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*County Borough of Devonport.*

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**ANNUAL REPORT**

OF THE

**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH**

*For the Year 1894.*

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**DEVONPORT (URBAN) SANITARY AUTHORITY.**  
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**DEVONPORT :**

**SMITH & CO., PRINTERS & STATIONERS, FORE STREET.**

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# ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1894.

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## Devonport Urban Sanitary Authority.

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The number of deaths from all causes was 920 or 17 per 1,000.

The number of births 1,466 which is 27.1 per 1,000.

Deaths from zymotic diseases 79, or 1.4 per 1,000.

Of these 19 were from Measles, 7 from Scarlatina, 31 from Whooping Cough, 9 from Enteric Fever, and 4 from Diarrhoea.

From Respiratory Diseases 161 died ; from Tubercular 141.

The infantile mortality was 190 under 1 year, or 129.6 per 1000 births.

Total under 5 years 303, or 206.7 per 1,000 births.

There were 18 deaths from Influenza : 10 in January, 2 in February, 3 in April, 2 in May, 1 in July.

The deaths were mostly from Bronchial and Cardiac complications as sequels of the original attack. This disease appears to lower vitality, so as to favour the development of individual constitutional weakness and tendency to particular disease. It is a serious disease, from the insidious and unforeseen character of the attack, the severe and protracted sequels, and the liability to recurrence.

39 children died from Wasting Diseases.

There was no Epidemic of any kind, though Measles prevailed in the 3rd Quarter of the year, the fatal cases being, as usual, from lung complications.

Whooping Cough prevailed chiefly in the first quarter.

The Death Rate was the lowest for the last 10 years, the highest for this period being 20.9 in 1885, the next lowest 17.7 in 1889.

The zymotic death rate was fifth on the list of 10 years, the numbers ranging from 2.8 to 9.

The total number of diseases notified was 225, consisting of Scarlatina 118, Diphtheria and Membranous Croup 16, Enteric Fever 31, Erysipelas 43, Puerperal Fever 1, Small Pox 16. A deduction of 5 must be made for 4 cases sent into the Borough Hospital from Stonehouse, and 1 from Tregantle Fort, so that the total of cases from this borough was 220.



These were distributed among the 4 Districts as follows .—

	<i>Scarlatina.</i>	<i>Diphtheria.</i>	<i>Enteric.</i>	<i>Puerperal.</i>	<i>Erysipelas.</i>	<i>Small Pox.</i>
Tamar	36	5	5	0	18	0
St. Aubyn	15	7	16	1	7	12
Morice	8	1	4	0	4	3
Stoke	51	3	6	0	14	1

Of SCARLATINA the wave of notification was in January 18 cases, August 14, September 13, May 12, February, July 10, March 9, April 8, October 8, June, November 5, December 4.

Of TYPHOID, August 7, January, May 4, November 3, April, June, July, October, December 2, September, February, and March 1.

Of ERYSIPELAS, February 8, December 7, January and November 5, August and October 4, March and July 3, May and June 2, September 1, April 0.

Of SMALL POX, August 6, September 4, July 3, October 2, April 1.

Of this disorder there were 8 outbreaks in different parts, one in April in the lowest and most unsanitary part of the town—Jessamine Lane. This was stamped out by prompt removal and burning of all infected stuff, and no more cases occurred till July, then it broke out afresh in the family of a fitter in the Dockyard, man and wife and 7 children occupying 2



small rooms in Canterbury Street. 4 children caught it, and were removed at once, and the premises disinfected. Another case occurred in Cherry Garden Street at about the same time in a dirty close room; this was removed and no more occurred.

Another case occurred 2 days after in Chapel Street with the same treatment and result. The 4th child from Canterbury Street was infected on the 4th August.

A few days after 2 fresh cases occurred in Edinburgh Road, and on 22nd August a work-girl in a factory was found infected and removed from her home in Ker Street.

