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Glamorgan County Council.

Quarterly Report of the County Medical Officer to the Sanitary
Committee, held on the 5th day of June, 1896.

W. T. O'NEILL

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ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF GLAMORGAN.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

SUMMARY OF NOTIFICATION RETURNS.

Cases notified or ascertained during the Quarter ending 28th March, 1896.

DISTRICTS.	Estimated Population Mid-year 1895.	Small Pox.	Cholera.	Diphtheria.	Croup.	Erysipelas.	Scarlet Fever.	FEVERS.					OTHER DISEASES PREVALENT.					No. of Weekly Cards returned.
								Typhus.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Relapsing.	Continued.	Puerperal.	Measles.	Whooping Cough.	Pneumonia.	Diarrhoea.	Influenza.	
URBAN.																		
Aberavon Borough ...	7,500	3	..	45	..	5	23	..	2	..	..	3	XX	..	X	..	..	13
Aberdare	43,800	1	..	9	9	3	12	..	2	..	..	1	..	XX	XX	..	X	13
Barry	23,228	..	..	7	1	17	19	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Bridgend	6,136	16	..	..	..	4	6	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Briton Ferry ...	8,000	..	..	3	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Caerphilly	14,000	..	..	15	3	4	5	..	1	..	..	..	X	XX	XX	..	..	13
Cowbridge Borough	1,250	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	X	..	..	..	..	13
Garw and Ogmore	16,000	..	..	..	..	..	24	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Glyncorwg	5,500	..	..	..	..	..	11	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Maesteg	10,500	..	..	..	..	..	40	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Margam	7,500	..	..	10	..	6	7	..	4	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	13
Merthyr	66,324	10	..	4	..	25	33	..	52	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	13
Mountain Ash ...	24,000	..	..	2	2	12	75	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Neath Borough ...	12,000	1	..	..	..	..	3	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Oystermouth ...	4,100	1	..	3	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Penarth	14,000	..	..	..	..	1	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Pontypridd	36,855	3	..	7	2	15	181	..	2	..	..	2	..	XX	1	..	..	12
Porthcawl	1,800	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Ystradyfodwg ...	114,370	1	..	1	6	17	218	..	27	3	6	8	..	..	..	..	..	13
RURAL.																		
Cowbridge	6,700	..	..	4	3	5	4	..	..	..	..	3	X	X	X	..	X	5
Gelligaer and Rhigos	15,710	..	..	..	..	1	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Gower	7,550	..	..	..	..	..	5	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Llandaff and Dinas Powis	19,574	..	..	3	..	..	19	..	3	..	..	..	..	XX	..	..	..	13
Llangyfelach :—																		
Llangyfelach Division ...	11,266	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Llandilo-Talybont „	19,720	1	..	..	..	1	15	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Llantrisant and Llantwit																		
Fardre	9,500	..	..	1	..	1	5	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	X	..	..	6
Neath	23,953	1	..	3	1	7	56	..	4	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	13
Penybont	13,464	1	..	9	2	3	12	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Pontardawe :—																		
East Division	8,505	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
West „	10,672	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13

NOTE.—Aberdare is the only district where the "Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act" has not been adopted. Where figures are not given the prevalence of certain diseases is indicated thus :—A few cases, x; prevalent, xx; very prevalent, xxx. * No returns. † No cases.

Cases per 1,000 of population or the comparative prevalence of infectious sickness in each district of the County:—

