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Contributors

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Kingsbridge Urban District Council.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1904.

Gentlemen,—I have the honour to submit to you my eleventh annual report, dealing with the health matters of your district, for the year ending 31st December, 1904.

Last year, as you doubtless recollect, I entered into a general description of "THE PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS" of the district, touching upon the question of "HOUSE ACCOMMODATION: ITS ADEQUACY AND FITNESS" and "SUPERVISION OVER THE ERECTION OF NEW HOUSES."

It is therefore unnecessary for me to recapitulate them in this report, as the conditions as then described have existed during the period which I have now under consideration.

SEWAGE AND DRAINAGE.

The general system remains the same as when last reported upon, but it has during the year been rendered more satisfactory by the fitting of an automatic escape valve at the out-fall of the main sewer. This valve, while allowing free outlet from the sewer from "Salt Mill Quay" at low water, is closed by the incoming tide, which formerly used to enter the sewer and produce back pressure on the whole of the drainage system.

One of the defects of the system to which I drew attention in my last annual report, viz., the want of flushing cisterns in the closets, has already begun to be remedied since the introduction of the new supplementary water supply, and I trust that by the end of another year your Authority will have insisted upon all waterclosets being supplied with non-waste flushing cisterns.

It has been necessary, as in previous years, to provide adequate flushing for some of the dead level sewers by means of water carried in a cart to the manholes. From time to time the sewers have been inspected, and have been frequently disinfected.

THE REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL OF HOUSE REFUSE.

This remains as provided for during last year, and there are therefore still several large accumulations in positions which are by their nature undesirable. I am still of opinion therefore, as expressed in my last annual report, that some more satisfactory way could and should be found of disposing of the refuse, either by burning it in a suitable situation or utilizing it for filling in low-lying waste spaces.

In a previous annual report I drew attention to the considerable nuisance created by the use of open and improper receptacles for the holding of house refuse, and I am glad to state that your Authority has, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, formulated bye-laws enforcing the provision of properly constructed sanitary covered bins, which will obviate the nuisance which was constantly recurring on the footpaths and in the various passages.

WATER SUPPLY.

I have in previous reports, and especially in that for last year, referred at great length to the water supply of the District, and to the necessity for, and the means taken to obtain, a greater supply.

The scheme adopted in 1903 has now been completed, and the water thus obtained was available for use in November. So far it has been found abundant and of good quality.

Some days before it was contemplated to distribute the new supply, there was discovered in part of the reservoir some extraneous matter which on analysis proved to contain naphthalene and carbolic acid. It was not determined how this gained access to the reservoir, but precautions have been taken to prevent the possibility of any extraneous matter being introduced to the water supply in the future.

SUPERVISION OF LODGING HOUSES, WORKSHOPS, ETC.

As your Council is aware there are at present no "Common Lodging Houses" in the district.

The only "offensive trade" (Public Health Act, 1875) carried on in the district is that of a fellmonger and tanner, the premises of which have been frequently inspected and found satisfactory.

The slaughter houses, dairies, cowsheds, milk shops, bakehouses, factories and workshops have been periodically inspected by me, and have with few exceptions been found satisfactory. I would however repeat that though the cowsheds are clean they in many instances lack the prescribed cubic space for each animal; this defect however, I consider, is less serious in this district, where the cattle seldom remain stalled for any length of time. The owners of the three slaughter houses in the district have applied for and have been granted by your Authority the annual licenses. With regard to the bakehouses, most of them are modern and well constructed, one of them being fitted with machinery for the making of bread, which in my opinion, obviating as it does the necessity of hand kneading of the dough, is a meritorious advance towards hygienic cleanliness.

NUISANCES.

The nuisances discovered and reported on during the year have not been numerous, and have all been remedied under your Authority's orders.

A complete and satisfactory drainage scheme has been carried out for Martin's Yard and at Belle Vue Terrace, and considerable improvement has been made in the drainage of Port's Passage.

At "River View" the connections from the closets to the main sewer have been repaired on account of leakages discovered.

Chicago Urban District Council

ANNUAL REPORT ON WEATHER ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1911

The Council of the Chicago Urban District Council, organized in 1908, has the honor to present to you its annual report on the weather for the year 1911. The report is based on the observations made by the Council's weather observers, who have been working for the past several years to collect and analyze the weather data for the Chicago Urban District Council.

The report is divided into two parts: the first part contains the observations made by the Council's weather observers, and the second part contains the analysis of these observations.

The observations made by the Council's weather observers for the year 1911 are as follows: The average temperature for the year was 50.5 degrees Fahrenheit, which is 0.5 degrees Fahrenheit below the normal average for the year. The average precipitation for the year was 40.5 inches, which is 0.5 inches above the normal average for the year. The average number of days with rain for the year was 110, which is 10 days above the normal average for the year. The average number of days with snow for the year was 40, which is 10 days above the normal average for the year.

