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# REPORT

ON THE

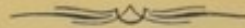
## HEALTH OF BILSTON

*FOR THE YEAR 1897,*

BY

T. RIDLEY BAILEY, M.D., EDIN.,

**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.**



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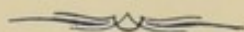
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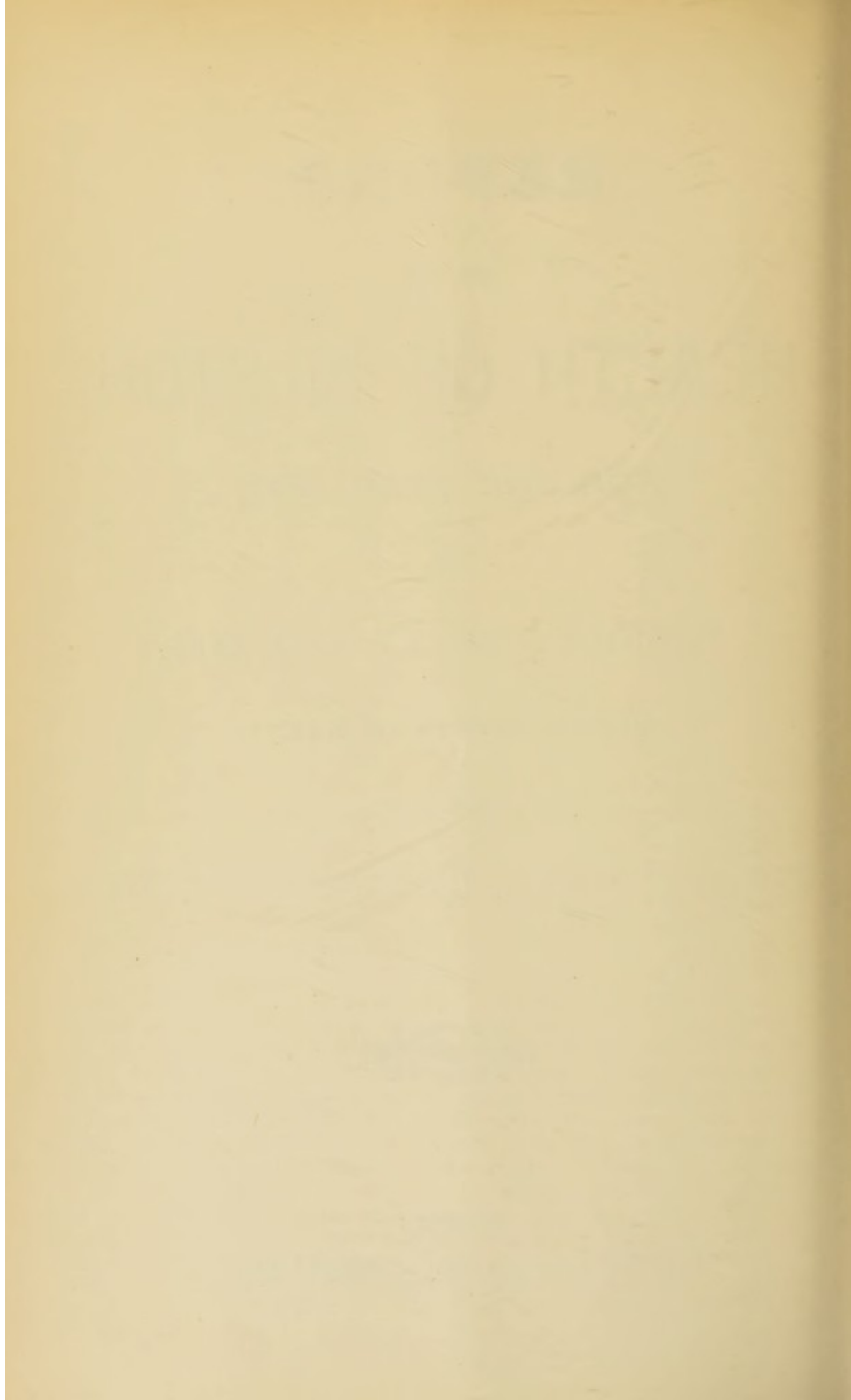


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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE URBAN  
DISTRICT COUNCIL OF BILSTON.

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Gentlemen,

*I beg to present you with the following Report on the Health of the town for the year ending December 31st, 1897, being my THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.*

## PREVENTION OF DISEASE.

**Scarlet Fever.**—During the year 112 cases of Scarlet Fever in 77 houses were notified as compared with 118 in the previous year; 48 in the year 1895; 94 in the year 1894, and 235 in 1893. Of these 8 ended fatally, 7 being in children under 5 years of age.

