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CHARD  
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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**ANNUAL REPORT**

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

Year ending December 31st, 1905.

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CHARD :

1906.

YOUNG AND SON'S PRINTING WORKS, FORE STREET.

CHARD

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT

Medical Officer of Health

Year ending December 31st 1915

CHARD

Printed and Published by the Rural District Council



RURAL DISTRICT OF CHARD,  
IN THE  
**COUNTY OF SOMERSET.**

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Annual Report of the Medical  
Officer of Health.

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GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit for your consideration the Annual Report of the vital statistics and sanitary condition of your district for the year ending December 31st, 1905.

**Physical Features and General Characteristics of the District.**

The district is divided into four localities corresponding to the four registration sub-districts of the Chard Union, viz., Ilminster, Chard, Crewkerne, and Combe St. Nicholas. It includes within its confines but not its jurisdiction, the urban districts of Ilminster, Chard, and Crewkerne. The area in acres is 52,992. Its geology may be briefly described as a Greensand area overlain here and there by Chalk outliers and based on Lias Clays, which occupy the lower areas. The population at the Census taken in 1901 was 13,300, the estimated population is 12,965. The number of inhabited houses at Census of 1901 was 3079, the number of persons per house - 4.3. The district is an agricultural one, a mixture of arable and pasture. Dairy farming is a prominent feature and important from a public health point of view. There are several factories as described under "Factories and Workshops." Many of the women find employment in the glove, collar, and lace industries of the neighbouring towns.



## Vital Statistics.

Details of the vital statistics will be found in the several tables appended. A feature in this year's report is the addition of a table (Table v) of deaths, from stated causes in weeks and months, under one year of age.

### BIRTH, DEATH, INFANTILE MORTALITY, AND ZYMOTIC DEATH RATES.

In order to show the relative value of the different rates, I have arranged them for comparison with their averages of the past seven years, and with those of Rural England and Wales for 1905.

	Births, per 1000 living	Deaths, per 1000 living	Infant Deaths, per 1000 Births	Zymotic Deaths, per 1000 living
Chard Rural Districts ...	22·8	10·9	74·0	·3
Do. average of previous 7 years	22·3	14·1	101·4	·9
Rural England and Wales ...	26·3	14·9	113	1·09

I venture to suggest the above figures show the birth-rate to be satisfactory; the death, the zymotic death, and the infantile mortality rates to be decidedly low and therefore extremely satisfactory.

### CAUSES OF DEATH.

The deaths attributed to the different causes were in much the same proportion as in previous years. Excluding "all other causes" the majority of deaths were caused by diseases of the heart and respiratory organs. Cancer accounted for 7·9, and phthisis for 6·4 per cent. of all deaths. The zymotic deaths were as follows:—diphtheria, 1; enteric fever, 1; diarrhœa, 2. I presume that Table v was drawn up with a view to show the proportion of infant deaths caused by improper feeding—a prominent and avoidable cause of infant deaths in this country. The four deaths attributed to "diarrhœal" and "wasting" diseases might be placed in this category if there was any evidence to include other possible causes; the death which occurred under one week and attributed to "atrophy" cannot be included. With the exception of three, all infant deaths were subsequent to the first month, unfortunately one was the result of overlaying.

