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REPORT  
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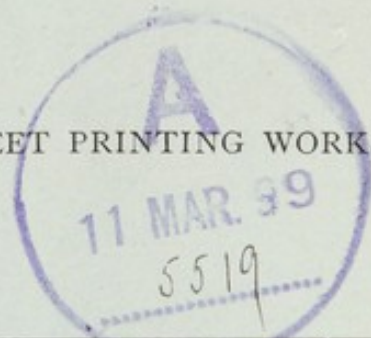
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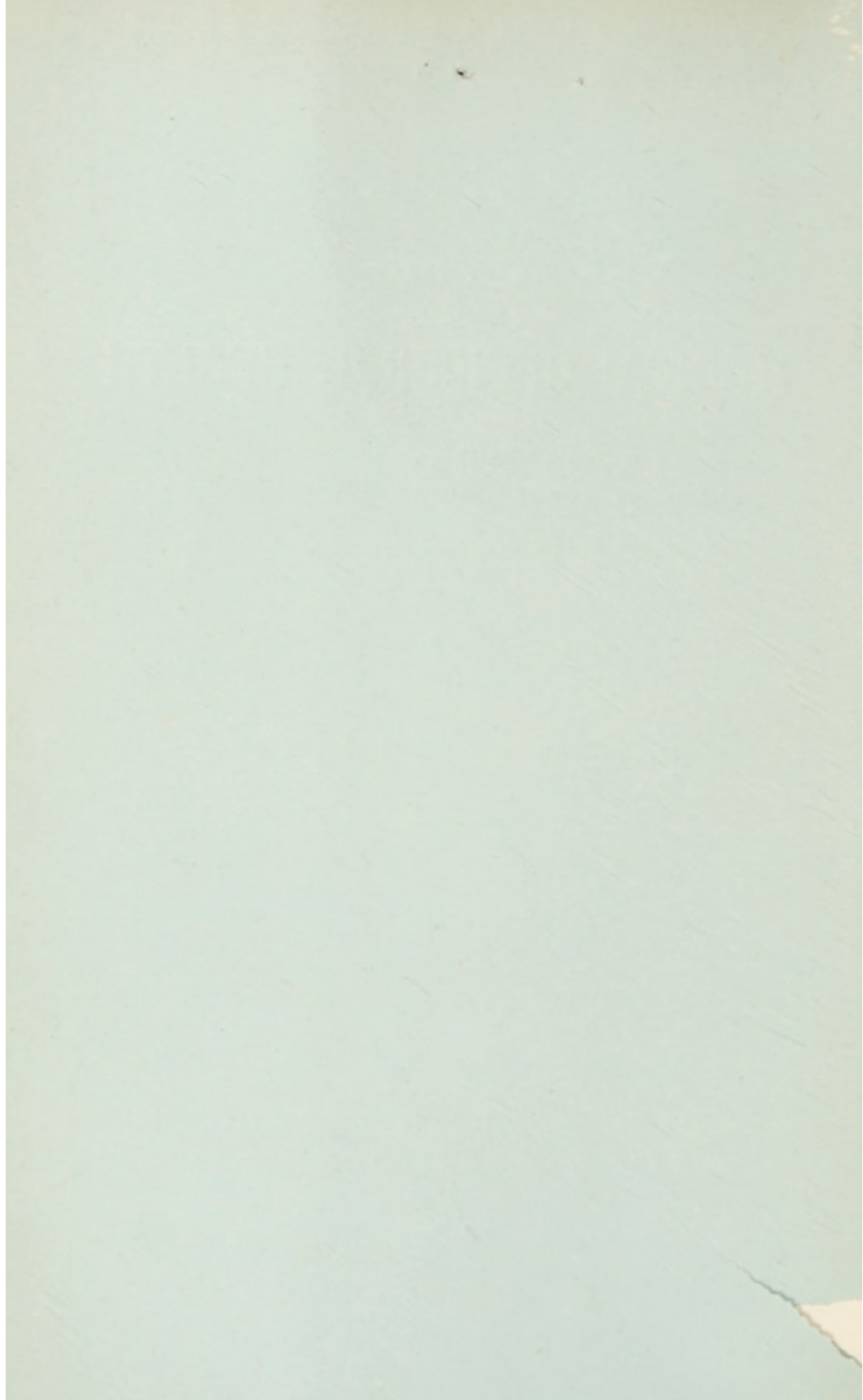
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REPORT  
OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
FOR THE  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF HETTON  
FOR THE YEAR 1898.