On 25th a young girl was admitted into Hospital supposed to be suffering from Scarlatina. She died, and the skin presented such an unusual appearance that precautions were taken as if it had been that disease. A sister of this case died at home in Clowance Street on September 10 from supposed Scarlatina; but I examined the skin after death, and found it presented a similar aspect to the first case, precautions were then taken as for Small Pox. On September 10 a companion of the first case was admitted with undoubted Small Pox, and if to settle all doubts as to the diagnosis, on September 17 another case of Small Pox of a severe type was admitted, and this person had laid out the body of the second case which died at home.

Another severe case in September was clearly traced to infection in London ; it was removed to Hospital, and the house disinfected, and no further case occurred.

On 10th October another case admitted had nursed the woman who laid out the corpse of the girl above-mentioned ; and another, admitted the day after, had visited this last case at the commencement of her sickness. No further case occurred.

The value of early isolation is clearly shown here, each fresh centre of infection being neutralized by strict disinfection and destruction of clothes, &c., which latter is a most important matter, as these can never be sold for old rags, as probably they would be otherwise.

Experience would seem to have justified the opinion formed by me as to the advisability of having accommodation for Small Pox cases on shore, as well as for other infectious diseases. The risk of removal to the patient is far less, as the exposure is reduced to a minimum, and involves merely the change from one house to another, along more or less sheltered roads ; whereas in the removal to a ship, admirable as such provision is from a hospital point of view, there is so much more exposure to the patient, that in severe cases it cannot but involve risk. It seems self-evident that the moving a case from bed to ambulance, thence to the quay of embarkation, and then a journey on



the water, and into a ship must be more disturbing than merely taking it from a house to a shore hospital, which only involves two exposures to the air.

Considering the uncertain character of this climate, even in summer, this point is one which must be reckoned with. Before the provision of this hospital, I had been obliged to delay the removal of a case until the weather moderated, owing to the prevalence of cold high winds, and the serious nature of the case.

Speaking generally, the ISOLATION HOSPITAL has continued to be of much assistance in checking the spread of disease, even in its present very imperfect condition. During the year 68 cases have been under treatment, 45 of Scarlatina, 7 of Enteric Fever, 16 of Small Pox. There were 6 deaths, 4 from Scarlatina and 2 from Enteric Fever.

Time has so fully justified the existence of the Hospital, and led to a development of its original limited conception, as to necessitate not only provision of increased facilities for washing and laundry work, a most important item in all such institutions; but to lead to the consideration of increased accommodation for patients, and a modification of its form.

Since it has become better known and appreciated, applications have been made from all classes for admission. This necessitates more facilities for classification, and the addition of small wards for paying

patients—a want at present very inadequately met by the use of two rooms, one a nurse's apartment, and the other in the administration building, both unfit for the purpose. It is superfluous to point out that the more perfect the accommodation the greater the efficiency and popularity of the Hospital, and that the provision for paying patients, if taken advantage of to any extent, as seems likely to be the case, will actually render the institution less of an expense to the town.

This question of Hospital accommodation is one I would press most strongly on the consideration of the Council. It is the most powerful weapon with which to deal with infectious disease; indeed, a town which is not thoroughly equipped in this particular is nearly powerless to stamp out disease. It is useless to have diseases notified unless there is full provision for the immediate isolation of all such cases as cannot be isolated at home, for every such case not removed becomes a centre of infection.

The usefulness of the present building is very much marred by the imperfect character of the accommodation. There is absolutely no laundry or mortuary, or disinfecting room, laundry work having to be carried on in a spare ward, in which sometimes patients are also obliged to be placed, though cut off as far as possible from its work, and only used for the least infectious cases, such as Typhoid; and another ward, when not in



use, being utilized as a dead house. Both these arrangements are unseemly, inconvenient, and run the risk of some day being disastrous. I cannot too strongly urge the immediate solution of this difficulty, which I have reported on several occasions, and for the possible evil results of which, if continued, I cannot undertake the responsibility.

THE MORICE TOWN DRAINAGE SCHEME has been actively carried on, and will no doubt add to the health of the parts affected by it; this means a good deal, as the streets drained are numerous and contain a large population, almost entirely consisting of artizans; several families occupying one house in many cases.