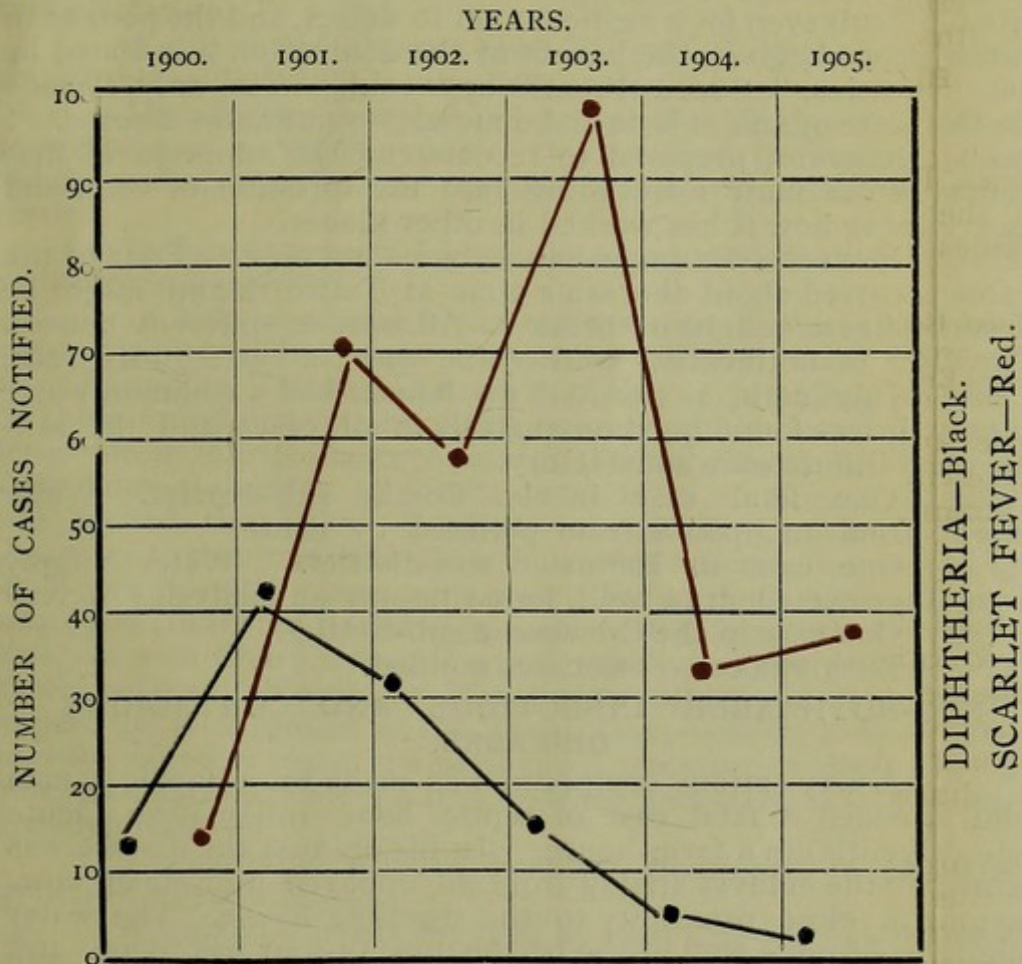
## Prevalence of Infectious and Contagious Diseases.

If it were not for scarlet fever, I could report the prevalence of infectious diseases to have been slight. Four more cases were notified than in 1904, only about half those notified in 1902 and 1903.

**DIPHTHERIA.**—Four cases notified; two in the Crewkerne, and two in the Combe sub-districts.



The accompanying chart is to show diagrammatically the subsidence of the diphtheria wave we have experienced since 1900, and it also shows the scarlet fever prevalence during the same period.



**SCARLET FEVER.**—Thirty-eight cases notified. The disease was mild in type and practically limited to children of school age. Milk supply in all cases was good; in thirteen cases from their own dairies, in three from one dairy, the remainder from different sources.

The greatest incidence was in the Ilminster sub-district.

The special house incidence was :—

27 houses	...	...	1 case in each.
2 houses	...	...	2 cases in each.
3 houses	...	...	3 cases in each.
1 house	...	...	6 cases.



I have good reason to believe that many cases of so-called "measles" were really mild cases of scarlet fever. It is inconvenient to have scarlet fever in a house especially if it happens to be a dairy, the symptoms may not be pronounced and often difficult even for a medical man to detect, and the patient in consequence is given the benefit of the doubt, and it is stated he has "measles," "sore throat" or "cold." The only remedy for this state of affairs is to make measles a notifiable disease. I am not, however, prepared to recommend the adoption of that course before more fully going into the question of cost, and ascertaining how it has worked in other places.

**ENTERIC FEVER.**—Seven cases notified. Four of the cases occurred about the same time at Tatworth and might be described as a "slight outbreak." All were in different houses. The dates of notification were—June 29th, 2 cases; July 12th, 1 case; July 20th, 1 case. Two houses had a common water supply, it was found good on analysis in all cases, and the sanitary conditions were satisfactory.

One fatal case in the Combe sub-district. Water supply from an open stream polluted by cattle.

One case in Ilminster sub-district. Water supply from unprotected draw well, found impure on analysis.

One case in the Crewkerne sub-district.