DISTRICTS.	Estimated Population Mid-year, 1895.	Small Pox.	Cholera.	Diphtheria.	Group.	Erysipelas.	Scarlet Fever.	FEVERS.				
								Typhus.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Relapsing.	Continued.	Puerperal.
URBAN.												
Aberavon Borough	7,500	0·4	...	6·0	...	0·6	3·1	...	0·2	...	...	0·4
Aberdare	43,800	0·02	...	0·2	0·2	0·7	0·3	...	0·04	...	...	0·02
Barry	23,228	...	...	0·3	0·04	0·7	0·8	...	0·04	...	...	...
Bridgend	6,136	2·6	...	...	...	0·6	0·9	...	0·5	...	...	...
Briton Ferry	8,000	...	...	0·4	0·3	...	...	...	0·1	...	...	...
Caerphilly	14,000	...	...	1·1	0·2	0·3	0·4	...	0·07	...	...	...
Cowbridge Borough	1,250	...	...	...	...	...	0·8	...	...	...	...	...
Garw and Ogmore	16,000	...	...	...	...	...	1·5	...	...	...	...	...
Glyncorwg	5,500	...	...	...	...	...	2·0	...	...	...	...	...
Maesteg	10,500	...	...	...	...	...	3·9	...	0·1	...	...	...
Margam	7,500	...	...	1·3	...	0·8	0·9	...	0·5	...	...	0·2
Merthyr	66,324	0·1	...	0·04	...	0·2	0·3	...	0·5	...	...	0·01
Mountain Ash	24,000	...	...	0·08	0·08	0·5	3·0	...	0·2	...	...	...
Neath Borough	12,000	0·08	...	...	...	...	0·2	...	0·3	...	...	...
Oystermouth	4,100	0·2	...	0·6	...	...	0·2	...	0·2	...	...	...
Penarth	14,000	...	...	...	...	0·07	1·1	...	...	...	...	...
Pontypridd	36,855	0·08	...	0·2	0·06	0·4	4·9	...	0·06	...	...	0·06
Porthcawl	1,800	...	...	...	...	0·6	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ystradyfodwg	114,370	0·01	...	0·01	0·06	0·2	2·0	...	0·3	0·03	0·06	0·08
RURAL.												
Cowbridge	6,700	...	...	0·6	0·4	0·7	0·6	...	...	...	...	0·4
Gelligaer and Rhigos	15,710	...	...	...	...	0·06	0·6	...	...	...	...	...
Gower	7,550	...	...	...	...	...	0·6	...	0·3	...	...	...
Llandaff and Dinas Powis	19,574	...	...	0·1	...	...	0·9	...	0·1	...	...	...
Llangyfelach:—												
Llangyfelach Division	11,266	0·1	...	...	...	...	...	...	0·1	...	...	...
Llandilo-Talybont „	19,720	0·05	...	...	...	0·05	0·7	...	0·1	...	...	...
Llantrisant and Llantwit Fardre	9,509	...	...	0·1	...	0·1	0·5	...	0·2	...	...	...
Neath	23,953	0·04	...	0·1	0·04	0·3	2·1	...	0·2	...	...	0·04
Penybont	13,464	0·07	...	0·6	0·1	0·2	0·8	...	0·2	...	...	...
Pontardawe:—												
East Division	8,505	0·2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
West „	10,672	0·38	...	...	...	...	...	...	0·19	...	...	...

Cases notified or ascertained during each week of the Quarter ending 28th March, 1896 :—

DISEASES.	JANUARY.				FEBRUARY.					MARCH.				TOTAL.
	4th	11th.	18th	25th.	1st.	8th.	15th.	22nd.	29th.	7th.	14th.	21st.	28th.	
Small Pox ... ..	...	2	2	4	6	4	4	7	6	6	1	1	3	46
Cholera ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria	10	17	21	19	12	10	7	6	4	3	9	12	9	139
Croup	1	1	...	2	1	5	3	1	...	...	3	3	6	26
Erysipelas	7	10	15	13	10	5	12	14	13	9	7	7	5	127
Scarlet Fever	68	69	58	87	42	55	70	62	56	56	68	47	51	789
Typhus ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric or Typhoid	9	14	8	12	7	9	4	6	8	6	18	13	11	125
Relapsing ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	3
Continued ... ..	...	1	...	1	1	1	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	7
Puerperal	1	3	1	...	...	1	3	1	3	1	2	1	2	19
Measles ... ..	...	...	...	x	...	...	...	...	x	...	x	xx	xx	...
Whooping Cough	x	x	x	x	...	x	x	...	...	...	...	x	x	...
Pneumonia	x	x	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diarrhoea ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Influenza ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	x	...	...	x	...	...

NOTE.—Where figures are not given the prevalence of certain diseases is indicated as follows :—A few cases, x; prevalent, xx; very prevalent, xxx.

COMPARISON WITH THE PREVIOUS QUARTER.

Increase—Small pox, Diphtheria, Erysipelas, Relapsing and Continued Fevers.

Decrease—Croup, scarlet and typhoid fevers.

46 cases of *Small Pox* occurred in the Administrative County, as compared with 3 in the previous quarter. They were distributed thus:—3 at Aberavon, 1 at Aberdare, 16 at Bridgend, 10 at Merthyr, 1 at Neath, 1 at Oystermouth, 3 at Pontypridd, 1 at Ystradyfodwg, 2 at Llangyfelach, 1 in Neath Rural, 1 in Penybont, and 6 in Pontardawe.

There was a slight increase in the prevalence of *Diphtheria*, 139 cases as compared with 116 in the previous quarter. Of these 67 occurred in January, 39 in February, and 33 in March; 45 were at Aberavon, where it was epidemic, 9 in Aberdare, 7 in Barry, 3 in Briton Ferry, 15 in Caerphilly 10 in Margam, 4 in Merthyr, 3 in Mountain Ash, 3 in Oystermouth, 7 in Pontypridd, 1 in Ystradyfodwg, 4 in Cowbridge Rural, 3 in Llandaff and Dinas Powis, 1 in Llantrisant and Llantwit Fardre, 3 in Neath Rural, and 9 in Penybont, districts.

The highest percentage occurred at Aberavon (6.0), Margam (1.3), and Caerphilly (1.1).

26 cases of *Croup* were notified, as compared with 42 in the previous quarter. No local epidemic was indicated by the returns.

127 cases of *Erysipelas* were notified as compared with 106 in the previous quarter.

789 cases of *Scarlet Fever* were notified from 25 districts, as compared 836 from 23 districts in the previous quarter. Of these 282 occurred in January, 285 in February, and 222 in March. The districts of Porthcawl, Llangyfelach, and Pontardawe escaped entirely. The disease was most prevalent in Pontypridd (4.9), Maesteg (3.9), Aberavon (3.1), and Mountain Ash (3.0).