The disease, which had been present in the town throughout the whole of the preceding year, manifested itself in every month of the year, except June, but the cases were more numerous in the last quarter. 6 only were notified in January, 8 in February, 5 in March, 3 in April, 1 in May, 2 in July, 9 in August, 10 in September, 27 in October, 23 in November and 18 in December.

The difficulties in dealing with this and other infectious diseases have frequently been described. Parents often will not isolate the children nor keep their neighbours out of the house. They sometimes endeavour to suppress the existence of such cases and do not call in a medical man. When such are discovered they plead ignorance of the nature of the complaint! In one instance a Doctor was called in to attend a child who had suffered an injury, only to discover four other children with Scarlet Fever, one of whom was actually "peeling"! It is easy to understand therefore how the disease is almost permanent in the district.

**Typhoid Fever.**—Only 9 cases of Typhoid Fever were notified during the year as compared with 31 in the previous year and 30 in the year 1895. Enquiry was in each instance made immediately on the receipt of the notification, and sanitary defects remedied and disinfectants supplied.

The extensive epidemics of Typhoid Fever in different parts of the country during the past year have called special attention to the causes of this disease, more particularly perhaps in connection with public water supplies. Pollution of a town water can occur in a variety of ways: in the gathering grounds, in the course of its distribution, as well as after its entrance into dwellings. A very remarkable instance of the possible means by which Typhoid Fever can be spread has lately been placed on record. The excreta of a single Typhoid Fever case were thrown out upon the snow of a frozen hillside, at the base of which ran a small stream from which the water supply of a neighbouring town was ultimately drawn. Several weeks elapsed, during which the dejecta were hard frozen, before the March thaws permitted the melting snow to wash them into the stream below; but during this interval the Typhoid germs had retained their vitality and full complement of virulence and were the cause of a disastrous epidemic



in the said town. That freezing does not destroy the bacillus of Typhoid has long been known for ice and iced creams have served as the media for infection; and there can be no reasonable doubt that the virus may occasionally be conveyed through the air.

We are extremely fortunate here in having recently acquired a new and excellent Water Supply, and too much care cannot be exercised in preventing the least contamination. This should be borne in mind in reference to the proposed erection of workmen's cottages at the Water Works, and every precaution taken to avoid the possible entrance of faecal matters. It should not be forgotten, too, that an infectious disease, like Typhoid, might occur among the families of the workmen living in these cottages with results disastrous to the community using the water.

**Measles.**—In June some cases of Measles appeared, and in the month of July, 2 deaths from this disease were registered. In August a large number suffered, particularly in the Ettingshall district, and on my recommendation the Ettingshall Wesleyan Schools were closed for three weeks from August 20th. The disease continued to spread in other parts of the town and as a result of information conveyed to me by the various Day School Managers, together with particulars of the causes of absence, I recommended, further, the closure of the following Schools on the dates given, viz: the Holy Trinity Catholic Schools on December 7th, the Primitive Methodist Schools on Dec. 10th, and St. Leonard's, St. Edward's, and St. Mary's Schools on the 14th. All were closed up to the Christmas holidays, and a recommendation was also sent to the Committees of the Sunday Schools meeting in the same buildings to close them for the same period.

In all 11 deaths were ascribed to this disease, all but 1 being in children under 5 years of age, viz: 2 in July, 5 in November and 4 in December. It will be understood from this mortality that, though the cases, were many the type of the complaint was not severe.

**Diphtheria and Membranous Croup.**—Diphtheria is a Disease that has largely increased in towns in recent years, though only 4 cases have been notified here during the year. Formerly it was chiefly a disease of rural districts and its general increase has been investigated by experts with the result more of upsetting some old views as erroneous than of greatly extending our knowledge of its etiology, &c. It is however, now established: that Diphtheria may be so mild as practically to present nothing to draw attention to it; that the germs sometimes linger in the throat and nasal passages long after all symptoms have disappeared; that they may even be present in the throat of persons who have never had any symptoms noticed; and further that the disease has apparently very little to do with ordinary insanitary conditions as it has been severely epidemic in several towns where the sanitary arrangements are much above the average.

Two cases of Membranous Croup, both fatal, were also notified. By many authorities now both diseases are recognised as simply varieties of the same affection.



**Whooping Cough.**—6 deaths only have been due to Whooping Cough this year as compared with 17 in the previous year, viz: 1 in January, 1 in February, 1 in April, 1 in July, 1 in September and 1 in November, all being in very young children.

**Influenza.**—During the year Influenza has manifested itself on several occasions, but the type of disease has been mild and quite different to that of the first two epidemics. 9 deaths (2 in children under 5 years of age) have been directly attributed to it. 1 in January, 2 in February, 2 in March, 2 in May, 1 in June and 1 in July. It however undoubtedly adds to our mortality indirectly much more than this.