The analysis of these observations shows that the year 1911 was a year of average weather for the Chicago Urban District Council. The average temperature was slightly below the normal average, and the average precipitation was slightly above the normal average. The average number of days with rain and snow was also slightly above the normal average.

The Council of the Chicago Urban District Council is grateful to the many people who have helped it in its work during the past year. It is especially grateful to the Council's weather observers, who have been working hard to collect and analyze the weather data for the Chicago Urban District Council.

Very truly yours,
The Council of the Chicago Urban District Council

Chicago, Illinois, January 1, 1912

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In September I considered that the head of the Creek had become insanitary owing to the large accumulation of various forms of refuse; following a report of mine the obstructing matter has been removed and provision made for the periodical cleansing and levelling of the channel, whereby all nuisances are carried away. The nuisance caused by the periodic overflow of the manhole in Duke-street after heavy rainfall has been almost entirely abated by the diversion of the storm water into the proper surface channels. At "Avon House," Doddbrooke, where there have been two cases of diphtheria, the house drains were found to be very defective, and under your Authority's orders have been made good. Certain sanitary defects at the Council's schools, consisting of defective ventilation of the classrooms and boys' closets have been dealt with under the advice of the County Council's Architect, but in my opinion it is doubtful whether the additional ventilation of the former will be found to be sufficient.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

As I stated in last year's annual report, our means of dealing with infectious disease consist of compulsory notification, investigation of cases, and disinfection where possible of the premises occupied.

Though some years ago the question of providing an Isolation Hospital was considered (in conjunction with the Kingsbridge Rural District and the Salcombe Urban District) and a prospective site was decided upon, nothing further has been done in the matter, and though I was able to state in my last annual report that there had not been any occasion for such an institution, still when reviewing the infectious diseases which have occurred in the year now under consideration, one is forcibly convinced of the great advantages which such an establishment would have conferred upon the district as a means of preventing the spread of these diseases.

During the year I have considered it expedient to remove one typhoid patient to the Cottage Hospital, and three scarlet fever patients to an isolated cottage in the country, in order that they might not under their individual circumstances prove centres of further infection. In other cases it was as advisable, though unfortunately impossible, to take similar measures.

During the year I have received 39 notifications of the existence of infectious disease in the district, as compared with 19 during 1903. Of these, eight were diphtheria, seven erysipelas, nineteen scarlet fever, and five enteric or typhoid fever.

DIPHTHERIA.

These eight cases occurred in five houses: in four of the dwellings grave sanitary defects were found to exist, and being duly reported to your Authority were remedied.

ERYSIPELAS.

The seven cases had in my opinion no bearing on local insanitation.

SCARLET FEVER.

A mild epidemic of scarlet fever began in the latter part of July, and has continued until the end of the year under consideration. The fact of the epidemic being of a mild type, has in my opinion largely contributed to its continuance, as many parents have sought no medical advice for those under their care, and in ignorance of their duties under the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act, 1839, have failed to notify the medical officer of health of the existence of the disease, which has proved the focus of infection for others. On December 15th I reported to you as follows:—"There is, notwithstanding all the sanitary precautions taken and the advice given, so much ignorance and indifference shown by persons responsible for the safe keeping of those suffering from infectious disease, that I would suggest that your Council should have some notices printed and circulated setting forth the legal responsibilities of those who offend against the requirements of the Public Health Act, 1875. I beg to submit a copy of such a notice for your perusal and, I trust, adoption," and as a consequence these handbills have been provided by your Authority for circulation.

I am strongly of opinion that parents and those in custody of children should bear in mind how important it is to avoid as much as possible the aggregation of susceptible children, whether in private gatherings or public meetings, at times when infectious disease is epidemic in the district.

The 13 cases occurred in 13 families, and all possible precautions are being taken to cut short the epidemic.

I have referred to the removal of three of these cases: they occurred in the family of a dairyman who had them removed to an isolated house, with the result that the rest of his family escaped infection, and his dairy supply was safeguarded from any risk of contamination.

ENTERIC FEVER.

Of the five cases, one occurred in Martin's Yard, where the whole drainage system was found to be defective, and under your orders has been made quite satisfactory.

One case in Ebrington-street was, as reported to your Authority at the time, ascribed to the ingestion of cockles from the Estuary: and I again drew attention to the danger of infection from this source.

Two cases occurred in Connaught-row, where this disease has for some years been endemic, and for this reason I obtained your Authority's permission to destroy a quantity of bedding, and to empty the house and thoroughly disinfect it: besides which, various sanitary defects common to all the houses in the row have been improved. The situation of the block however is such that it can never be looked upon as a desirable residence.

The remaining case was of a doubtful nature and its origin could not be traced.

The district so far as I am aware, has been free from whooping cough, and only one or two cases of chicken-pox have been heard of. There has been no case of smallpox.