There was a decided decrease in the number of cases of *Typhoid Fever* notified. The number was 125 as compared with 270 in the previous quarter. Of these 43 occurred in January, 34 in February, and 48 in March. 52 cases happened at Merthyr. There was no other local epidemic indicated by the returns.

Nineteen cases of *Puerperal Fever* were notified as compared with 13 in the previous quarter. They were distributed thus:—Aberavon 3, Aberdare 1, Margam 2, Merthyr 1, Pontypridd 2, Ystradyfodwg 8, Cowbridge Rural 3, and 1 Neath Rural, Districts.

Measles appears to have been prevalent at Aberavon, *Whooping Cough* at Aberdare, Caerphilly, Pontypridd, and Llandaff and Dinas Powis, Districts; *Pneumonia* in Aberdare, Briton Ferry, and Caerphilly.

No prevalence of *Influenza* was reported from any district.

SPECIAL REPORTS.

The order of the Local Government Board, which defines the duties of Medical Officer, includes the following articles:—

- (15) " He shall give immediate information to Us of any outbreak of dangerous epidemic disease, and shall transmit to Us a copy of each annual report, and of any special report. He shall make a special report of the grounds of any advice which he may give to the Sanitary Authority, with a view of their requiring the closure of any school or schools, in pursuance of the Code of Regulations approved by the Education Department, and for the time being in force."
- (16) " At the same time that he gives information to Us of any outbreak of infectious disease, or transmit to Us a copy of his annual report he shall give the like information or transmit a copy of such report to the County Council of the County."

No special reports have been received up to 11th May.

SMALL POX.

The accompanying Table shews the incidence as to time and place of the 160 cases of Small Pox that occurred in Glamorganshire during the current year. Very few cases have been recently notified, and it seems that the prevalence of the disease is on the wane. In districts which had provided Isolation Accommodation for themselves or had made arrangements with neighbouring districts to receive their infected sick, the disease did not spread to any alarming extent in any instance. At Bridgend no accommodation whatever had been provided by the Sanitary Authority, with the consequence that 18 cases occurred. The expense occasioned to the Bridgend Authority by the prevalence of Small Pox in their district would have been sufficient to defray their cost of providing the permanent Isolation Hospital which is about to be erected by Order of the County Council.

Isolation and re-vaccination were rigidly exercised wherever possible, but the threatened prevalence of the disease amongst us, which was the means of providing two additional Small Pox Hospitals in the County, clearly proved that—

- (1) There is no time to prepare for fighting when the enemy is upon us.
- (2) It is far more economical and safer to have all our forces and appliances always in readiness.

DISTRICTS.	JANUARY.				FEBRUARY.				MARCH.			APRIL.			MAY.			TOTAL.					
	4th.	11th.	18th.	25th.	1st.	8th.	15th.	22nd.	29th.	7th.	14th.	21st.	28th.	4th.	11th.	18th.	25th.		2nd.	9th.	16th.	23rd.	
URBAN.																							
Aberavon	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Aberdare	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Barry	1
Bridgend	3	...	1	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
Briton Ferry	0
Caerphilly	0
Cowbridge	0
Garw and Ogmere	0
Glyncorwg	0
Maesteg	0
Margam	0
Merthyr	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Mountain Ash	3	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Neath Borough	2
Oystermouth	2
Penarth	4
Pontypridd	0
Porthcawl	5
Ystradyfodwg	0
RURAL.																							
Cowbridge	0
Gelligaer and Rhigos	0
Gower	0
Llandaff and Dinas Powis	0
Llangyfelach :—	1
Llangyfelach Division	1
Llandilo Talybont	1
Llantrisant and Llantwit Fardre	0
Neath	8
Penybont	0
Pontardawe :—	2
East Division	4
West "	0
Total for Administrative County	...	2	2	4	6	4	4	7	6	6	1	1	3	4	4	4	6	...	1	...	...	...	61
County Borough of Cardiff	7	6	4	3	4	1	2	...	...	3	1	2	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	37
County Borough of Swansea	5	...	1	3	3	2	13	3	1	5	5	10	3	2	2	2	1	...	62
WEEKLY TOTAL	3	4	11	17	8	8	14	10	10	14	4	7	10	7	14	10	2	5	1	2	...	160

BRIDGEND URBAN DISTRICT.

INSANITARY CONDITION OF CAEPENDRE ESTATE AND COYCHURCH ROAD.

In consequence of several letters complaining of the dangerous surroundings of dwellings in the above localities, and stating that the Urban District Council, the authority responsible for this insanitary condition, had not taken any action in the matter, I visited the spot with the Medical Officer of Health and Surveyor.

The following conditions were found to exist, and the person who made the complaint was fully justified in so doing:—

Fourteen houses in Ewenny and nine in Grove Roads were found to be drained into *improperly constructed* (dry walls) and *unventilated cesspools*, three of which were at the time overflowing over an unfinished back lane.