The streets are—Albert Road, containing 160 houses; Martin Terrace, 30; Clarence Place, 50; Charlotte Street, 72; Herbert Place, 15; Herbert Street, 16; Charlotte Row, 23; Garden Street, 45; Ross Street, 31; Haddington Road, 34; Pentamar Terrace, 12; Arundle Terrace, 9; Victoria Place, 28; Benbow Street, 28; Keppel Street and Terrace, 28; Brunswick Place, 28; York Place, 21; Stoke Terrace, 19; Home Park, 23; Windsor Terrace, 5; Somerset Place, 10; Pottery Quay, 51; John Street, 45; William Street, 41; Gloucester Street, 79; Portland Road, 39; Hood Street, 17; Milne Place, 12; Pym Street, 24; Tamar Terrace, 20; Acre Place, 8; Portland Road, 14; in all, 900 houses, inhabited by artizans; with the

exception of this last, all these streets consist mostly of old houses, thickly tenanted. Martin Terrace, Victoria Place, Benbow Street, Keppel Street, Stoke Terrace, Windsor Terrace, John Street, William Street, Gloucester Street, Portland Place, Hood Street, Milne Place, Tamar Terrace, consist of 3 stories, the rest of 2. The former sewers were rock-hewn, and of large size, in places cavernous: substitution cannot fail to benefit the locality as ensuring a much more rapid removal of sewage than was possible before. The gradients are, as a rule, excellent.

The question which has come lately with more and more prominence to the front is that to which I have adverted in more than one of my Annual Reports, the PROVISION OF DWELLINGS FOR THE WORKING CLASSES.

On this question it is hard to say whether ignorance or indifference has hitherto been most conspicuous; one thing is only too certain, that be the causes what they may, a great opportunity has been lost during the last 7 years of supplying a great need and affording a worthy model.

Hundreds of houses have been built, of which it is not too much to say hardly one fulfils what should have been the object of its building, *i.e.*, the proper housing of working men's families at a reasonable rent.

Each house has been built as if it were to be occupied by one family, although it must have been



quite well known that the rent would be such as would oblige each occupant to take in one or more families to live with him, in order to pay his rent.

Of what use to artizans are such houses as Martin Terrace, built in 3 stories, and costing in rent and taxes over £40 a year. Of course they are nearly all let out to 2, 3, or 4 families ; their plan being 6 rooms in the main building, and 2 tenement rooms over kitchen and wash-house : an arrangement fitted only for one.

In Herbert Place the same thing has been done, 3-storied houses built with no endeavour to adequately accommodate the families which were bound to come into them ; consisting simply of an assembly under one roof of 6 or 8 rooms, each containing a window, a door, and a fireplace ; no provision of water or wastepipe on each floor, no attempt at portioning out sets of rooms in twos or threes ; wasteful cooking on parlour grates, and weary dragging up of water from the court, down to which must also be taken all waste from each floor.

In Wilton Street, Hotham Place, Valletort Road, the same mistake has been made ; very few men being able to afford to occupy a whole house. In the tall imposing looking houses of Norman Avenue even, the word " apartment " is to be met with in some cases as soon as they are occupied, proving the occupiers' inability to pay the rent, unaided by lodgers or tenants ; these are houses of 3 stories ; and so it may be said they

are fitted by their size for more families than one ; this may be granted, but they are not so constructed, their conveniences are for one only.

And besides this, it may be said of most of these new houses, with the exception of Norman Avenue, Martin-terrace, and Herbert-place ( South side ) that they are not at all too large for one family only ; in Hotham-place, for instance, they consist of 4 small rooms and a small kitchen, not at all in excess of what most working men with families require for decency and comfort ; and yet these are in most cases tenanted by 2 families at least.