**ERYSIPELAS.**—Four cases notified.

#### **NON-NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES.**

A very serious complaint was made by a medical man who attended a fatal case of septic bone inflammation (acute osteo myelitis) in a farm-house. In his opinion the disease was caused by the effluvia arising from an unpaved undrained cow-barton, in close proximity to the dwelling-house. The water supply was from a well in the barton, twenty-four feet deep, and found on analysis to be polluted by sewage. The matter was represented to the responsible party, but not until another case developed similar symptoms were the necessary alterations commenced.

**MEASLES.**—In October an extensive outbreak at Clapton, Wayford, Huish, and Woolminstone. Schools closed for a few weeks.

**ANTHTRX.**—On case in swine reported by Police Superintendent in Chard sub-district. Necessary precautions taken.

#### **METHODS ADOPTED TO PREVENT INFECTION.**

The following precautions are taken in all cases of notifiable infectious diseases:—On receipt of a notification the Sanitary Inspector immediately visits the house, supplies disinfectants gratuitously, printed leaflets of precautions to be



observed, notices to prevent other children of the house attending school, and notices to the authorities of the school attended by children from the infected house. Every effort is made to secure home isolation.

A full record of each case is kept. In diphtheria cases anti-diphtheritic serum is supplied.

Disinfection is attempted by sulphur fumigation. As I have stated in previous reports, this method is inefficient for bedding, clothing, &c.; a portable steam disinfector is badly needed.

In former reports I have placed on record that there is no isolation hospital.

In May small-pox broke out amongst the navvies working on the new railway near Somerton. Several cases cropped up at Langport, Taunton, Yeovil, and the surrounding district. As the infected districts bordered on ours, there was imminent danger from infected tramps passing through Chard Workhouse. Your Council decided to obtain a site for a small-pox hospital and invited the Urban Councils of Chard, Crewkerne, and Ilminster to combine with them in a joint scheme for providing small-pox hospital accommodation. For various reasons Crewkerne and Ilminster declined to join, your Council then in combination with Chard Urban Council with considerable difficulty purchased a suitable site at Eleighwater which fulfils in every respect the requirement of the Local Government Board. The question whether to build a permanent structure or simply lay a concrete flooring to erect a tent on when necessary, is still under consideration.

The portable wooden hospital mentioned in previous reports is still available.

A trained nurse is engaged by your Council in necessary cases. Ilminster Rural, Tatworth Shepton Beauchamp, and Winsham, are privileged in having permanent district nurses.

#### **SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.**

The district is satisfactorily worked by a whole-time Sanitary Inspector. I have in conjunction with him systematically carried out inspections.

### **SANITARY CONDITION.**

#### **WATER SUPPLY.**

##### **i. PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES.**

COMBE ST. NICHOLAS.—Collecting tank on Combe Head, water piped to supply tank (8-ft. square) and thence to houses and to Jubilee Fountain on village green. Shute supply discharges by roadside at Combe Head, is used by about twenty houses, and flushes main sewer. Occasional complaints of water



shortage were made by the inhabitants of the higher part of the village: the Inspector reports that in his opinion this was caused by the taps in the lower parts of the village being wilfully left turned on. The tank has been thoroughly repaired, yet still there is occasional shortage.

**CHAFFCOMBE.**—Reservoir (4ft. by 3 ft. on hill). Water before entering filtered through 1 foot of charcoal (changed twice yearly) is piped to village. Reservoir requires repairing.

**HINTON ST. GEORGE.**—Piped to village from Hinton park.

**BUCKLAND ST. MARY.**—Good supply piped to village and collected in trough.

**DONYATT.**—Piped to houses from reservoir on Herne Hill.

**PERRY STREET.**—Good supply piped to workmen's cottages.

**HEWISH.**—Tank has been enlarged, improved, and covered. A good supply has been piped to about twenty houses and stand pipes erected.

**MISTERTON.**—All the villagers with the exception of about twenty who are privately supplied by Lord Portman, have water piped to their houses supplied by contract from the Crewkerne Water Company.

## 2. WELLS.

The greater part of the water supply is derived from wells.

## 3. STREAMS AND SPRINGS.

In many places the supply is from streams and springs.