**Diarrhœa.**—The special feature in the Health Report of this year is the enormous fatality from Diarrhœa. No less than 69 deaths, all but 6 being in children under 5 years of age, were due to this disease, 31 occurring in the month of August alone. Before discussing the causes I will give the number of deaths, above and below 5 years of age, for the past ten years.

<i>Deaths from Diarrhœa.</i>	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888
Infants under 5 years .. ..	63	26	38	9	27	13	15	23	17	6
Above 5 years ... ..	6	3	4	1	8			2	1	1
	69	29	42	10	35	13	15	25	18	7

These figures readily show the excessive infantile diarrhœal deaths this year even for Bilston. Bad feeding, neglect, want of cleanliness, in the person and the surroundings of the children, are great causes of Diarrhœa in manufacturing districts like this and can only be dealt with by systematic teaching of the mothers and guardians. This, too, more by example and personal visitation to the houses of the poor than by nursing lectures. There are however other well recognised causes that have undoubtedly been in operation more or less over the whole country during the past summer.

It has been demonstrated that a certain soil temperature has an important bearing on this disease. The temperature of the atmosphere itself plays no part in the causation of an epidemic of Diarrhœa except its slight influence on the range of the subsoil temperature. Thus Baldwin Latham has shewn that at Croydon the average temperature of the air in the summer months of one year was 59·4 and for the same months of the succeeding year 61·1, yet the deaths in the former year from Diarrhœa were more than five times as many as in the latter. The reason, apparently, is due to the differences in the level of the subsoil water. The moist soil will not heat as quickly as if it were comparatively dry and therefore in a dry season a less atmospheric temperature is sufficient to bring the soil temperature to that point which is necessary for the development of the germ of the Disease. Therefore, the observation that Diarrhœa is more likely to be prevalent when the sub-soil water is low is probably correct, and is in harmony with the view that "whatever the air temperature may be, diarrhœa



does not appear in epidemic form until a definite temperature is reached at a given depth below the surface of the soil." As a rule diarrhoeal mortality sets in a few weeks after the hot period begins, and last year the heat was very great from the end of June until the beginning of August. Indeed at the commencement of the latter month it rose as high as  $84.5^{\circ}$  and it was in this month, as previously stated, that the great proportion of deaths occurred. It will be obvious how essential it is that saturation of the ground particularly near to human dwellings, from deficient or absent spouting, surface water, by leakages from ash-pits, cess-pools, &c., should be avoided.

Further, there are other conditions intimately associated with a high death-rate from Diarrhoea that perhaps concern a Health Authority even more. Density of population and buildings; want of cleanliness, light and ventilation; foul emanations from ash-pits, drains and sewers, accumulations of filth, manure, &c., have all a causal relation to Diarrhoea. For this, among other reasons, close overcrowded and dirty courts, and back-to-back houses, are evils that ought to be abolished.

The safe and proper disposal of dry refuse is becoming an urgent matter, and I would suggest the possibility of combining a dust-destroyer here with the production of power for Electric Lighting as in Shoreditch, St. Pancras and other places.

**Zymotic Diseases.**—The deaths attributed to the seven principal Zymotic Diseases were 99, and were equal to a death-rate of 4.2 per thousand. In the subjoined table the number of deaths from each of these diseases is given and it will be seen that if the excessive deaths from Diarrhoea are deducted, the result this year is rather below the average.

Deaths from	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	Aver. No. of deaths 1887-96.	Total deaths in 1897.
Scarlet Fever ...		2	3	1		6	9	8	1	10	4.0	8
Smallpox ...	1	3						1	1		.6	
Measles ...	42		5	12	9	13	15		51	7	15.4	11
Whooping Cough ...	11	5	14	3	6	23	7	12	3	17	10.1	6
Fever (Typhoid) ...	7	2	4		1	6	4	1	8	7	4.0	1
Diphtheria and Membranous Croup }	8	9	5		5	4	3	8	12	11	6.5	4
Diarrhoea ...	16	7	18	25	15	13	35	10	42	29	21.0	69
	85	28	49	41	36	65	73	40	118	81	61.6	99

**Vaccination.**—The returns of the Vaccination Officer are given for the seven years 1890-6 and for the first half of last year.