The condition of the back lanes in the locality is disgraceful, and a positive danger to the health of the inhabitants.

The public sewer in Merthyr Mawr Road is about 300 yards away.

All the houses on Caependre Estate, numbering some 57 in all, are drained in a similar way. Of these 47 are completed and 30 inhabited. All this was allowed by the Sanitary Authority during the last few years, and 24 of the houses were built within the last six months in this way, contrary to the expressed wish of the Surveyor, who had prepared three different plans for sewerage of the Estate.

On Coychurch Road there are four houses draining into one cesspool, which periodically overflows, producing a lake of sewage close to the back door of one of the dwellings. This has been allowed to exist at least for five months.

In the interests of the health and safety of the inhabitants of the localities concerned, it is imperative that immediate action be taken by the Council to remedy these dangerous nuisances so justly complained of.

8th April, 1896.

POLLUTION OF THE OGMORE RIVER.

I have lately received several complaints of the pollution of the river Ogmore at Bridgend, and a few days ago I inspected it once more. Its condition is disgustingly foul, and the stench therefrom unbearable and conducive to ill health and fever among the inhabitants. It is common knowledge that the Ogmore is the main sewer for Maesteg, Garw and Ogmore, Aberkenfig and Tondù, and Bridgend, and until these Authorities are compelled to provide for the disposal of their sewage, the foul condition of the river, the brunt of which is felt at Bridgend, will not be materially improved. The river in its passage through the town receives its sewage and other filth in the shape of house refuse, &c., thrown into it by the inhabitants. This, in dry seasons, as at present remains in its bed, producing a condition of things which is unbearable at the Coity and Pwlllyrocks outfalls, and in the neighbourhood of the Public Slaughter-house and Laundry.

A representation with respect to all the above Districts has been made to the Local Government Board, but with what results it is not yet known.

28th May, 1896.

CAERPHILLY URBAN DISTRICT.

Since my last Report (dated the 5th February, 1895) on the sanitary condition and requirements of this district, only a very few improvements have been made by the Council. These are :—

- 50 yards of sewer in Courthouse Street, Caerphilly.
- 400 yards of sewer in St. Martin's Road, Caerphilly.
- 100 yards of sewer in Van Road, Caerphilly.
- Sewer from the Universal Hotel to the Company's houses, Senghenydd.
- Street lamps at Llanbradach.
- Water main extended to Collier's Arms, Nelson.
- Slop-water sewer extended up Heol Fawr, Nelson.

On the other hand, the work accomplished by private owners has been very considerable, especially in the rapidly-growing centres of Llanbradach and Senghenydd, which have assumed a totally different appearance, thanks to the persistent energy of the Sanitary Inspector, who has been continually dinning private owners to put their property in a sanitary condition. The work done by the Council is most insignificant as compared with that done by private owners. On the occasion of my first inspection of the district, some three years ago, I heard much the same tales as on the present occasion—Caerphilly and Pwllpant were to be provided with a better water supply; Nantgarw, Glanllyn, Taff's Well and Tongwynlais, were to be connected with the main sewer; the pollution of rivers was to be stopped; and a host of other promises were made, but not kept.

When complaints were made by your Committee, the answer that you always got was that the District Council was doing its best. I am of opinion that the District has not fulfilled its promises to your Committee, and I find that the last communication to the Clerk of the Llandaff and Dinas Powis Authority, with respect to connecting Tongwynlais with their sewer, was made during March, 1895. Since that time Tongwynlais has been a hot-bed of fever, and it is significant that 20 out of the 23 cases of typhoid fever notified in the whole district during 1895 occurred here. This is not to be wondered at, for its sanitary condition is deplorable, and there is everything ready for the breeding and spread of filth diseases. Again you were promised that the pollution of the Aber brook at Senghenydd should be stopped, and a temporary cesspool provided. As far as this pollution is concerned, it is worse than ever, and the sewer discharges its foul contents direct to the brook. I also find that the contract for extending the same sewer is about to be let, which is again to discharge direct to the river lower down. It should be pointed out that at Senghenydd the District Council pour unpurified sewage direct to the stream, whereas at Llanbradach, where the work was carried out by private owners, temporary cesspools have been provided pending the construction of the main sewer. The Caiach brook at Nelson and the Cledyr at Caerphilly are as polluted as ever, and at the former place, where a system is much needed, no steps have been taken to remove the filth from the surroundings of dwellings. An inspection of the open sewer at the back of Penuell Road cannot but confirm the truth of my remarks.

I will now make a few remarks on the various centres in the order in which they were inspected.

NELSON.—The few improvements carried out here have been noted. The *water supply* is inadequate, and I am informed that a storage reservoir is to be provided. The *open sewer* and *privies* at the back of Penuell Road are in the same disgraceful and dangerous condition as heretofore. The yard at Nelson Inn is

overflowing with stable and pigstye manure. There are three houses opposite Wern Crescent *without* drains of any sort. Troughs and down-pipes are often wanting in many instances. The school privies, drains, and ash heap are unsatisfactory. The cesspit privies belonging to houses in Commercial Street, situated in the back yards which cannot be emptied except through the houses, are a source of danger to the inhabitants; no back lane is available, and ash heaps were noticed in the adjoining fields. Tonwytach cottages have been improved, but the roofs are still dilapidated. At the back of Picton Hotel there was noticed an accumulation of slop and other refuse from six houses, in an open ditch.

