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Contributors

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BOROUGH OF BRIDPORT.

The Annual Report of Dr. Walter E. Manby, M.B., Medical Officer of Health, upon the health and sanitary state of the Borough in the year 1910.


I am presenting to you to-night my annual report upon the health and sanitary state of the Borough in the year 1910. The area of the district is 673 acres, the population was 5,970. The number of births was 93 as against 100 in 1909. The birth rate worked out at 15 per 1,000 of the population—the rate for England and Wales being 21.8, and for 136 small towns 23.7. The deaths numbered 98 as against 85 in 1909. The death rate was 16 per 1,000 living, that for England and Wales being 13.4, and for 136 small towns, 12.9. The average age at death was 52. The facts relating to the mortality are set forth in Table IV. I give here the incidence at the different periods of life, and a brief summary of the causes of death. The incidence is as follows:—

		in 1909.	
Under 1 year	8 as compared with 12
1 and under 5 year	3 " " 2
5 " 15 "	5 " " 3
15 " 25 "	5 " " 10
25 " 65 "	28 " " 23
65 and upwards	50 " " 35

The mortality is thus relatively highest in the first year of life and in the last phase. It is satisfactory to note the diminution in infantile mortality. Of the causes of death, there were due to cancer, 7; phthisis, 11; tubercular, 2; heart diseases, 11; pneumonia, 3; of the infantile mortality, prematurity marasmus, 5; measles, 2. The striking points that arise out of these statistics are the number of deaths due to tubercular diseases, cancer, and heart disease. I am glad to note an improvement as regards phthisis and allied affections. In 1909 there were 17 deaths attributable to that cause. As regards infantile mortality, the deaths cannot be traced to faulty feeding or to definite diseases but rather to inherent weakness at birth. The marked absence of maladies which usually make havoc of infant life, and also amongst children in the first five years of life, during my term of office, is a matter upon which I may congratulate you. I refer to such diseases as epidemic summer diarrhoea, bronchitis and broncho pneumonia, measles and its complications. It speaks well for our climate, our milk supply, and our hygienic conditions.

THE INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFICATION ACT.—Six cases of scarlet fever, and five of diphtheria were notified during the year. Three scarlatinal and all the diphtheretic cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital and there treated. As regards the scarlet fever, three cases arose almost simultaneously at a private day school. Every effort was made to trace the source of the infection, but this could not be definitely arrived at. The school, however, was promptly closed, and disinfected, and no further instance arose amongst the scholars in their homes.

UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH REGULATIONS (in regard to tuberculosis) 1908.—Two cases were notified, and two deaths occurred. The infected premises were disinfected and the bedding destroyed. In the early months of the year the following schools were closed for a period of four weeks, by order of the Medical Inspector of Schools, on account of an outbreak of measles and whooping cough:—Bridport Allington School, on February 15th; Bridport Church School, on March 8th; The General School (Infants' department), on March 12th.



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IN REGARD TO THE SUBJECT OF DISINFECTION.—Including the cases of notifiable phthisis, there were ten instances where the disinfection of infected premises was carried out. For the disinfection of bedding, clothing, &c., I think it is very desirable that the necessary plant for exposing these to superheated steam should be substituted for the system now in use. I hope to submit to you my views on this subject in the immediate future.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS.—Seventy-eight of these were made during the year, besides inspections of vessels at West Bay, and twelve notices were served altogether.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.—It cannot be maintained that the housing accommodation—in the past few years—has been sufficient. There are practically no uninhabited houses in the Borough, and for many who wished to reside in the town it has not been possible. On the other hand there have been instances of overcrowding. There is, in short, a pressing need for more houses, and I am glad to record that fifteen new ones are in course of erection at the instance of the Council, and with the approval of the Local Government Board. I hope this movement may prove to be the initial stage of a wider one in the future. It is only by improving the dwellings of the people and the conditions under which they live that we can hope to strike at the roots of such a problem as that of tuberculosis and consumption. In accordance with the instructions conveyed to me by the Local Government Board and embodied in the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, I am proposing to make an inspection, in conjunction with the Inspector of Nuisances of such house and premises as may seem to us to need inspection. The first area we propose for inspection is East Street (from King Street to East Bridge, South side), King Street East and West sides), Folly Mill Lane and Church Street. The object aimed at by this survey will be to condemn all tenements that are clearly unfit for human habitation and to cause amendments to be made in the condition of those which can be made habitable, in accordance with the act.

THE SCAVENGING AND FLUSHING of the district has been regularly carried out. Our system of drainage being a combined one, sewers of a wider capacity than would have otherwise sufficed have been necessary. As a result it is difficult by means of flushing by hydrant to secure efficient scouring of the upper surfaces of the sewer in dry seasons. Effete matter is liable to be deposited in that part. This is probably the explanation of the effluvia which is noticeable in some quarters in close weather. The full bore flush provided by automatic tank action would more effectually scour the sewers, and I am pleased to hear their installation is being considered by the Council.

THE SLAUGHTER-HOUSES, BAKEHOUSES, DAIRIES, AND COWSHEDS were severally inspected during the year. I found them to be well conducted—for the most part—and in good sanitary condition. In regard to a slaughter-house I received complaints on more than one occasion, and I visited the premises with the Sanitary Inspector. We found it was not being conducted in strict accordance with modern regulations, and a notice was served to abate the nuisance complained of. Pamphlets and leaflets containing instructions for ensuring a wholesome milk supply to the inhabitants of the Borough have been distributed to the owners of dairies and cowsheds, and to the householders and consumers of milk.

THE WATER SUPPLY.—There was no shortage during the year, and I received no complaints. The quarterly reports on samples sent for analysis were all satisfactory.

THE PORT OF BRIDPORT.—Nine vessels arrived from foreign ports, and 62 coastwise. The latter were regularly inspected by the Inspector of Nuisances and the former by myself.

(Signed),

WALTER E. MANBY,

Medical Officer of Health.

is based on the subject of Disinfection—Involving the case of notifiable
epidemic diseases, the institution of isolated premises, and the
the disinfection of bedding, clothing, &c. I think it is very desirable that the necessary
expanding views on the subject in the following manner.

SANITARY INSPECTION.—The necessity of this was underlined by the great number
of cases of Cholera, Typhoid, and other diseases which were reported.

History of the Working Classes.—It would be interesting to know the history
of the past few years, and how far the working classes have advanced in
hygiene. The progress of the working classes in the last few years has been
in the main, but there has been a great deal of improvement. There is a
for the past few years, and I am glad to say that the working classes are
improving in the general sense of the word, and that the sanitary
inspector is doing his duty.

The sanitary inspector is a very important officer, and his duties are
of the highest importance. He is responsible for the health of the
community, and for the prevention of disease. He is also responsible for
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