	Half year to June 30 1897	Year 1896	Year 1895	Year 1894	Year 1893	Year 1892	Year 1891	Year 1890
BIRTHS REGISTERED ...	488	864	955	926	939	929	946	891
Successfully Vaccinated .	319	613	670	731	734	736	755	744
Insusceptible ...	3	4	6	4	6	9	2	5
Died before Vaccination ...	69	118	133	114	145	117	119	93
Postponed ...	5	12	29	10	19	41	40	20
Removed from District ...	17	29	53	34	35	26	30	29
Refusals and not fit cases	75	88	64	33				
	488	864	955	926	939	929	946	891



## INFECTIOUS DISEASES HOSPITAL.

At the end of 1896 two patients suffering from Scarlet Fever remained in the Cottage Hospital, and 56 were admitted during this year, 21 being children under 5 years of age. Five children died, three from Scarlet Fever and two from Measles.

The introduction to the Hospital of the latter was most unfortunate. A boy who had been admitted on November 5th, with Scarlet Fever contracted Measles three weeks after and died on December 9th. Two other cases of Scarlet Fever also took the same complaint, and one, a girl of 4 years, admitted on November 18th, died of Measles on December 18th. When these facts were brought to my notice I at once declined to allow any more patients to be admitted into the Hospital until those already in were discharged cured and the building thoroughly fumigated.

I understand, the Medical Attendant at the Cottage Hospital ascribes this outbreak to the carelessness of the friends of patients in visiting, and the taking of clothes, presents, &c., to them. The latter should be absolutely prohibited, and every thing required in the shape of food, toys, &c. provided on the premises. It must be remembered that this "Hospital" consists of some old converted cottages and was only meant for use temporarily. It has now been in occupation, however, for some 15 or 16 years, and it would seem desirable that the Scheme of a Conjoint Hospital for combined districts suggested by the County Council, or some other equally or more suitable should be proceeded with. An Iron Structure was erected on the site some years ago for additional purposes, but even with that there are no conveniences to deal adequately with Infectious Disease, such as an isolation room for doubtful cases, proper day and sleeping rooms for nurses, means by which parents can satisfactorily and yet safely enquire about the condition of their children, &c. Further, the site is too small and too near the town to be suitable for a permanent Institution, and it seems to me not at all advisable to spend more money on the present buildings.

The provision of a proper disinfecting apparatus where clothes, bedding, &c., could be thoroughly disinfected is also necessary. No means for this exists, and I am convinced that our present system is worse than useless, for it tends to give a feeling of security which the methods employed, and they are the only ones possible here, do not justify.

The Mortuary provided a year or two ago has actually been removed to make room for a shed for the new Ambulance. One is very much needed and could be utilized in many ways, *e.g.* to remove the dead body in an infectious case from a small house where there is only one sleeping room. In one instance a child died of Scarlet Fever, and until after the funeral, there was no place in the home but the kitchen for the child's parents to sleep in. Had there been a Mortuary the body could have been at once removed to it to await burial.



## SANITARY WORK.

### Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act, 1888.

During the year 146 Certificates under this Act were received, as compared with 185 in the preceding year, viz: 112 of Scarlet Fever, 9 of Typhoid Fever, 4 of Diphtheria, 2 of Membranous Croup and 19 of Erysipelas

The following table shews the number of notifications of each disease received in each month of the year, and also the total for this and the six previous years.

	Scarlet Fever.	Typhoid Fever	Puerperal Fever.	Smallpox.	Diphtheria & Membranous Croup.	Erysipelas.	TOTALS.
Jan.	6	1				2	9
Feb.	8	1				4	13
Mar.	5	2			1	1	9
April	3					1	4
May	1				1		2
June						1	1
July	2						2
Aug.	9	1			1	2	13
Sep.	10	1				1	12
Oct.	27	1			1	3	32
Nov.	23				1	1	25
Dec.	18	2			1	3	24
1897	112	9			6	19	146
1896	118	31			23	13	185
1895	48	30		3	11	17	109
1894	94	14	2	32	9	19	170
1893	235	18	5	4	8	23	293
1892	168	36	1		5	34	244
1891	63	13	2		2	12	92

**Unhealthy Dwellings, Courts, &c.**—One of the great difficulties—perhaps the greatest—in the Public Health Administration of the town is connected with the dwellings of the poor. That many of them are small, ill-ventilated, and dirty, packed together in close Courts and Narrow Streets, is well known and that these conditions ought to be abolished is generally admitted. At the same time it cannot be denied that, it would be almost ruinous, in a financial sense, to insist upon too high a standard being maintained. Rents are too low to provide all that is desirable, and this, unfortunately, applies most to those cases where most accommodation is required, the poor with very large families. Many of the houses, too, are without damp proof courses and proper spouting, and are therefore damp and unhealthy, rendering the inmates particularly liable to Rheumatic and Pulmonary Diseases.