LLANBRADACH AND PWLLYPANT.—The improvements carried out by private owners have totally changed the appearance of this rapidly-growing mining centre. The street lamps is the only improvement effected by the Council. The brook and river are *enormously* polluted with small coal by the Cardiff Steam Colliery Company. The back lanes, pails, and slop-water drain which empties into the brook on the side of the main road at the lower end of Longfield Crescent, are unsatisfactory, and should be immediately remedied. The condition of the county road opposite Wingfield Crescent is also unsatisfactory, and without proper curbing, channelling, pavement, or surface drains.

Pwllypant is practically *without* a water supply, and close upon 80 houses are dependent upon an unprotected spout. Here the condition of things will be deplorable should we have a dry summer.

SENGHENYDD.—A great improvement has been carried out in the surroundings of the Company's houses, all of which are now being connected with the sewer provided by the Council.

The *water* before it reaches the reservoir is not sufficiently protected, and may be easily polluted. Twenty-six houses on Parc Newydd Estate are dependent on a spout, and 16 in Windsor field on an unprotected surface well. The present supply will not reach some of the houses about to be erected on Gwern-y-milwr hill.

The 18 pail closets in Stanley Road should be converted into w.c.'s, for no back lane has been provided for the scavenger's cart.

The main street is in a very bad condition, and the old parish road has been filled up in places to a depth of five to six feet.

CAERPHILLY.—The *water supply* is very short, and at this time of the year is cut off from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. Several lengths of new sewers (already noted) have been provided. The *main* and some *private streets*, such as Pentreban, Windsor, St. Fagans, and Stockland, sadly require repairs. All the *slaughter-houses* are unfit for the purpose, especially the one by the Cledyr brook. The three houses on Bedwas road, condemned by the Medical Officer of Health some years ago, are still occupied. There is a large number of houses without through ventilation, especially on the "Twyn." No attempt has been made to provide drains for the Red Cow yard, where a stable without a drain abuts on the pine end of Boar's Head.

The common lodging house has been converted into dwellings, and the new one is in every way satisfactory, except the drainage of its cellars, which is being attended to.

THE TAFF WARD VILLAGES.—Practically the whole of *Nantgarw*, about one-third of *Glanyllyn*, two-thirds of *Taff's Well* and *Tongwynlais*, are now supplied with water from the Pontypridd Water Company's main. All owners have been served with notices to connect, but it is difficult to convince some of them that water obtained from a sewage-sodden soil is other than fit for drinking purposes. The drainage is still most primitive; a few open gullies here and there discharge their contents into a water course or into the soil in the neighbourhood of dry-steined deep wells. No connections have yet been made with the main sewer; they were about to be made a long time ago, and they are now about to be made. As a matter of fact no arrangements have yet been made with the Ystradyfodwg and Pontypridd Joint Sewerage Board.

The condition of Tongwynlais is most deplorable, and last year it was continually a hot-bed of fever. You were told at your last Committee meeting that the plans for the sewerage of the village were ready, and that it would be commenced forthwith. As a matter of fact, the arrangements for connecting have not yet been made.

The *scavenging* of the whole district is much better performed than used to be the case.

The requirements of this district are very numerous, and as follows :—

- (1) An improved supply of water for *Caerphilly*, *Pwllypant*, and *Nelson*, parts of *Senghenydd*, and of the Taff Ward Villages.
- (2) The sewerage of *Caerphilly*, *Nelson*, part of *Senghenydd*, and the *Taff Ward Villages*.
- (3) The prevention of the pollution of rivers with sewage, especially at *Senghenydd*, *Caerphilly*, and the *Taff Ward Villages*, especially *Glanyllyn*, where the privies discharge on the river's bank. And with small coal, the brook at *Llanbradach*.
- (4) The provision of Isolation Accommodation, Disinfecting Apparatus and Ambulance.

This is a very large order, but all the items are absolutely necessary in the interests of the public health and safety.

Judging from the Annual Report of Dr. Thomas for 1895, I am of opinion that a representation under section 19 (2) of the Local Government Act of 1888 should be made to the Local Government Board.

20th April, 1896.

PONTYPRIDD URBAN DISTRICT.

My last Report on this district is dated 21st January, 1895. Since that time I find that considerable progress has been made with the subsidiary sewers, and in other respects.

DWELLINGS AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS.—A large number of new houses have been and are being erected in several localities, especially in Coedpenmaen and Trallwn Gardens. Notwithstanding this increase, it is said that more are required. In my last Report I called attention to the fact that the Building Bye-laws with respect to house drainage were disregarded, and that it was uncommon to meet with fresh air inlets or ventilating shafts, even for a group or street of houses. I now find that not only no improvement has taken place in this matter, but that a much more common class of dwellings have been allowed to be erected and inhabited. If the builder provides fresh air inlets and foul air outlets, all well and good, but if he does not, all well and good, and it seems no one remonstrates with him. Let me take a row of houses known as *Thurston Road*.