And even the smallest kind of cottage lately built with a distinct view to the accommodation of this class, can hardly be said to do so when the rent and taxes amount to a sum which is often far beyond a working man's means. The same story may be told of the houses built 15 or 20 years ago, Pasley Street, Herbert Street, Haddington Road, most of these being let out in rooms, £10 and £12 being asked for 2 rooms, in one of which the family has to sleep, and in the other live, eat, cook, and wash-up, there being but one kitchen and scullery for the whole house in most cases. When it is considered that there are hundreds of men whose wages are such that they cannot afford more than £10 or £12 a year for house-rent it is evident how wide-spread must be the inconvenience, discomfort, and unseemliness



caused by the fact that for this class not a single house exists in the whole of Devonport.

And why should there not? Is this state of things common to all working centres? Is it impossible to solve the problem how workmen shall have the accommodation they have a right to expect at a rate which they can afford to pay? Most assuredly it is not. In other places, small houses are to be rented for £7 to £10 a year, houses of 4 rooms, where each man can have his family to himself, and have his own kitchen and court accommodation, besides enough bedrooms to ensure comfort and decency; here his wife is not worn out by weary tramping with heavy loads up and down flights of stairs, and the children are not subject to the risk of catching infectious diseases, as they are in houses containing several families; and the bread-winner is not kept from his work by the existence of these diseases in a house of which he is a tenant, though the sickness may not be in his own family; I have known 3 or 4 men in one house to be subjected to this serious interruption to their duties, from this cause.

An attempt has been made by a Dockyard Society to meet this difficulty, by building a street at the bottom of Rocky Hill, but these houses, good as they are, do not meet the pressing need of the large class of whom I speak; as the rent is £12 without taxes, and besides this, it is doubtful how far this measure of success may

be again attained, as I am informed that it will be impossible for this Society again to buy land on the same favourable terms.

This fact has, I regret to find, led to the abandonment of a scheme which has been launched at my suggestion, for the immediate building of small houses consisting of 2 large rooms in the main house, the lower entered from the streets, and 2 smaller behind in tenement, consisting of kitchen and bedroom over ; these could have been let for much less than the first lot, and so would have answered the requirements of a class of low wage-earners ; but inasmuch as the land was not to be obtained for less than 1s. a foot, which was double the price of the first lot, the plan had to be abandoned. I am informed it would not have paid to build so small a house on this more expensive site ; this is much to be deplored, as there seemed in this plan a chance of a solution of the difficulty which has hitherto accompanied all this class of housebuilding.

The impossibility of obtaining the desired accommodation near their work has led to the developement of housebuilding at St. Bude and Camel's Head ; this is a distinct gain, as the latter site especially is not very far removed from Keyham Yard, and the extension of this Government establishment, which will render necessary considerable increase of house accommodation, will be in a direction towards this site, though it is to



be feared it will not be near enough to enable the men to go home to dinner, an important consideration in their case, on the ground of comfort and expense.

The principle underlying the whole question is this, that every man in the receipt of fair wages, and commonly thrifty, has a right to claim that he shall be housed with as much consideration for comfort, decency and health, as those of the community who have larger incomes ; at present it may be said, speaking generally, that in this neighbourhood this is not the case ; not in Devonport, nor in neighbouring towns, and unfortunately not even in Ford which has missed a good opportunity of making itself a model artizan's town. It may be mentioned incidentally that one result of the non-provision of proper houses for artizans, is that whilst they are forced into houses which were not built for their use, those for whom these were intended are crowded out, and often find accommodation out of the Borough, which detracts from its prosperity in a mercantile point of view, and makes it harder for the artizan class, on whose shoulders naturally fall that proportion of the taxation of the town which would otherwise be shared by inhabitants of larger means, if they had remained in the town ; increased rates are a powerful factor in determining the artizan's inability to allow himself the rooms which he really requires.

A hamlet of several hundred houses is springing up at Pennycross ; this consists of useful little houses of 4 rooms, but has the disadvantage of being too far from the Dockyard, Schools, and Shops. Such only fulfil their purpose when they are accessible by train or tram, which is not the case here ; this provision, although good in many ways, it is to be feared will not fully realize the expectations of the promoters ; still it is a project worthy of praise as giving a whole house to each family, which the low rent will, in this case, admit of being done.