Every endeavour should be made to keep the Courts clean and free from accumulations of filth, stagnant water, &c. For this purpose it is desirable that they should be well-paved, and have a fairly even surface. Ash-pits, too, should be reduced in size so as to necessitate frequent emptying, be roofed over, and made water-tight.

Contamination of the sub-soil of dwellings, and the erection of houses on "made soils" should be avoided. The sub-soil of dwellings erected on disused refuse tips is fouled by organic matter of both animal and vegetable origin and by the gaseous products of its decomposition. In the Model Bye-laws of the Local Government Board it is directed that no such site should be built on until all filth is removed by excavations or otherwise. Even then there should always be added a layer of good Portland Cement Concrete over the site and proper damp proof courses. Sub-soil around a dwelling and—by the diffusion of gases—under the dwelling may be contaminated by leakage from drains, privies, cess-pools, &c., near the house or by soakage from unpaved back-yards, on which filth falls or is thrown and these should all be prevented.

The provision of decent tenements, on open sites, for the very poorest classes would be a great boon. The wretched dwellings now in use are hot-beds of disease and a menace therefore to the whole community.

**Workshops and Bakehouses.**—A list of these is kept and they have been periodically visited. Generally they have been found in a fairly satisfactory condition, a request for any necessary work to be done being usually sufficient. All new Workshops must be notified to H.M. Inspector of Factories for the district and in two cases this had been overlooked.

**Dairies, Milkshops, &c.**—These also have been regularly inspected, and the Dairies have, as a rule, been found clean. There is still, however, room for improvement in most of the Cowsheds, a prevailing idea, apparently, being that Cows may suffer from a free supply of fresh air, and that the cubic space they require is of small moment! proper regulations should be enforced to govern these, and a minimum of cubic space, which ought to be 800 cubic feet, fixed. The paving, draining, and cleaning of cowsheds are of the highest importance too.

The list of Slaughter-houses has been revised and numbers 43. 14 of these however are not now in use and the others are, by systematic inspection, kept clean and satisfactory.

The Common Lodging Houses are also regularly visited and have been found in a clean condition. In Stafford and some other towns the inspection of these is given to the Sanitary Inspector instead of to the Police, and this seems a very desirable arrangement.



**Unwholesome Food.**—The Meat offered for Sale in the Market has been regularly inspected, and although there is frequently some of poor quality it is not such as can be condemned. On February 1st, one fore-quarter and eleven pieces of Beef, weighing in all 101 lbs. were seized and condemned, the vendor prosecuted, and a fine of £5 and costs inflicted.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

**Births.**—947 children, 502 males and 445 females, were born in the year, being an increase of 80 over the previous year and giving a birth-rate of 40·2 per thousand of the population. The following gives the number of births, male and female, in each quarter of the last three years.

	1897			1896			1895		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
1st Quarter ...	118	125	243	100	86	186	128	146	274
2nd Quarter ...	122	107	229	124	112	236	112	111	223
3rd Quarter ...	123	102	225	111	104	215	125	104	229
4th Quarter ...	139	111	250	124	106	230	120	111	231
	502	445	947	459	408	867	485	472	957

Table shewing the number of Births from 1887 to 1897.

Year	Males	Females	Total
1887	420	418	838
1888	449	428	877
1889	437	458	895
1890	434	461	895
1891	469	481	950
1892	484	439	923
1893	466	449	915
1894	474	445	919
1895	485	472	957
1896	459	408	867
Yearly Average			
1887-96	457·7	445·9	903·6
1897	502	445	947

It will be useful to add, for purposes of comparison, the mean birth-rate of the whole country and of the Urban and Rural Districts respectively, for the eight years 1889-96, taken from Dr. Reid's Annual Report for 1896, and the corresponding rates for England and Wales and the large towns in England, as taken from the returns of the Registrar General.

Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.													
<i>Districts.</i>					1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	
Stafford- shire.	{	Combined Urban and Rural				33·5	32·7	35·7	35·5	35·7	34·3	35·1	34·2
		Urban	...	...	...	35·2	34·5	37·3	36·3	36·6	35·4	36·2	35·4
		Rural	..	...	...	29·5	28·6	31·6	32·2	33·3	31·6	32·0	31·2
England and Wales ... ..					31·1	30·2	31·4	30·5	30·8	29·6	30·3	29·7	
Large Towns in England ... ..					30·9	30·4	32·5	21·8	31·8	30·6	31·2	31·2	
Bilston ... ..					38·08	38·08	40·4	39·2	38·9	39·1	40·7	37·02	



**Deaths.**—During the year 582 deaths from all causes were registered, 308 males and 274 females, being an increase of 122 on the previous year, a decrease of 52 as compared with 1895, and giving a death-rate of 24·7 per thousand. The average yearly number of deaths for the previous five years was 522, and for the decade 1887-96, 520, so that there is a considerable excess this year over the usual rate.