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HETTON-LE-HOLE,

FEBRUARY, 1899.

*To the Members of the Hetton Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my report of the sanitary and general condition of your district for the year 1898.

There were 511 births—247 males, 264 females, Births. which on the census of 1891, is 40·1 per 1,000, and on an estimated population of 14,750 to the middle of 1898, is 34·64 per 1,000.

Two hundred and fifty-six deaths (256) occurred in Deaths. the district, and 10 deaths of those residing out of the district, but belonging to it, making a total of 266 (145 males, 121 females), which is 20·9 per 1,000 on the census of 1891, and 18 per 1,000 on the estimated population to the middle of 1898.

In 1897 the number of births was 567 against 511 in Comparisons between 1897 and 1898. 1898, and deaths were 204 against 266. The excess of births over deaths was 363 in 1897 against 245 in 1898.

Ages at  
Death.

The following were the ages of those who died :—

107	deaths	were	those	of	infants	under	1	year.
44	were	over	1	year	and	under	5	years.
7	„	5	years	and	under	15	years.	
11	„	15	„	25	„			
6	„	25	„	30	„			
7	„	30	„	40	„			
12	„	40	„	50	„			
13	„	50	„	60	„			
20	„	60	„	70	„			
39	„	70	years	of	age.			

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266

Infant  
Mortality.

The infant mortality is 209 per 1,000 births, which I regret to say compares unfavourably with 1897, when it was 137 per 1,000 births.

Causes of  
Death.

The deaths from the various diseases were as follows :

Premature birth and imperfect development .....	32
Diarrhœa.....	46
Measles .....	3
Whooping Cough .....	14
Diseases of respiratory organs, not including	} 38
Consumption .....	
Consumption .....	12
Diseases of Brain and Spinal Cord, including	} 39
Convulsions .....	
Diseases of the Heart .....	21
Cancer.....	10
Natural Decay .....	18
Diseases of the Kidneys .....	4
Debility .....	5
Puerperal Fever.....	1
Croup .....	1
Influenza.....	2
Scarlet Fever.....	2
Intestinal Obstruction .....	3
Injuries .....	7
Sundries .....	8

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266

Deaths from  
Zymotic  
Diseases.

There were 21 deaths from Zymotic Diseases, which is 1.65 per 1,000. There were no deaths from Typhoid.

Deaths from  
Diarrhœa.

The death-rate from Diarrhœa was high, 46 deaths having occurred during the year, 11 being in Hetton Downs Ward, 13 in Hetton-le-Hole Ward, and 22 in

Easington Lane Ward. Of those in Hetton Downs Ward 3 were in William Street, and 1 each in Byers Street, Low Downs Square, Maudlin Street, Jane Street, Kenton Row, Miner Street, Hutton Street, and Lyon Street. Of the 13 in Hetton-le-Hole Ward 6 were in John Street, 2 in Shaw's Row, 1 each in Hetton Square, Bog Row, Scott's Terrace, Springwell Terrace, and Four Lane Ends. In Easington Lane Ward, 9 were in High Street Easington Lane, 6 in the Brick Garth, 2 in Murton Lane, 2 in Colliery Lane, and 1 each in Seymour Street, Pemberton's Bank, and Elemore Lane. There were only 22 deaths from Diarrhoea in 1897.

There have been 265 notifications of Infectious Diseases:—	Notification of Infectious Diseases.
Scarlet Fever.....	230 cases
Erysipelas .....	24 „
Typhoid Fever ..	7 „
Diphtheria .....	1 „
Puerperal Fever.....	2 „
Continued Fever .....	1 „
	265

There were 31 cases of Scarlet Fever during the first nine months of the year, occurring in various parts of the district, and 199 cases from October 1st to December 31st. The epidemic was of a very mild type, and the onset in October was principally confined to the Hetton Downs Ward, though at the end of the year it had extended to all parts of the district. Every effort was made to prevent the spread of the disease, but the mildness of the outbreak, together with the fact that nearly all the cases were young children, rendered this most difficult as in very many instances, the parents could not realise any danger, and it is well nigh impossible to keep children confined to the house when so slightly affected. The only practicable course to prevent the transmission of the disease is entire isolation, which, generally speaking, is most difficult to obtain. I have reason to suspect that some of the earlier cases were overlooked by the parents, and thus became a centre of infection. In one instance, a young man who was daily engaged in the delivery of milk, and had delivered it that morning, came to me at mid-day complaining of sore throat; his temperature was high, and on examination I found his body covered with the characteristic rash. He was removed to the Hospital in a few hours, and his clothing, also the house where he lived, were disinfected. I do not think that any cases came from that source.

