Notifications. 69 cases in all of infectious diseases have been notified to me during the year - 3 of Diphtheria, 1 of Membranous Croup, 17 of Erysipelas, 38 of Scarlatina and 10 of Typhoid Fever.

The 3 cases of Diphtheria were single cases, one at Filton, one at Westbury, and one at Winterbourne.

The 17 cases of Erysipelas were distributed over the whole district with the exception of Stoke Gifford.

The 38 cases of Scarlatina were more or less in each parish, with the exception of Filton, and Stoke Gifford, and the 10 cases of Typhoid Fever were 2 at Avonmouth, 3 at Henbury, 5 at Westbury, and 1 at Horfield Barracks.

BARTON REGIS RURAL SANITARY DISTRICT.

Notifications received during the year 1899.

Locality.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Erysipelas.	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric or Typhoid	---	Total
Avonmouth			1	2	1		4
Filton.	1		2				3
Henbury			2	4	3		9
Shirehampton			6	9			15
Stoke Gifford.							0
Westbury.	1	1	2	13	5		22
Winterbourne	1		4	10			15
Horfield Barracks.					1		1
	3	1	17	38	10	Total	69

Typhoid Fever.

10 cases of Typhoid Fever have been notified to me from the District during the year, this is a larger number than usual, and as most of them occurred in adjoining localities they attracted considerable attention, in 1896 3 cases were notified, In 1897 5 cases, and in 1898 2 cases, which give an average of 4.1 per annum. Typhoid is one of the opprobiumsof Sanitary Authorities depending not so much on infection communicated through the air from one to another as upon a Micro-organism contained or generated in Septic Material and most often taken into the system with ordinary foods and drinks.

The transmission of Typhoid infection by means of air is doubted by many Authorities but in my opinion it is dangerous in the present state of our knowledge to exclude this means of propogation and it is much safer while carefully providing against its propogation through the mediums of solid and liquid ~~infected~~ ingesta, to prevent the possibility of its entering the system through the resperatory passages. The most common medium of infection is undoubtedly water, and water may convey infection when to the naked eye it appears pure, and chrystaline. Next to water milk seems the more common vehicle, milk appears to have the property of not only readily absorbing the germs but of providing a nidus in which they rapidly increase and multiply. Hence the necessity for the supply of pure water and for the careful guarding of the source of our milk supply.

The first case of Typhoid occurred at Horfield Barracks in January and proved fatal, owing to some misunderstanding it was not notified to me till after the death, no second case followed it there. In the same month a case occurred at Avonmouth, which also proved fatal, and here again it was an isolated case - in July 3 cases occurred at the same time in a large house at Henbury, we carefully inspected the premises which had recently been drained after the most modern and approved system, and found the drains in perfect working order, The water was from the Bristol Water Company, and the milk above suspicion, but we found "a grease trap" connected with the drain from the scullery filled with accumulated filth, which in the hot weather was not only putrescent, but was filled with worms and living organisms, this in my opinion had given rise to the fever.

The next case occurred at Stoke Bishop in August where upon analysis the water proved so bad as to be sufficient to account for it.

The next case was an imported case also in August, at Southmead a child arrived on a visit and developed Fever the next day.

The 3 last cases occurred in September in Westbury Village, In the Nest Company's water was used and the Milk always boiled, The only cause we could detect was an open gully immediately in front of the house conveying road water to the Trym from which bad smells had arisen during the protracted ~~bad~~ hot weather the last two cases occurred in the same house in Trym Road and here the water proved upon analysis to be the cause, in addition to these cases notified to me in the regular course, I received private notice through the courtesy of the M.O.H.of Bristol that 3 cases had been admitted into the Bristol Infirmary from this district, the first from the same house at Stoke Bishop as the 6th notification where the water had proved to be the cause, the second a servant girl from the Butts who came back from her holiday and immediately sickened and the third a young man from Church Road, Westbury, who had been working away from home, and at his home Company's water was used, the milk always boiled and no unsanitary condition existed on the premises.

It is satisfactory to notice that these cases had no common origin, nor were they connected with each other except in those instances where more than one occurred in the same house. During a long period of drought such as we had last summer filth accumulates which in its dry state is innocuous, but upon the occurrence of rain becomes septic before it is finally washed away, and it is upon these occasions that Typhoid Fever makes its appearance, as soon as the autumn rains had washed away the septic accumulations of the summer we heard no more of the Fever.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births. The number of births registered is 364, males 176, Females 188.

The average of the last 3 years being 311.

Deaths. The number of deaths registered is 184, Males 84 Females 100, this is equal to a death rate of 11.5 per 1000 of the population, and comparing it with the number of births shows an increase of population of 180 per annum.

The average number of deaths of the last 3 years is 157.

Deaths of Infants under one year. The death of infants under one year number 49, the average of the last 3 years being 47 - 49 deaths is equal to a rate of 134.6 per 1000 registered births - but in looking over the causes of death we find that disease has not played an active part, but what we may call the " accidents of birth"- immaturity - Debility - unexpanded lungs - Convulsions, and so forth have accounted for a very large proportion of the deaths.

Deaths from Old Age. The deaths from Old Age (over 75) number 45 - the average of the preceeding 8 years being 26, this is an extraordinary excess above the average which I can only account for by supposing that the two preceeding mild winters preserved a large number of old persons to whom the excessive heat of last summer proved fatal. 45 deaths is equal to a rate of 3.4 per 1000 of the population, which is really a just source of pride to sanitarians for old age is not a disease or accident but a natural termination of life.

Institutions. Two deaths are registered in the institutions, one in the Village Hospital from Heart disease, and one in the Norfield Barracks from Typhoid Fever.

Zymotics. The deaths from Zymotics are 5, equal to a rate of 0.3 per 1000 of the population, one from Membranous Croup, 2 from Measles and 2 from Typhoid Fever. 8 deaths from diarrhœa or Dysentery are not included for the term covers such a variety of Infantile affections that no reliance can be placed on it for statistical purposes.

Influenza and Cancer. Three deaths are registered from Influenza and 6 from cancer, which are introduced into the returns at the request of the Coun ty Council.

I append Statistical Returns on the usual Local Government Forms.

And am Gentleman,

Your obedient Servant.

EDWARD CROSSMAN.