### TABLE OF DEATHS

Shewing the number under 1 year, under 5 years, under 15 years, under 65 years, and above 65 years.

	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891
Children under 1 year of age ..	214	157	215	161	85	203	200
Above 1 year and under 5 years	90	93	163	61	80	201	89
"    5 years    "    15    "	13	18	22	21	26	29	22
"    15    "    "    25    "	21	17	15	16	22	11	19
"    25    "    "    65    "	154	112	96	99	91	90	104
65 years and upwards ..	90	63	123	95	130	95	122
	582	460	634	453	534	529	556

Table of the number of Deaths in each quarter of 1897, classified according to age and sex.

1897	Males.	Females	Total at all Ages	Under 1 year	1 and Under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards
1st Quarter ..	84	73	157	55	22	1	6	42	31
2nd Quarter ..	65	52	117	29	13	2	6	49	18
3rd Quarter ...	77	79	156	67	28	7	3	31	20
4th Quarter ...	82	70	152	63	27	3	6	32	21
	308	274	582	214	90	13	21	154	90

Table of Deaths during the past decade, classified according to age and sex

Years.	Males	Females	Total at all Ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards
1888	218	234	452	141	66	24	19	106	96
1889	267	252	519	183	98	25	21	83	109
1890	260	230	490	163	82	23	17	110	95
1891	282	274	556	200	89	22	19	104	122
1892	286	243	529	203	101	29	11	90	95
1893	277	257	534	185	80	26	22	91	130
1894	239	214	453	161	61	21	16	99	95
1895	327	307	634	215	163	22	15	96	123
1896	244	216	460	157	63	18	17	112	63
1897	308	274	582	214	90	13	21	154	90

(In these tables for all years previous to 1896 the figures given are "under 60 years" and "above 60 years" instead of "65 years")

MORTALITY from the Subjoined Causes, for the Four Quarters of 1897,  
distinguishing Deaths of Children under 5 Years of Age.

1897	AGE.	Con'd. Fevers.										TOTAL.														
		Smallpox.	Measles.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Croup (not "spasmodic.")	Whooping Cough.	Typhus.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Other or Doubtful.	Puerperal Fever.		Cholera.	Erysipelas.	Diarrhoea and Dysentery.	Diseases of Alimentary Organs.	Rheumatic Fever.	Heart Disease.	Phthisis.	Diseases of Respiratory Organs.	Influenza.	Pyæmia.	Ague.	Inquests.	Uncertified.	All Other Diseases.
1st QUARTER	Under 5	..				1	2	...	...	...			4	5	...	1	7	3	12	2			1	2	45	77
	5 upwds.					...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	6	25	3	...	...	2	2	32	80
2nd QUARTER	Under 5	..				...	1	...	...	...			4	3	...	...	5	...	11		...	...	3	2	18	42
	5 upwds.				1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	5	23	3	...	...	6	...	28	75
3rd QUARTER	Under 5		2	1	1		2	...	...	...			50	2	...	...		3	8				1		25	95
	5 upwds.			1		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	2	...	...	6	4	13	1	...	...	4	1	25	61
4th QUARTER	Under 5		8	6		1	1					1	5	2	...	...		5	17				4	8	32	96
	5 upwds.	1				...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	1	20		...	...	7	...	22	62



TABLE OF DEATHS classified according to Diseases, DISTINGUISHING DEATHS OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE, FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS.

YEARS.	AGE.	Smallpox.	Measles.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Croup (not "spasmodic")	Whooping Cough.	Typhus.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Other or Doubtful.	Diarrhoea and Dysentery.	Cholera.	Rheumatic Fever.	Erysipelas.	Pyæmia.	Puerperal Fever.	Ague.	Pthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.	Inquests.	Uncertified.	Influenza.	All Other Diseases.	Totals at Ages Stated.	Total at all Ages.	
1888	Under 5					7	5				6									47	2	3	5	139	207	452	
	5 upwds.	3		2		2		2			1		1						21	69	23	5	7	111	245		
1889	Under 5		5	3		3	14				17				1				1	60		3	13	161	281	519	
	5 upwds				1	1			4		1		1					23	49	11	7	17	122	238			
1890	Under 5		12	1		1	3				23								2	42		3	15	1	142	245	490
	5 upwds.					1					2							14	75	16	4	11	8	114	245		
1891	Under 5		8			4	6				15								4	55		6	18	2	171	289	556
	5 upwds.		1			1			1					1				29	79	10	15	2	3	125	267		
1892	Under 5		13	3		2	19				13								1	56		14	8	2	174	306	529
	5 upwds			3	1	1	4		6					1				14	54		8	25	2	3	102	224	
1893	Under 5		15	5		1	7		2		27								1	42	2	5	4	2	152	265	534
	5 upwds.			4		2			2		8						1	15	61	18	10	1	2	146	269		
1894	Under 5			6		6	12				9									35		12	6	1	135	222	453
	5 upwds	1		2	1	1			1		1		1				1	17	49	16	23	1	7	109	231		
1895	Under 5		14	6	1	11	3				38									51		9	4	4	210	378	684
	5 upwds.			5		1			8		4							19	64	12	18	1	9	115	256		
1896	Under 5		7	9	4	7	17		2		26			2					2	56		5	3		110	250	460
	5 upwds.			1					5		3		1		1			19	53	11	12	1	3	100	210		
1897	Under 5		10	7	1	2	6				63			1					11	48		9	12	2	132	304	582
	5 upwds.			1	1	1			1		6							16	81		25	19	3	7	116	278	