The row consists of ten houses, two already occupied, and *all* let, but none so far certified as fit for occupation, and if these are passed as fit for occupation, then I say that this is equivalent to a general invitation for more jerry builders to flock into the district. These houses at *Thurston Road* are damp and generally unfinished. They consist of two rooms on the ground floor and two bedrooms above, in the smaller of which there is not a sufficient cubic space for two adults. There are no pantries, and the space under the stairs are supposed to serve for that purpose. They are brick built, and the partitions upstairs are of laths and mortar, and only 7 inches from the fire-place in the front bedroom. It seems a pity that builders should be allowed to put up such structures. If buildings during construction were frequently inspected, and the bye-laws rigidly enforced, there would soon be an end to such a practice, but as long as the Council is apathetic in the matter, there will be no improvement, but the reverse.

Two Houses in High Street, condemned long ago by the Medical Officer of Health are still occupied.

Old Rolling Mill Cottages are damp, the drains defective, and troughs and downpipes absent.

At *Cilfynydd* many *back yards* are improperly paved, the soil is sodden with filth, and practically all the drains are imperfectly trapped by means of "lip traps," which are worse than useless. Many are also choked, *e.g.*, at the back of *Anna Street*.

Six Houses at Pontshon Norton Road are unconnected with the sewer, and their slop drains discharge to the canal.

Old Chain Works Row.—Fourteen houses with defective pavements for the back yards.

The Cellars, Fothergill and Park Streets, Treforest, though considerably improved, still are without *through* ventilation, eave gutters and down-pipes.

Richard's Court.—No improvement, still damp, and without eave gutters and down-pipes.

69-81, *Cardiff Road*.—Here the drains and privies discharge direct to the river; the back areas are not paved. There was a very disagreeable smell at the time of my visit, and the inhabitants declared that it was unbearable in summer. The condition of this road is the most insanitary in the district, and should be remedied at once.

Red Cow Row, Hopkinstown.—The backs of these houses are close to the polluted river, and very insanitary. The sewer, which has but a slight fall, should have an automatic flushing tank at its upper end. Typhoid fever is always present here, and last year there were 5 cases, all in one house.

Four Vans in Millfield are without closet accommodation or water.

Lane back of Victoria Street.—An accumulation of refuse.

Temperance Place.—Accumulation of refuse, and dilapidated closets—only two for seven houses.

Davies Court.—Defective drains and a tumble-down w.c.

River Street.—House refuse and manure in abundance, and a quantity of putrid fish thrown to river from the fishmonger's shop above.

Mathew's Court.—One broken w.c. pan and one defective flushing cistern; house refuse and excrement about the corners.

WATER SUPPLY.—The water supply is very inadequate, and no more is available than a year ago. Two large reservoirs are being constructed above the site of the old Maerdy Reservoir, but will not be completed for a long time. Should we have a dry summer, things will again be very serious, and the flushing of w.c.'s and sewers a matter of impossibility. During the dry season of last year water was very scarce, and supplied intermittently. A plentiful supply of pure and wholesome water is most essential for the district.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.—There is a marked improvement in the scavenging of the whole district. It is now undertaken by the District Council, and under the supervision of an Inspector. Refuse is frequently seen tipped into the river, and along lanes and courts. Especially is this the case in No. 1 District, *e.g.*, at Pwllwau, and along the lanes and courts between Taff Street and the river.

A large quantity of refuse in Millfield is deposited on the river's banks and elsewhere, which is very unsightly if not dangerous.

Tipping has been discontinued in several localities, and at present only four tips are used, and the most objectionable as regards position is the one south of the Public Abattoir, near the main road and river. Cremation is the only satisfactory method for the disposal of refuse in such a district as Pontypridd. At Cilfynydd I found house refuse deposited near the engine ashes which were being ground for making mortar.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.—It was stated in previous Report that a scheme was being then prepared for the sewerage of Cilfynydd. The main sewer and subsidiaries are practically completed, and the house connections have been commenced. It is of the greatest importance that the present cesspools, many of which are situated on the steep slopes above the houses, should be, once for all, emptied and filled up with lime and earth. The house drains also require remodelling throughout, and the defective "lip-traps," which are in general use, should be replaced by proper earthenware gullies. Several back areas require to be paved, and the w.c.'s furnished with flushing tanks. All the surface water drains (at Cilfynydd) are choked. At Pontshon-Norton there are still some houses with cesspit privies and slop drains which discharge to canal or river.