**KENNY BRIDGE.**—How to provide a good supply has been a vexatious subject for many years. Several schemes were considered, the most practicable of which were (1)—to get the supply from an adjacent field, but the supposed spring could not be found; (2)—to obtain it from the main at Highbridge, the cost was prohibitive; (3)—rain water storage, not sufficient roof now for collection and difficulties of filtration too great. The matter has therefore been given up as impracticable.

**SOUTH CHARD and TATWORTH.**—Supply still unsatisfactory, most of the houses supplied by shallow streams and open wells.

**LOPEN.**—Upper part of the village supplied by protected springs, the other part is supplied by a stream liable to pollution. The matter was referred to the Parish Council in 1903; nothing has been done since.

## WATER ANALYSIS.

Twenty two analyses of drinking water were made by the Medical Officer of Health in the course of his duties.



## SEWERAGE, DRAINAGE, and EXCREMENT DISPOSAL.

The public sewers are :—

ILMINSTER  
SUB-DISTRICT.  
Ashill.  
Shepton Beauchamp.  
Seavington St. Mary.  
Whitelackington.  
CREWKERNE  
SUB-DISTRICT.  
Hinton St. George.  
Lopen.  
Merriott.  
Wayford.  
Winsham.

CHARD  
SUB-DISTRICT.  
South Chard.  
Chaffcombe.

COMBE ST. NICHOLAS  
SUB-DISTRICT.  
Combe St. Nicholas.  
Buckland St. Mary.

In some places the sewage is discharged over the land, in others either directly into a ditch or into an intercepting catch-pit. In every instance at such a distance from the public road and houses as not to be a nuisance.

The Church Street sewer at Lopen discharges into a tributary of the River Ile. It should be connected with the main sewer.

Plans for the extension of the Buckland St. Mary sewer as far as the new rectory are under consideration.

### HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.

Number of inhabited houses .. ..	3,079
Average number of persons per house ...	4'3
Overcrowding cases reported and dealt with	7
Houses condemned as unfit for human habitation ... ..	1

### FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

I have inspected the following factories :—

Lace (Bobbin net) Factory, Perry Street, Chard.  
Dowlish Ford Factory (Hemp, Tow, Carpet).  
Chard and Ilminster Factory at Ilminster.  
Sailcloth Factory, Merriott.  
Twine and Yarn Factory, Lopen.

In above factories the ventilation, air space, and sanitary conditions are in accordance with the Factory and Workshops Act, 1901. Those of more than one storey high are provided with special means of exit in case of fire.

WORKSHOPS.— A complete list is kept at your office. There are 10 in the Ilminster, 37 in the Crewkerne, and 11 in the Chard sub-districts.



**SLAUGHTER-HOUSES, BAKE-HOUSES, Etc.**

Systematically inspected by the Sanitary Inspector.

In concluding this report, I would point out that the Central and County Authorities require me to set forth in it year by year, not only a record of the vital statistics and prevalence of infectious disease, but also a description in detail of the sanitary conditions, together with improvements effected and required. Such a description is of necessity in great part a recapitulation of former reports, and may seem superfluous to you.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

**SAMUEL BOAKE,**

Medical Officer of Health.

Ditton-lea, Ilminster.

TABLE I.

*Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1905 & previous Years.*  
Name of District, CHARD RURAL DISTRICT.

YEAR	Popula- tion esti- mated to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		DEATHS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE		DEATHS AT ALL AGES. TOTAL.		TOTAL D'THS IN P'BLIC INSTI- TU- TIONS IN THE D'S'CT	D'ths of Non R'sdnt in Public Insti- tut'ns in the D's't'ct	D'ths of Resi- dents regis- tered b'y'nd Dis- trict	DEATHS AT ALL AGES. NETT.	
		Num- ber.	Rate *	Num- ber.	Rate per 1,000 Births regis- tered.	Num- ber.	Rate *				Num- ber.	Rate *
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1898	14628	403	27.5	37	91.8	204	13.9					
1899	14042	332	23.6	35	105.4	228	16.2					
1900	13729	307	22.3	35	151.7	202	14.7					
1901	13300	440	33.0	25	56.8	167	12.6					
1902	13208	297	22.3	34	116.8	211	15.9					
1903	13137	329	25.4	25	75.9	149	11.3					
1904	13049	314	24.0	35	111.4	188	14.3					
Aver- ages for years 1895- 1904	13584	345	22.3	35	101.4	192	14.1					
1905	12965	297	22.8	22	74.0	139	10.9					

\* Rates in columns 4, 8, and 13 calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

NOTE.—The deaths to be included in column 7 of this Table are the whole of those registered during the year as having actually occurred within the district or division. The deaths to be included in column 12 are the number in column 7, corrected by the subtraction of the number in column 10 and the addition of the number in column 11.