THE COWSHEDS in the Borough vary a good deal as regards neatness and cleanliness ; on the whole they are kept in very fair condition, as is proved by the absence during the year of any outbreak of disease in any way attributable to pollution of milk : but very few come up to an ideal standard, which is rarely attained or even attempted, save in the model dairy farms of the rich landlords. It is understood that here insecurity of tenancy is a bar in some instances, to the laying out of much money on improvements by the tenant. It would seem that such an important question as the milk supply of a large population deserves consideration as a matter of public safety, and that if proper buildings and appurtenances are not provided by the owners of property, Town Councils might erect such according to a model plan, and thereby ensure the best of all surroundings for the milk factories ; and they would be able to



choose as tenants only such as were found to have those habits of neatness and cleanliness so necessary in the handling of milk, and so often wanting. The control of the milk supply is certainly as important a matter as that of the water of a Town. In one respect regulations might and should be imperative: and that is in dissociating the keeping of cows from pigs; these piggeries in close neighbourhood to cowsheds are at present a fertile source of untidiness and offence, and ought not to be allowed.

The question of PUBLIC BATHING IN THE SEA has been the subject of complaint and enquiry. Notwithstanding its position, Devonport is not so well provided in this respect as would seem likely: so much of the foreshore being taken up by Government buildings and quays. Complaints have been made as to the pollution of the water from various sources: whatever share the pouring of the general sewage of the Town into the Waterway may have in this particular pollution, it seems certain that there are places which it affects unfavorably; notably the parts below the old millbridge, into which it would seem that some finds its way at flood tide, for it must be remembered that whilst the flow of sewage is persistent, the ebb of the tide which carries it out to sea is intermittent. I have before adverted to the danger and unwisdom of turning the whole sewage of a town into a tidal river with mud banks, without previously treating

it by any process of precipitation ; it cannot be right, for not only does it pollute the water, but it involves a waste of fertilizing material : it ought to be no more difficult to precipitate the solids, and make the effluent innocuous in a sea-side place than inland ; it is obligatory in the latter for obvious reasons, and is the natural method ; the other is unnatural and must in time be more or less disastrous, besides being thoroughly unscientific.

No proper PUBLIC MORTUARY exists in the Borough. I have already on more than one occasion pointed out that the position of the present makeshift is unsatisfactory : in a room under the Guildhall with windows on one side only, and so imperfectly lit and ventilated. What is wanted is a large room in an isolated position, with proper provision for making post-mortem examinations, as well as isolated chambers, where the bodies of such as have died of infectious disease may be removed immediately after death, from the thickly inhabited neighbourhoods, where they are a source of danger to the living. When it is remembered how many families live in 2 rooms, it is not difficult to realize what an unseemly addition to the difficulty of living must be the presence of death even from ordinary diseases. If mortuaries were made of a seemly character like the mortuary chapels sometimes seen in cemeteries abroad, in time people might be brought to look upon such as



a solution of a difficulty which must often press on them very closely, and much might be attained without any violence to the feelings naturally associated with the dead. At any rate before this ideal state is reached, it is at least imperative that for the other cases requiring special examination and an inquest, a fit building should be provided. An additional objection to the present one is, that its door is opposite that of the room occupied by the Inspector of Weights and Measures.



# COMPARATIVE TABLE OF DEATHS. FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS.

Year.	Births.	Deaths.	Natural Increase	Deaths from Zymotic Diseases.	Measles.	Scarlatina	Diphtheria and Membranous Croup	Whooping Cough.	Enteric Fever.	Diarrhoea.	Pneumonia & Tubercular Diseases.	Respiratory Disease	Rheumatic Diseases	Death rate per 1000.	Birth Rate per 1000.	Zymotic Death rate per 1000.	Deaths under 5 years.
1894	1466	920	546	79	19	9	6	31	9	4	141	161	1	17.	27.1	1.4	303
3	1620	985	635	55	4	11	9	26	5	9	120	222	7	18.2	30.	1.	367
2	1438	995	443	52	28	9	9	—	6	—	123	229	3	18.2	26.6	0.9	344
1	1570	1080	490	63	10	5	4	40	4	1	134	230	4	20.	29.	1.	358
90	1570	992	578	89	32	24	10	15	8	—	140	190	4	18.5	28.	1.6	343
89	1572	979	613	89	19	32	2	31	5	—	159	137	8	17.7	28.9	1.6	371
8	1624	1018	606	69	13	15	31	4	4	4	142	175	16	20.3	30.7	1.2	355
7	1599	1004	595	91	29	18	6	21	8	9	127	184	12	20.8	29.6	1.6	335
6	1719	976	743	63	12	12	4	12	8	15	128	152	9	19.2	34.3	1.1	320
5	1551	1045	506	153	79	2	3	35	15	19	125	204	4	20.9	31.	2.8	403