PIGSTYES, COWSHEDS AND MANURE.—There are many pigstyes at Cilfynydd without drains, and improperly kept. At back of Wood Street is a cowshed, with only 400 cubic feet per animal, and without a manure receptacle. Near Bonvilstone Terrace, is a newly erected cowshed without a cesspool or a drain. Stable manure was tipped into the mill stream (Mill Field), and there was an accumulation of tons of manure at Powis' stables, and filthy pigstyes without drains in the same locality.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—The Public Abattoir, Mr. Evans', Mr. Phillips', the Cilfynydd, and Hopkinstown, slaughter houses were found clean and satisfactorily kept. There is no change in the slaughter house at Fothergill Street, Treforest, which is unsatisfactory and unsuitable, especially in position. It drains into a gully at the back door of the house which adjoins it, and over it is a hay loft.

RIVER POLLUTION.—As far as sewage is concerned the river is not so polluted. In other respects there is not much difference—house refuse, manure, earth, &c., are tipped into it here and there. As usual small coal and dirty washings from the Great Western Colliery are poured into the bed of the river, there to accumulate until it is cleared by a flood. At the Treforest Tinplate Works, it further receives chemical contamination in the form of vitriol and copperas. A brick receptacle for the reception of the pickling fluid was being constructed.

SYSTEMATIC INSPECTION.—A house-to-house inspection of the district has never been made. I am fully aware that such a procedure would entail a large amount of time and labour, and I maintain that the sanitary condition of the district will not be satisfactory until such a course is adopted. It has been done with great benefit in other districts that are much larger and more scattered than Pontypridd.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.—There are *two* registered common lodging houses in the district, and *one* unregistered and not fit for registration, but still used as such. The model lodging house at Coedpenmaen is by no means so clean and well arranged as it ought to be.

I was informed that an application is to be made shortly to the Council to register a large house in Mill Street as a common lodging house. The premises which are situated in one of the chief and most frequented thoroughfares in the town, are altogether unsuitable for the purpose, and it would be a disgrace to the district to have a common lodging house in this locality, and I trust the Council will refuse the application.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—The premises lately and at present used for isolating Small Pox cases are well adapted for the purpose. A difficulty would be experienced in the case of female patients, but, possibly, the adjoining room, now used as a store room, could be acquired for a female ward from the owners. The building would then make an admirable Small Pox Hospital.

I consider the site which I inspected most admirable for a permanent Infectious Diseases Hospital, and I trust that the Council will be fortunate enough to be able to acquire it. Such a building will not be considered complete without a disinfecting apparatus and ambulance.

25th April, 1896.

MOUNTAIN ASH URBAN DISTRICT.

The following statement kindly supplied me by the Council's Surveyor, gives an account of the permanent improvements effected in 1895.

- (1) A cemetery at Ynysybwll.
- (2) Private street works in two cross streets, Penrhiwceiber, and Dover Street, Mountain Ash.
- (3) Extension of Penrhiwceiber New Road to Aberdare Junction.
- (4) Water mains laid and the house connections made in the following streets:—Beckett Street, extension of Granville Terrace, extension Campbell Terrace, Mountain Ash; Springfield, Woodfield, Glasbrook, Penrhiwceiber New Road, and Cynon Terraces, Penrhiwceiber; Walsh, Halswell, Millborne Streets, Mathewstown, and Kennard Street, Ynysboeth.
- (5) Nearly the whole of the houses at Aberdare Junction connected with the Council's water supply.
- (6) Extension of sewer at Cwmpennar.
- (7) Provision of ambulance carriage for removal of persons to the Infectious Diseases Hospital.

Number of houses built during 1895 is 440.

,,	,,	occupied	,,	probably 400.
,,	,,	certified	,,	nil.

The Council have submitted for the approval of the Local Government Board a bye-law to the effect that houses be certified as fit for occupation with respect to *being dry*—the certification being limited to that, but the Local Government Board have not yet signified their approval, and I trust it will not do so.

In my last report I suggested that the Council should adopt and enforce a bye-law to the effect that no new dwelling should be occupied until the same was certified as fit for human habitation. It is of the utmost importance to the inhabitants that their dwellings should be dry, and *in other respects*, fit for habitation before they are allowed to be occupied. In the past no such precaution has been taken, which I consider a very grave omission. Some 400 new houses have been allowed to be occupied in the past year without such a certificate, or examination on the part of the Sanitary Authority, indeed I came across many with their surroundings (at least) unfinished.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.—A very large number of new dwellings have been erected during the past year at Mountain Ash (Caegarw), Penrhiwceiber, and Mathewstown. The latter place, which, a year ago, practically consisted of a few streets, has grown to be quite a town of some hundreds of houses, and extends almost from Penrhiwceiber to Aberdare Junction. At Aberdare Junction also some dozens of new houses have been erected. Many of these are already occupied. There is at least one commendable feature noticed in connection with the new dwellings in Mathewstown. I refer to the fact that no cesspit privies have been provided in the various back areas near the dwellings. The sewage is carried away in pipes with several outfalls, either in the open or into uncovered cesspools, which are nothing more or less than holes dug in the ground. In no instance has an adequate provision been made for distributing this sewage over the land,

and when the hot weather arrives it will, doubtless, be dangerous to the health of the inhabitants. None of many hundreds of houses below Penrhiwceiber (including Mathewstown and Aberdare Junction) has been connected with the main sewage carrier. Whatever the intention of the Council may be I cannot say, but to say the least this is a most insanitary method of dealing with sewage, rather I should say, it is not dealt with, but allowed to take care of itself or pollute the nearest stream.