- Precautions taken. Every house in which a case of Scarlet Fever occurred was carefully disinfected. There were only two deaths from Scarlet Fever, but that does not represent the mortality, as some of those notified in December died this year.
- Erysipelas. There is an increase in the number of cases of Erysipelas, and the disease is more virulent than it has been for some years.
- Typhoid Fever. The cases of Typhoid were sporadic, and scattered all over the district. There were not two cases in any one street.
- Disposal of Typhoid Excreta. The pail system, by which all excreta is deposited in a vessel containing a powerful germicide, is still carried out, and seems an efficient means of preventing the spread of the disease. It may be of interest to remark that other districts in the County are now adopting the same system.
- Smallpox Precautions taken. In the earlier part of the year there was a serious outbreak of smallpox in an adjoining County, and in accordance with the request of the Medical Officer of Health for this County, I addressed a letter to the medical practitioners of this district asking for early information of suspicious cases. I also instructed the keepers of lodging-houses to inform me at once of any person applying for lodgings who might appear to be ill. No cases of smallpox occurred in this district.
- Sanitary condition of District. While the sanitary condition of your district is much improved, there is still great room for further improvement.
- The open ash middens with privies attached, and with the bottom in nearly every case below the level of the surrounding surface, must always produce more or less pollution of the soil, and may cause disease to be conveyed to a considerable distance.
- Ash-closets. Further experience confirms the opinion I expressed in my last annual report as to the superiority of those ash closets where the ash is delivered direct on the excrement, rather than by a side shoot. The former plan has its drawbacks, but the advantages of improved sanitation more than compensate for them.

The scavenging of the greater portion of the district is carried out by contract, and, generally speaking, the existing arrangements are satisfactory. There are, however, certain localities where no direct access to the conveniences is provided, and which are not included in the existing contract. The houses in these localities are therefore not scavenged by the contractors, consequently many of the privies and ashpits are never thoroughly cleaned out. I think it highly desirable in the interests of the public health that such a state of affairs should be remedied.\*

Scavenging.

There is need for a good system of surface water drainage in many portions of the district. Many of the drains at present used for surface water are the old sewers, the sides of which are constructed of rubble, and the cover of rough flat stones or wood. In a dry season, such as we had last year, these old drains are very offensive at times, and are very likely to originate and perpetuate Zymotic diseases. Drains constructed thus would retain the infection for a long time in an active condition, and it would take years before such could be considered free from noxious and dangerous material.

Surface Water Drainage.

The following paragraph appeared in my report for 1897 :—“The practice of throwing slops into ash closets may have lessened a little, but is still largely practised, and contributes to, or causes the insanitary condition in which ash closets are sometimes found. The practice is probably pursued through ignorance, but whatever the cause the result is the same, a likelihood to engender and foster disease.”

Slops in Ash-closets.

The practice is less general but still frequent.

The water supply of the district is sufficient. It comes from a feeder which is tapped in the shafts of Eppleton Pit and Elemore Pit. The water is pumped into two reservoirs, one at the Downs Pit and the other at Easington Lane, and is distributed by pipes to each house in the district. The supply is from the same source as that distributed by the Sunderland and South Shields Water Company.

Water Supply.

The sewerage of your district is of modern construction, and is very efficient.

Sewerage.

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\*At the Council meeting of February 14th, and prior to the reading of this report, it was agreed that arrangements be made in the ensuing contract for the scavenging of the whole of the district, excepting farm houses and farm labourers' cottages.



Offensive  
Odours from  
Sewers.

Complaints have from time to time been made about offensive odours from the man-holes, but these have been less frequent since the sewers have been regularly and systematically flushed.

Dairies and  
Cowsheds in  
relation to  
Tubercular  
Disease.