# ADMISSIONS TO BOROUGH HOSPITAL,

22

1894.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apl.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total.	Deaths
Small Pox	...	...	...	1	...	..	3	6	4	2	...	..	16	1
Scarlatina	4	4	4	3	9	1	2	8	6	3	2	4	50	4
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	1	...	...	1	...
Erysipelas	..	...	..	...	...	...	...	1	..	...	...	...	1	...
Enteric Fever	1	...	...	...	2	2	1	...	...	1	...	...	7	2

# Devonport Urban Sanitary Authority.

RETURN of the number of cases of Infectious Disease notified under the Act, in 1894.

		Cases notified in 1894.	Deaths registered in 1894.
Small Pox ...	...	16	1
Scarlet Fever ...	...	113	9
Diphtheria and Membranous Croup }	...	16	6
Enteric Fever ...	...	31	9
Puerperal Fever ...	...	1	1
Erysipelas ...	...	43	0



1894.

District.	Total Deaths.	Population.	Deaths per 1000.	Area in acres.	Population to each acre.	Ratio of Population to sq. mile.
Tamar	234	13477	17.3	194	69	44850
St. Aubyn	244	15796	15.4	211	75	48750
Morice	166—31 (135)	7262	18.5	56	129	83850
Stoke	276—71 (205)	13837	14.8	1299	10	6500

24

In Morice District 31 Deaths were in the Royal Albert Hospital.

„ Stoke	„	71	„	Military	„
				and the Workhouse Infirmary.	

# TOTAL WORK DONE UNDER HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES ACT.

(Houses reported unfit for human habitation.)

3 Grauby Street	...	...	rebuilt
5 Ordnance Lane	...	...	"
3 Pembroke Street	...	...	repaired
73 Mount Street	...	...	"
4 Duke Street	...	...	rebuilt
1 Back of Morice Square	...	...	closed
5 Belgrave Cottages	...	...	"
34 John Street	...	...	repaired
11 York Street	...	...	"
7 " "	...	...	rebuilt
10 Princes Street	...	...	"
12 " "	...	...	"
45 Pembroke Street	...	...	repaired
15 Barrack Street	...	...	limewashed
3 Gay's Court	...	...	repaired
28 James Street	...	...	pulled down
4 " "	...	...	closed
3 Back of James Street	...	...	limewashed
12 William Street	...	...	repaired
2 Back of Morice Square	...	...	closed
16 St. Stephen's Street	...	...	repaired
2, 3, 4, Clowance Lane	...	...	order for closing
18 Queen Street	...	cleansed, repaired, limewashed	
17 " "	...	" "	" "
1 Ordnance Street	...	" "	" "
11 and 12 Cornwall Street	...	...	repaired
2 Tamar Street	...	...	"
60 Back of Albert Road	...	...	closed
5 Cross Street	...	...	repaired
4 Sydney Street	...	...	"
29 Pembroke Street	...	...	"



TABLE OF WORK DONE DURING YEAR 1894  
BY SANITARY INSPECTORS.