**Consumption.**—27 deaths were attributed to Consumption, 11 being in children under 5 years of age, as compared with 21 in 1896, 19 in 1895, 17 in 1894 and 16 in 1893.

**Diseases of the Respiratory System.**—129 deaths were registered as due to diseases of the respiratory organs as compared with 109 in the previous year, 48 being in children under 5 years of age. Of these 11 occurred in January, 11 in February, 15 in March, 12 in April, 12 in May, 10 in June, 11 in July, 6 in August, 4 in September, 5 in October, 12 in November and 20 in December.

**Inquests.**—Enquiries by the Coroner were held in 28 cases as against 17 in the previous year, 27 in the year 1895, 25 in 1894 and 15 in 1893.

**Uncertified Deaths.**—In 15 cases of death no Certificate was given by a Medical Practitioner, and no inquest held by the Coroner, 9 of these being in very young children. This is the largest number of uncertified deaths since the year 1891.

**Infant Mortality.**—The Infant Mortality this year is equal to a rate of 226 per thousand registered births as compared with 181 in the previous year, 224 in the year 1895, and the yearly mean of 198 for the decade 1887-96. The following table where the figures are given for the eight years 1889-96, together with comparative figures for the Urban Districts of Staffordshire and for the large towns in England, will shew at a glance how heavy the Infant Mortality is here.

	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	Mean Rate.
Bilston ...	204	182	210	219	202	175	224	181	199
Urban Districts in Staffordshire }	168	176	175	174	179	163	181	171	173
Large Towns in England ... }	161	171	167	163	181	152	182	167	168

The special cause of the great excess this year undoubtedly is the epidemic of Diarrhœa already alluded to. If the deaths due to this were deducted, the number, while still too high, would not be above what I have regretfully to confess seems to be the normal standard here.

In my report last year I pointed out, with regard to Child Insurance, that of the children who died 156 were insured and the number dying under 1 year of age was 157. This year the figures, which have again been kindly supplied to me by the Registrar, similarly approach one another very closely. Of the 304 children under five years of age who died during 1897, 204 were insured, and the number of infants who died before reaching the age of one year was 214.



**General Death-rate.**—It has already been shown that the number of deaths this year is 62 above the mean average of the past ten years, and this excess is nearly all accounted for by the increase in the infantile rate, particularly therefore by Diarrhoea. How this latter is influenced by various conditions, some beyond our control and some of a local character has already been discussed.

It cannot however, be too much emphasised that the chief factor in the sanitation of a town like this, and the one that requires constant attention, is the presence of *dirt* in some form or another, on the person, in the home or near the dwelling. Where there is accumulation of filth of any kind the air breathed is charged with poison and noxious gases that have a most deleterious influence on health, particularly in the case of children, the enfeebled and the aged. It is important therefore that the Streets should be kept in good condition, scavenging regularly attended to, drains and sewers frequently flushed, and the people taught in every possible way that cleanliness, personal and domestic, abundance of sunlight, fresh air and pure water, wholesome food and regular habits, are the essentials of good health and long life.

Appended are the tables required by the Local Government Board and the Staffordshire County Council, together with the Sanitary Inspector's Statement which gives a Summary of the work done during the year in his department.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

T. RIDLEY BAILEY, M.D., EDIN.,

Medical Officer of Health.

BILSTON, March 2nd, 1898.

**SUMMARY OF SANITARY WORK** done in the Inspector of Nuisances' Department during the year 1897, in the Urban Sanitary District of Bilston.