The condition of the Dairies and Cowsheds in your district is quite up to the average, but in view of the acknowledged danger to the public health caused by the transmission of tubercular disease in its varied forms, to human beings, by the consumption of milk from cows that may appear to be in good health, I think it highly desirable that very strict attention should be given to the milk supply and the conditions under which that supply is produced.

Tuberculosis  
in Slaughtered  
Animals.

The question of the transmission of tubercular disease in connection with the milk supply, is closely allied with that of the meat supply, as it is an undoubted fact that the said disease may be spread by the consumption of meat from infected beasts. It is quite possible that animals may appear to be in a sound healthy condition, and yet after slaughter it may be discovered that there is deposit of tubercle in the lungs or other parts of the body. Hence great care should be observed to prevent tubercular infection from this source.

Food Supply :  
Fruit.

The food supply of the district is fairly satisfactory. The fruit provided by local tradesmen is usually wholesome, and shops and store-houses are clean and in good order, but I have had reason to find fault with articles of food sold by a certain class of hawkers. I find that with these, while the greater part is sound, there may be a number of apples, oranges, or other fruit rotten and unfit for food, and mixed with that which is good. It is a mistake to purchase fruit from these irregular hawkers, as it may have been stored for a day or two in a house in which there is infectious disease, and is thus likely to convey infection. This particularly applies to oranges exposed for sale covered with tissue paper. I have given attention to this lately, and shall continue to do so.

Fish.

The fish supply I think shows improvement. At times when there is a glut of immature unseasonable fish in the market, I find casual hawkers (that is, hawkers who come once or twice and may never come again), bring fish that are small and very inferior, but which I have scarcely felt justified in condemning. In these cases I always caution the sellers, and such cautions probably have a good effect.

The Inspector and I have systematically visited the slaughter houses, and find they are kept in a fairly good condition. The structural arrangements of some are faulty, but they are quite up to the average generally, and improvements are being effected. The quality and condition of animals slaughtered are better than was the case a few years ago. Slaughter Houses.


I regret to observe that carts and wagons used for the delivery to customers of articles of food are not always kept in such a clean condition as they ought to be. As a rule all butchers' carts are clean, but wagons for the delivery of groceries and fruit, and also milk carts, frequently present a very dirty, untidy appearance. While I cannot go so far as to say it is positively dangerous to the public health, yet it is repulsive, and I feel sure that the tradesmen and societies only require their attention to be called to such a thing to have it remedied. Dirty Carts for the delivery of articles of food.

The lodging houses are in fair condition, and are perhaps as tidy and orderly as can be expected, considering the class of people who make use of them. The yards of both are laid for some distance with cement, and are thereby much improved. Lodging Houses.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES ADAMSON, M D.



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TABLE I.

Showing the Total Deaths and Death Rates from  
July 22nd, 1895, to December 31st, 1898.

	Total No. of Deaths.	Rate per M. on 1891 Census.	Rate per M. on Estimated Population.
From July 22nd to Dec. 31st, 1895 .....	150	26·7	24·1
For year ending Dec. 31st, 1896.....	259	20·35	18·17
For year ending Dec. 31st, 1897.. ..	204	16·03	14·07
For year ending Dec. 31st, 1898.....	266	20·9	18



TABLE II.

Showing the Mortality of Children under 5 Years  
from July 22nd, 1895, to Dec. 31st, 1898.

	Total Deaths.	Rate per M. on 1891 Census.
From July 22nd to Dec. 31st, 1895 .....	92	16·3
Year ending Dec. 31st, 1896	163	12·8
"    "    1897	98	7·7
"    "    1898	151	11·86

The Infant Mortality, (that is deaths of Infants under 1 year), was 175 per 1,000 births in 1896, 137 in 1897, and 209 in 1898.



TABLE III.

Showing the Number of Infectious Diseases Notified from  
July 22nd, 1895, to Dec. 31st, 1898.

	July 22 to Dec. 31, 1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	Total.
Typhoid Fever.....	43	6	19	7	75
Scarlet Fever .....	8	26	4	230	268
Erysipelas .....	6	34	15	24	79
Diphtheria .....	1	3	3	1	8
Membranous Croup	1	3	2	...	6
Relapsing Fever ...	...	2	...	1	3
Puerperal Fever ...	...	...	2	2	4
Total.....	59	74	45	265	443