By the term "Non-residents" is meant persons brought into the district on account of sickness or infirmity, and dying in public institutions there; and by the term "Residents" is meant persons who have been taken out of the district on account of sickness or infirmity, and have died in public institutions elsewhere.

The "Public institutions" to be taken into account for the purposes of these Tables are those into which persons are habitually received on account of sickness or infirmity, such as hospitals, workhouses and lunatic asylums. A list of the Institutions in respect of the deaths in which corrections have been made should be given on the back of this Table.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water), 52092. Total population at all ages, 13300. Number of inhabited houses, 3079. Average number of persons per house, 4.3. } At Census of 1901.

The figures in columns 3, 5, and 7, for 1900 are approximate as the figures for only 9 mths. were available.

I.	II.	III.
Institutions within the Distr't receiv'g sick & infirm persons from outside the District.	Institutions outside the Distr't receiving sick & infirm persons from the District.	Other Inst'tions the deaths in w'ch h've b'n d'str'b'd am'g the sev'l localiti-s in the District
None.	Taunton & Som'set Hospital. Crewkerne Hospital. Chard Union Infirmary. Exeter Eye Infirmary.	None.

Is the Union Workhouse within the District?—No.



TABLE II.  
Chard Rural District

NAMES OF LOCALITIES.	1. ILMINSTER.				2. CHARD.				3. CREWKERNE.				4. COMBE ST. NICHOLAS.			
	Population estimated to middle of each Year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 Year.	Population estimated to middle of each Year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 Year.	Population estimated to middle of each Year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 Year.	Population estimated to middle of each Year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 Year.
1901	4281	118	58	11	2927	102	28	1	4241	154	57	7	1831	66	24	6
1902	4259	87	63	10	2906	72	44	12	4217	92	65	7	1826	35	39	5
1903	4238	94	51	9	2901	73	35	4	4197	112	44	10	1801	50	19	2
1904	4219	102	66	9	2882	78	49	12	4173	96	41	9	1775	38	32	5
Averages of Years 1895 to 1904.	4249	100	59	9	2904	81	39	7	4207	114	51	8	1813	47	28	4
1905	4193	90	48	7	2873	71	28	2	4149	80	43	9	1750	47	20	4

TABLE III.  
CHARD RURAL DISTRICT.  
Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1905.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE	Cases Notified in whole District.						Total Cases Certified in each Locality.			
	At all Ages.	At Ages--Years.					Ilminster Sub-district	Chard Sub-district	Crewkerne Sub-district	C'mbe S. N'h'l's Sub-district
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65				
Small-pox ...										
Cholera ...										
Diphtheria ...	4		3		1			2	2	
Membr'n's croup										
Erysipelas ...	4				4		2	1	1	
Scarlet fever ...	38	8	28		2		26	2	9	1
Typhus fever ...										
Enteric fever ...	7	1	2	1	3		1	4	2	
Relapsing fever										
Continued fever										
Puerperal fever...										
Plague ...										
Totals ...	53	9	33	1	10		29	7	14	3

NOTES.--The localities adopted for this table should be the same as those in Tables II. and IV.

State the name of the isolation hospital, if any, used by the sick of the district. Mark (H) the locality in which it is situated, or if not within the district, state where it is situated, and in what district.