An epidemic of measles occurred in the middle of the year, but in the absence of provision for its compulsory notification, I am unable to say what dimensions it assumed.

For several years following I have not had occasion to advise the closing of the public schools on account of the prevalence of infectious disease in the district.

INSPECTION.

I have during the year made many systematic inspections of the district, irrespective of those called for by any particular outbreak of disease.

At the end of the year your Council was unfortunate enough to lose the services of your surveyor and sanitary inspector, Mr. H. Lane, who rendered good service to the district during his term of office. The Council after due consideration has determined to engage a successor at an increased salary, which I am inclined to hope has not only obtained the services of a very competent officer, but that it will tend to retain him in office for some time. I am strongly of opinion that frequent changes in the sanitary staff of the Council militate against steady improvement in the sanitary condition of the district.

VITAL STATISTICS.

During the year there have been registered 49 births, giving a birth-rate of 16.2 per thousand of population, and 38 deaths, giving a general death-rate from all causes of 12.5 per thousand of population.

As regards deaths from the principal zymotic diseases, there has been registered one death from measles.

There have been five deaths of children under one year of age, giving a percentage of total deaths of 13.1.

The percentage of deaths of children under one year of age of registered births is 10.2.

The percentage of deaths of children under five years of age of total deaths is 15.7.

Of the total 38 deaths, 21 occurred at or over the age of 65; 19 of these were over 70, and 8 over 80, the oldest being 90.

A comparison of these figures for the previous ten years appears in the first of the Local Government Tables herewith appended.

Five deaths have again been returned as due to phthisis, giving a mortality of 1.6 per thousand of population, which is not excessive.

Cancer accounts this year for three deaths, as compared with four in each of the preceding five years.

No death has been caused by influenza, and only four deaths have been known to result from this disease during the last eight years.

There has been no death from accident nor suicide.

The general death-rate of 12.5 per thousand of population is very much lower than that of last year, which was 17.5; it is below the average of the last eight years, and is indeed with two exceptions the lowest since 1896. It is to be noted that of the total deaths, 19, or 50 per cent., occurred beyond the ordinary expectation of life. The death-rate also compares very favourably with the rate for all England and Wales, which in the 142 smaller towns is 15.6, and for "Rural England" 15.3. (The rate for the Kingsbridge Rural District is 13.4.)

The birth-rate of 16.2 shows a marked falling off from all previous years; it is actually the lowest on record, the average for the preceding decade being 23.1, and the birth-rate for England and Wales being 27.3, for the 142 smaller towns 27.4, and for Rural England and Wales 26.8; these latter figures are also lower than in 1903.

The mortality of children under one year of age (10.2 per thousand) is happily very much lower than last year, and lower than the average of the last ten years. It also compares favourably with the infant mortality for all England, which in the 75 great towns is 160, in the 142 smaller towns 154, and in Rural England and Wales 125. For the purpose of such comparison this district, though an urban one, is very much smaller than those included under the term "smaller towns" by the Registrar General, and should be judged by the figures referring to "Rural England and Wales."

The zymotic death-rate is 3 per thousand of population, while for Rural England and Wales it is 1.28.

OPERATION OF THE FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901.

Under section 132 of the Factory and Workshops Act, 1901, it is my duty as Medical Officer of Health to your Council to report as follows:—

A register of workshops is kept by your Authority, and I have personally, together with your inspector, from time to time inspected the workshops and work-places in the district, and as regards (a) general cleanliness, (b) air space, (c) ventilation, and (d) provision of suitable sanitary arrangements, have found them satisfactory; (e) I have already referred to trades involving wet processes. I have failed to find that any home work is carried on.

Appended herewith is the new table provided by request of the Secretary of State, showing the number of inspections of factories, workshops, work-places, and home workers' premises made during the year, the number of defects found as regards nuisances under Public Health Acts and offences against the Factory and Workshops Act, and other matters.

UNION WORKHOUSE.

Two children have been born in the workhouse during the year, giving a general birth-rate of 22.2 per thousand of its population. There have been no deaths of children under one year of age. The total number of deaths at all ages is 15, giving a rate of 16.6 per thousand of its population: last year the rate was 28.4. The zymotic death-rate is nil.

Of the total deaths 12 or 80 per cent. occurred at or beyond the age of 70, and seven or 46 per cent. at the age of 80 or upwards, the oldest being 89.

I have again received no notification of infectious disease occurring in the institution. There have been no deaths from either cancer or phthisis.

The general sanitary arrangements of the house are satisfactory. As regards the water supply, the shortage of which in former years caused some embarrassment, the house now participates in the augmentation of the Kingsbridge supply, which has proved satisfactory.

Appended are the tabular statements required by the Local Government Board, the contents of which I have furnished to the extent of the information in my possession.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM HY. WEBB,

Medical Officer of Health.

The Kingsbridge Urban District Council.

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