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Contributors

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REPORT

OF

H. D. JOHNS, M.D.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR

HORNSEA-WITH-BURTON URBAN

DISTRICT COUNCIL,

Yorks

FOR THE YEAR 1910.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT.

*The following Report was presented
by the Medical Officer of
Health for the year 1910 :*

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

Gentlemen,—

Although the past year cannot be counted as a very healthy one, the run of illness has all been of a general character, that is to say, there have been no epidemics of any kind. No structural alterations of my district have been made since my last report, such as new roads, etc., but the condition of our main roads has improved. I am well aware that it would require the expenditure of a considerable sum of money to put our roads into first-rate condition; therefore the matter cannot be entertained at present. I would, however, draw your attention to the condition of Clifford Street and Clifton Street, which are private roads, and in a very bad state of repair, having holes in them two inches deep, into which liquid manure gravitates. I think all such roads should be put in proper repair and taken over by your Council. The defence of the foreshore, which you undertook some three years ago at a cost of about £11,000, is quite satisfactory, having withstood the autumn

storms without appreciable damage. I would remind those whom it may interest that this extensive work was carried out without any addition being made to the rates to defray the cost, and that, had not you taken this work promptly in hand, Hornsea would have lost its most valuable asset, viz., its Sea front.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.

You will understand that in a community like our own it is impossible to estimate the number of inhabited houses with anything like accuracy, for our population is a very moving one, but I estimate that there are 775 inhabited houses at the present time, with an average of about $4\frac{1}{2}$ persons to each house, which is ample accommodation. I am studying the Housing, and Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909, and will report to you upon it.

SEWERAGE EXCREMENT: DISPOSAL.

The drains have received regular and proper attention during the past year. When one remembers that about 680 of our 800 houses are now connected with the main sewer it is obviously very important that flushing should never be neglected. The scavenging is properly performed, and I have received no complaints under this heading. The main sewer in Westgate has been re-laid, and is now in a satisfactory condition.

NUISANCES.

I have made regular and systematic inspection of my district throughout the year, and have specially investigated any nuisance which has been reported to me. The Sanitary Inspector has kept a register of work done under this heading. The ash heap has been removed from the Hull Road, and ashes are being disposed of as soon as possible, but there is bound to be unavoidable delay at times, for ashes cannot be carted upon ploughed land at all seasons and in all weathers. I am glad to say that I have not had to make any special report to you on existing nuisances during the past year.

MILK SUPPLY.

Last year the milk as supplied to my district was uniformly good. I have furnished all new dairymen with copies of the regulations which I drew up two years ago. The regulations give detailed instructions as to the treatment of the cows, precautions to be taken by the milkmen, and the proper cleansing of all dairy utensils. None of our milk supply comes from a distance, but some comes from the Skirlaugh district, therefore I have asked the Sanitary Authority to co-operate with me to ensure a pure supply. None of the cases of infectious disease which I shall report to you presently owe their origin to infected milk.

WATER SUPPLY.

In my last annual report I described the sinking of the New Well in detail, and reported that we had failed to obtain water from it.

In July we suffered from a shortage of water which threatened to become serious had not a member of this Council come to the rescue, sunk a bore to the N.-W. of our waterworks, connected it with our Town supply, and delivered an average of 25,000 gallons per day. Our consumption of water in the summer is about 80,000 gallons per day, therefore this addition meant everything to Hornsea.

This auxiliary supply was commenced on 30th July, the Saturday before Bank Holiday, and continued until 15th October, when it was discontinued, being no longer required. This supply can again be obtained when needed.

Although we are certain of a plentiful supply, it is not of initial purity, and requires a certain amount of treatment before we can supply it to our consumers, therefore your Council is now negotiating with Hull to obtain water direct from that city. In the meantime, we have an ample amount of water of a wholesome quality both for our winter and summer requirements.

While we are establishing a permanent supply, I am afraid we cannot absolutely exclude the larvæ of midges and flies which sometimes appear in the water. I admit these insects are objectionable, but they are absolutely harmless.