		Inspections and Observations made.	Formal Notices by Authority.	Nuisances Abated after Notice.
Dwelling Houses & Schools.	Foul Conditions	21		
	Structural Defects	37		
	Over-crowding abated by preliminary notice	2		
	Unfit for Habitation			
	Lodging-houses...	48		
	Dairies and Milkshops	55		
	Cowsheds all lime-washed twice	56		
	Bakehouses	38		
	Slaughter-houses, Register revised	116		
	Canal Boats, 5 infringements	57		
	Ashpits and Privies, 10114 cleaned, 23 ash-pits repaired, 12 ashpits erected, 91 privies repaired, 78 lime-washed, 23 privies re-built	10341		
	Deposits of Refuse and Manure, removed 18, pig-wash 5	23		
	Water Closets, 5 erected, 2 urinals re-built, 8 urinals cleansed	15	2	2
	Defective Traps	26		
	No Disconnection			
House Drainage	Other Faults, 34 drains obstructed, 15 surface drains repaired	49	1	1
	Water Supply good			
	Pigsties lime-washed	5		
	Animals improperly kept and moved	5		
	Offensive Trades			
	Smoke Nuisances	1		
	Other Nuisances, fowls in houses removed	3		
TOTALS		10898	3	3

78 preliminary notices have been served dealing with 158 nuisances.

	Nos.
Seizures of Unwholesome Food, one case of Bad Meat fined £5 and costs, 18	
Rabbits condemned	2
Samples of Food taken for Analysis	nil
" " Found Adulterated	nil
" of Water taken for Analysis	nil
" " Condemned as unfit for use	nil

**PRECAUTIONS AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASE.**

Lots of Infected Bedding Stoved or Destroyed	nil
Houses Disinfected after Infectious Disease	51
Schools ditto ditto	nil
Prosecutions for not Notifying Existence of Infectious Disease	nil
Convictions ditto ditto	nil
Prosecutions for Exposure of Infected Persons or Things	nil
Convictions ditto ditto	nil
Removed to the Infectious Hospital, 56 cases of Scarlet Fever during the year.	

Signed, HERBERT WALKER, A. San. I.

Date, February 28th, 1898.

Inspector of Nuisances.



### Urban Sanitary District of Bilston.

(A.) Deaths registered during the year 1897, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities; showing also the Population of such localities and the Births therein during the year.

TOTALS....	Popula- tion.		Registered Births.			Deaths from all Causes at Subjoined Ages.										Mortality from subjoined causes, distinguishing deaths of Children under 5 years of age.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																														
	Census, 1891. 23,453	Estimated to middle of 1897. 23,500	Males. 502	Females. 445	Total. 947	At all Ages.										Under 5 5 & upwards	Smallpox. 1	Scarlatina. 1	Diphtheria. 1	Membranous Croup. 2	Fevers.						Typhus. 1	Enteric or Typhoid. 1	Typhoid. 1	Continued 1	Relapsing 1	Puerperal. 1	Cholera. 1	Erysipelas. 1	Measles. 1	Whooping Cough. 1	Diarrhoea or Dysentery. 6	Rheumatic Fever. 1	Phthisis. 16	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy. 81	Heart Disease 25	Inquests. 19	All other Diseases. 126																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			
						Males. 308	Females. 274	Total. 582	Under 1 year. 214	1 year and under 5. 90	5 years and under 15. 13	15 years and under 25. 21	25 years and under 65. 154	65 years and upwards. 90																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																

### Urban Sanitary District of Bilston.

(B.) New Cases of Infectious Sickness coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health during the year 1897, enumerating the Number of Houses Infected, the Total Number of Deaths, also the Number of Cases Treated and the Deaths that occurred in Infectious Hospitals

		Smallpox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria	Membranous Croup	Typhus Fever	Enteric Fever.	Continued Fever.	Relapsing Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Cholera.	Erysipelas	Measles.	Whooping Cough.
Houses infected .. .. .			77	4	2		9					19		
Total cases reported among persons Belonging to District .. .. .			112	4	2		9					19		
Total deaths reported among persons belonging to District .. .. .	Under 5 .. .. .		7	1	2							1	10	6
	5 & upwds .. .. .		1	1			1						1	
Cases treated in Hospital among persons belonging to District .. .. .	Under 5 .. .. .		21											
	5 & upwds .. .. .		35											
Deaths occurring in Hospital among persons belonging to District .. .. .	Under 5 .. .. .		3											
	5 & upwds .. .. .												2	

Is "Notification of Infectious Diseases" Compulsory in the District?—*Yes.* Since when?—*February 1st, 1890.*

Is Measles included among the Diseases notified?—*No.*

Is Whooping Cough " " " " *No.*

Is an Isolation Hospital available for the District!—*Yes, temporary arrangement*

Area of District in Acres?—*1866.*

Signed, T. RIDLEY BAILEY, M.D., M.O.H.