		Under Morice Town New Drainage Scheme.	General
No. of New Pipe-drains laid ...	596	500	96
„ „ repaired	290	100	190
„ „ ventilated	28		28
„ choked „ cleared	281		
W.C.'s repaired (pans, floors, &c.)	444	372	72
Courts repaired ...	492	420	72
Premises cleansed & limewashed	102		
Houses repaired ...	31		
Refuse bins provided ...	73		
„ „ repaired ...	14		
Ashpits repaired and covered	33		
General Nuisances abated	55		
Notices served ...	483		
			1067
Totals	2901	1834	

REPORT OF DILAPIDATED DWELLINGS,  
(with reference to the provision of house accommodation  
for the wage-earning population generally in Devon-  
port: presented to the Sub-Committee for Housing of  
the Working Classes, and read in their presence to Lord  
St. Levan at a Meeting held in the Manor Office,  
July 29th, 1895).

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The houses especially noted by the Sanitary  
Inspector's Staff have been all inspected by me,  
first with them, and again with Members of the Sub-  
Committee.

A detailed account of these, as regards number of  
inhabitants, condition of buildings and courts, closet  
accommodation, &c., has been prepared for reference, but  
it may be said of them all that they are in a more or  
less insanitary state, and so far ill-adapted for human  
habitation.

As regards the general question of house accom-  
modation in the Town, it may be compared to a ladder in  
which the bottom step is wanting: that step being  
houses for the working classes. Of these it may be said  
in general terms that as compared with many other  
towns as Portsmouth, Chatham, Yarmouth, Newcastle,  
&c., the provision of small houses for workmen at a  
rent suited to their means, each having a house to  
himself, is practically nil.



One result of this is, that this class is forced to occupy larger houses never intended for them ; and as many families thus live in a house built for the use of one only, and having conveniences only for one, the inconvenience, unseemliness, and even danger to health accruing is self-evident. A secondary result is, that as each class is driven to occupy a class of house above its social position, the higher one goes in the ladder, the more one finds a deficiency of accommodation for persons of larger incomes, who are thus driven out of neighbourhoods actually built for them, and forced to find houses suited to their means in neighbouring towns, very often in the case of Naval Officers, much to their inconvenience ; but there is no option, as not only are they crowded out, as has been shown, but there are no houses, or next to none, built here, of such a rent, and with such accommodation as can be obtained elsewhere for a rent of between £30 and £40. Garfield Terrace may be taken as an instance of this failure ; two-thirds being cramped in plan, without one good-sized bedroom, and no means of reaching the upper rooms in an upright attitude, and with the additional drawback of having a row of stables with residences between their back-doors, and the fronts of contiguous houses.

The plan of building smaller houses in bits of the gardens of larger houses cut off for this purpose, is one

much to be deprecated on all grounds, not only as tending to lower the character of these better houses, or at least to be an inconvenience to them; but also as being in the direction of that aggregation of human beings which is the curse of all towns; such insanitary localities as Clowance Lane, Pembroke Lane, Back of Monument Street, Back of James Street have all been formed by this process, the space deemed necessary for each house originally, having been treated as luxurious in a succeeding age; the new houses in Donegal Terrace are an example; there, what might have been a site to attract such persons as now go away from the town has been prevented doing this, by the building of a row of small houses close to the back doors of the very limited gardens of the terrace houses; of which cottages also it must be said that they do not at all fulfil their promise as workmen's dwellings, their rent being such as prevents their occupation by any but those of fairly high wages; and yet it is impossible for them to be occupied by more than one family without inconvenience, as the only means that exists for a tenant of the upstairs rooms to get at the water-taps, ash-bin and closet is through the kitchen of the tenant downstairs.

The question naturally arises in this conjunction why all this aggregation of houses in a limited space? why this building over of gardens, and in lanes? and that is a question I will leave to be answered as it



may be ; contenting myself with pointing out the inadvisability of such a means of housing a daily increasing population ; the pressing need of provision is shown by the rapid growth of small hamlets of cottages at St. Bude and Pennycross ; but there is no reason why workmen should be driven to seek accommodation so far from their daily work, when there is abundance of land close to it, ready for occupation ; but not by such houses as Johnston Terrace, which have its usual fault of being too large and expensive. It is not enough to provide 4-roomed houses ; it is probably not too much to say that at present fully one half the Dockyardsmen live in 2 rooms ; what is required is house-room for these, which might surely be done by some plan of 2 sets of rooms separate and distinct, under one roof, with conveniences for each.