There has been no case of water-borne disease during the nine years that I have been Medical Officer of Health, and I can also vouch for other nine years prior to that. Proper analyses in bacteriological examinations are being made at intervals.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

I have much pleasure in informing you that only five cases of infectious disease have arisen within my district during the past twelve months—two of these were scarlet fever, two diphtheria, and one enteric or typhoid. The case of enteric did not rightly belong to us, for the patient had been living in a lodging-house in Hull and came to Hornsea during the second week of the disease, so you will agree that it is impossible to guard against the "typhoid carrier." These cases were all inhabitants of separate houses, therefore one may claim that the isolation and disinfection was efficient.

Five cases of scarlet fever have been brought from Hull with the disease actually developed. As these were all Hull ratepayers, the Hull Sanitary Authority sent their ambulance and removed them with the least possible delay. The infected houses were disinfected under my supervision, and there was no spread of the disease.

You will agree with me that the fact that we have had an exceptional immunity from infectious disease in the past does not justify us in resting content without proper means of isolation.

On 5th July our Chairman and myself attended a conference at the County Hall, Beverley, which was called for the purpose of considering the best means of providing isolation hospitals for the whole of the Riding. The details of the scheme were very clearly put before us by the Chairman of the Sanitary Committee of the County Council, and we voted in favour of the proposal, subject to the final approval of this Council. The proposal was to provide five isolation hospitals for the whole district, viz., at Beverley, Kilham, Sproatley, Pocklington, and Sherburn. Under this scheme there would be 56 beds, or 1 for every 1,700 of the population. No parish would be more than

17 miles from a hospital, which distance with our present means of locomotion, would be no serious consideration.

I earnestly recommend you to seek powers from the Local Government Board to include cancer and consumption (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) with the notifiable diseases. The order of the Local Government Board, dated 18th December, 1908, enjoins that Poor Law Medical Officers should notify to the Medical Officer of Health any pauper who may be suffering from consumption, but this does not meet the needs of a community like our own, for several persons are brought here to die of one of these diseases each year, and I have no certain means of gaining information of the fact. In my opinion both these diseases are infectious and some person may unknowingly occupy an infected room and so contract the disease.

It is my custom, when I know of a death from either cancer or consumption, to have any room which the patient has occupied disinfected with very great care, but this matter should not be left to chance.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT.

All business establishments which come under this Act are in a satisfactory condition. There has only been one accident during the year, and that not of a serious character. I have resigned my position as Certifying Factory Surgeon owing to increasing calls upon my time.

DEATHS.

The number of deaths at all ages belonging to my district is 40. We had the same number in 1904, 46 in 1905, and 55 in 1907. Three of these 40 persons died outside the district, viz., 2 in the Hull Royal Infirmary and one at Stepney Station.

Five persons died after a residence of less than three months in Hornsea, this

improperly increases our death rate from 13.5 to 14.79 per 1,000. Cancer and malignant disease figure very prominently as a cause of death, five out of our 40 deaths being due to these diseases. The high death-rate from malignant disease cannot be traced to any local conditions, but I draw attention to it to strengthen my request for compulsory notification. There were three deaths due to Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

Eight children died under one year of age, i.e., 3 owing to premature birth, 1 gastritis, 1 enteritis, and 1 influenza, 2 all other causes.

Thirteen deaths were of persons over 65 years of age. There were 6 deaths from heart disease, all but 1 being persons over 65 years of age. There was only 1 suicide, and that of a man unknown.

BIRTHS.

Sixty-two births have been registered during the year, as against 67 in 1909, but this is only the second time in nine years that we have been over 60.

This year's birth-rate is 23.92—the second best on record.

Of our 62 births, 39 were boys and 23 girls. There were 2 illegitimate children born this year, as against 4 in 1909 and 3 in 1908.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, I would make the following requests to you, viz.:

1. That this Report should be printed and given to anyone interested in it.
2. That you should take steps to acquire the control of all private streets.
3. That you should petition the Local Government Board to allow us to include Cancer and Pulmonary Tuberculosis amongst Notifiable Diseases.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

H. D. JOHNS, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health for Hornsea.