TABLE IV. Chard Rural District Council.  
Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1905.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	DEATHS IN WHOLE DISTRICT AT SUBJOINED AGES						DEATHS IN LOCALITIES (AT ALL AGES)				
	All ages	Under 1	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards	Ilminster	Chard	Crewkerne	Combe St. Nicholas
Small-pox ...											
Measles ...											
Scarlet fever ...											
Whooping-cough ...											
Diphtheria and mem- branous croup. ...	1			1							1
Croup ...											
Fever { Typhus... ...											
Enteric... ...	1					1					1
Other continued											
Epidemic influenza ...											
Cholera ...											
Plague ...											
Diarrhœa ...	2	1					1	2			
Enteritis ...	1	1					1		1		
Puerperal fever ...											
Erysipelas ...											
Other septic diseases ...	2	1		1			1	1			
Phthisis ...	9			1	2	6	6	1	1	1	1
Other tubercular di- seases ...	1	1						1			
Cancer, malignant di- sease ...	11					5	6	3	4	1	3
Bronchitis ...	14	6				1	7	5	2	5	1
Pneumonia ...	12	6		1	2	2	1	5	3	4	
Pleurisy ...											
Other diseases of Res- piratory organs ...											
Alcoholism											
Cirrhosis of liver											
Venereal diseases											
Premature birth ...	1	1									1
Diseases and accidents of parturition. ...											
Heart diseases ...	21			1	1	9	10	3	6	9	3
Accidents ...	4	1		1			2			4	
Suicides ...											
All other causes ...	59	5	2	1		11	40	22	10	18	9
All causes ...	139	22	2	7	5	35	68	48	27	43	21

TABLE V.  
**CHARD RURAL DISTRICT.**  
 Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.													Total number.	Total Deaths under One Year.	
	Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	2-3 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	1 Month.	1-2 Months.	2-3 Months.	3-4 Months.	4-5 Months.	5-6 Months.	6-7 Months.	7-8 Months.	8-9 Months.			9-10 Months.
<b>All Causes.</b>	1	1	1	1	3	1	6	1	1	1	2	3	3	4		21
{ Certified ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Uncertified ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Infectious Diseases.																
{ Small-pox ... ..																
{ Chicken-pox ... ..																
{ Measles ... ..																
{ Scarlet Fever... ..																
{ Diphtheria: Croup																
{ Whooping Cough																
Diarrhoeal Diseases.																
{ Diarrhoea, all forms																
{ Enteritis ( <i>not Tuberculous</i> )																
{ Gastritis, Gastrointestinal Catarrh																
Wasting Diseases.																
{ Premature Birth																
{ Congenital Defects																
{ Injury at Birth																
{ Want of Breast-milk																
{ Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus																
Tuberculous Diseases.																
{ Tuberculous Meningitis																
{ Tuberculous Peritonitis:																
{ Tabes Mesenterica																
{ Other Tuberculous Diseases																
{ Erysipelas																
{ Syphilis																
{ Rickets																
{ Meningitis ( <i>not Tuberculous</i> )																
{ Convulsions																
{ Bronchitis																
{ Laryngitis																
{ Pneumonia																
{ Suffocation, overlaying																
{ Other Causes																
	1	1	1	1	3	1	6	1	1	1	2	3	3	4		22

District of CHARD RURAL.  
 Births in the year - legitimate, 293; illegitimate, 4—Total, 297.  
 Population, estimated to middle of 1905—13,300.  
 Deaths from all Causes at all Ages—139.



## Sanitary Inspector's Report.

---

Inspector's Office, Fore Street, Chard.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Chard Rural District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit to you particulars of my Report as Sanitary Inspector for the year ending 31st December, 1905.

**HOUSE-TO-HOUSE INSPECTION AT WINSHAM AND PURTINGTON, and other outlying houses, altogether about 200.**

Defects found while making house-to-house inspection are as follows :—Winsham, 49 ; Purtington, 7.

Other sanitary defects during the year in different parts of the district, 65.

Letters were written to all the owners of property, where defects were found, calling attention to these defects, and on making re-inspections I found the majority were remedied.

**STATUTORY NOTICES SERVED.**

Notices to abate nuisance, under P.H. Acts.,	Sec. 91	19
" to execute works	" " " Sec. 41	4
" to drain houses	" " " Sec. 23	2
" Under dairies and cowsheds	Order	1
		—
	Total...	26
		—

**BUILDING PLANS SUBMITTED AND PASSED.**—New Buildings, 17 ; alterations and additions to Houses, 5.

I have inspected all the stores licensed under the Explosive Acts for storing petroleum and carbide, and in some cases have had alterations and improvements carried out. A new smoke testing apparatus (smoke) has been purchased, and a new set of drain rods and plugs.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

E. CARTER, Memb. R. Sant. Ins.,

Sanitary Inspector.