The great advantage of each family having its separate house or set of rooms in a special sanitary point of view, independent of convenience, decency, and comfort, lies in the fact that by this, and this alone can the spread of infectious disease be limited. An instance of how it works under present conditions is afforded by a case in which 5 men living in one house were kept from work because the child of one of them had scarlet fever ; fortunately the parents consented to its removal to the Borough Hospital, and they were spared many weeks idleness and loss of wages ; but this occurred in

one of many like houses, consisting of 2 rooms on ground floor, 2 rooms above these, 2 attics, 2 tenement rooms and kitchens; how can this be called "housing" the working classes? "herding" would be the right word.

The provision of proper houses would also lead to a depleting of congested localities, and the worst houses would naturally become vacant as the demand was met by a wholesome supply, such houses as

- Case.* 1. A dilapidated building, with water-closet (and no water) under the stairs, and the ash-bin in the passage, and a court about 5 feet square.
- „ 2. One court for 3 houses, 37 souls using one (water) closet.
- „ 3. One court for 4 houses, 23 using one closet.
- „ 4. One court 5 feet square; for 3 houses, 2 closets under living rooms; one used by the public; the street gulley used as a common sink; no wash-house or drying ground.

Such cases as these are fortunately rare, and are merely given as examples of the worst kind of tenement: but in the more crowded parts, there are many which call for remedy on the ground of position and accommodation: and one notable defect is the fact that in the poorest localities, where it is most needed, no water is laid on to the closets, which have to be flushed by hand.



The plan at present in vogue of letting out old houses whose lease has expired, to some one person who rack-rents them, works badly, as might be expected. Some of the worst houses are found under these conditions as also those depending on one old life ; it is hard on owners of such properties to call on them to do necessary repairs to a house which may cease to be theirs at any moment : it would seem possible that means might be found without much difficulty, to remedy this state of inconsistency, which acts prejudicially in so many cases ; each becomes a menace to the health of the tenants and their neighbours ; and although it is true you cannot make all people clean and thrifty, by Sanitary laws, still it is also true that these qualities may be either encouraged or rendered almost impossible by the conditions under which people live ; and it is the duty of each Sanitary Authority to provide the best for every one, and look upon no class as incorrigible, but all as susceptible of improvement, and some attempt must be made to improve even the dirtiest places, not only for the sake of those who live in them, but also for the sake of their neighbours, who may be clean themselves ; for certainly in a Sanitary sense it is worth any man's while to be his brother's keeper, if only in a selfish way, as he himself may some day suffer from his sanitary sins.

The Sanitary Authority may fairly ask for all

possible help in diminishing the difficulties which are met with in such an enquiry as this : the rescuing from dirt and degradation of so many as are found to be its victims is surely a duty ; what chance of turning out good citizens is there in that family found at (*case c*) where 9 souls live day and night in a little room which gives for each occupant only 130 cubic feet, not half the lowest requirement, which is 300 for sleeping and 400 for sleeping and living ; and the answer usually given when asked why they live so is “ We cannot afford to pay any more.”

The great need in this Town is summed up in a sentence ; better accommodation at a lower rent. Many are the times that the remark is heard “ We have lived in many places, but never in one where we were so badly housed at such a high rent as in Devonport.” There is no reason why this should be. In a town similarly placed as regards tenure of land and building facilities, it is possible to build good houses containing 5 rooms each, to let them at a profit of 5 per cent. for £9 a year. And this is the only practical outcome of the whole enquiry ; let 500 such be built in Devonport, and it will do more for its health, happiness, and prosperity than any circumstance that could happen to it, and the greatest benefactor to this or any town will be that man or body of men who will satisfactorily solve the question of Dwellings for the Working Classes. It is surely



not to the credit of nineteenth century civilization that it can be said with truth of the conditions of town life, that in them, " Every night there are people who are going to their rest under conditions under which comfort, health, and decency, and in many cases, even morality, are well-nigh impossible."