No houses were condemned as unfit for habitation during the year. The old houses at the Barracks are in the same insanitary condition as they were a year ago: the defective traps to which I then called attention are still in use and complained of by the inhabitants. The common lodging house—the only one in the district—which is said to have been registered years ago for 16 lodgers, was far from being clean, with only one w.c. placed in a defectively paved yard.

Defective traps, allowing the escape of sewer gas, are common in the older localities, but it should be mentioned that no traps of this variety are used for new dwellings or after repairs.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—They are all too near dwellings, and inadequate for the purpose. Some were far from being clean, and required more systematic limewashing and cleansing. The Public Slaughter house, Mountain Ash, has defecting flooring and drains. The boiler is in the killing room, and it required lime-washing. The Penrhiwceiber Slaughter house was more like a stable than anything else, indeed it was used as a harness and trap room. At Ynysybwl, Meredith's Slaughter house was actually used as a stable and a wash-house combined.

Public slaughter houses for the various centres are greatly needed. A year ago I was informed that a public slaughter house was to be provided at Ynysybwl shortly, and that the old ones, none of which are fit to be registered, were no longer to be used. The matter is still in abeyance.

WATER SUPPLY.—The present supply provided by and under the control of the Council seems to be exceedingly satisfactory, and laid on to every accessible house, except a few at Aberdare Junction, which are now being connected with the mains.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.—All the houses (with a very few exceptions) within the statutory distance in the Cynon Valley are provided with w.c.'s. (pans and syphons), generally hand-flushed, especially in the older localities. Here and there flushing cisterns are provided, but this is not the rule and is not insisted upon even in the case of new dwellings. In the case of new dwellings and after repairs, syphon earthenware gullies are invariably used. Cesspools are the rule at Old Ynysybwl, and at Ynysybwl proper there are still a few streets emptying into large cesspools unconnected with the public sewer. The slop drains of Clive Road discharge in the first place to surface channels but eventually into the brook.

The disposal of sewage at Mathewstown and Aberdare Junction is highly unsatisfactory, and at the latter place gross pollution of the Cynon and Taff rivers takes place. The Authority are still in treaty with the Pontypridd and Ystradyfodwg Joint Sewerage Committee with a view of connecting this important locality with the conjoint main sewer. The Local Government Board have intimated that the Provisional Order granted to the Joint Sewerage Committee does not allow sewage to be admitted into the sewer from any area outside Ystradyfodwg and Pontypridd, and that they are in communication with the Committee with a view to amending the Order. The urgency of the case should be pointed out to the Local Government Board, and their permission asked to proceed with the work pending the settlement between the Board and the Joint Committee.

At Aberdare Junction the sewage from Gertrude, Catherine, Margaret Streets, and a part of Ynysmeurig road, over 160 houses in all, is carried for some distance in an earthenware pipe put down by the estate, and discharges into a brook, and then along a culvert under the Taff Vale Railway at the lower end of the street, to the Taff river.

Four privies discharge to the Cynon on Old Ynysmeurig Road.

The sewage from some 40 houses in Bassett Street and neighbourhood is conducted under the Taff Vale Railway and discharges on a field, and then flows alongside the railway wall to a water course some 100 yards lower, and then to the Cynon River at the top of the Ynysmeurig Road. It should be observed that the arrangement for the disposal of the sewage over the land has not been completed, and that it is deposited here at the wish of the farmer to whom the field is rented.

DISPOSAL OF REFUSE.—The Council has experienced a difficulty in the disposal of refuse. The Craig Isaf depôt has assumed enormous proportions. The Cwm Cynon depôt is too near dwellings, and at Ynysybwl refuse was tipped into the river's bed, in anticipation of a flood. It is the rule throughout the district to use the screenings from refuse tips mixed with lime—two of refuse and one of lime—for building purposes. Although the screenings may not contain any excrement, it must consist to a considerable extent of decaying vegetable matter, which is not desirable even when mixed with lime, to have under the floor and in the walls and partitions of dwellings. None of the tips are fenced in, and builders are allowed to use the refuse as they please. At the time of my visit the refuse was being screened at the Craig Isaf and Ynysybwl tips, prior to being used for building purposes.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—An ambulance has been procured, but a disinfecting apparatus is yet required. The disinfection of dwellings should be performed by an experienced person engaged by the Council and acting under the supervision and guidance of the Medical Officer of Health. To provide disinfectants gratuitously and give directions how to use them is, according to my experience, far from being enough.

SYSTEMATIC INSPECTION.—A house-to-house inspection of the district has never been made, and until such a course is adopted, I maintain that its condition with respect to *nuisances, defective traps, &c.*, will not be satisfactory. Nuisances which are now common should be sought out, and the provisions of the Act for their repression enforced.

BUILDING BYE-LAWS.—The bye-laws with respect to the ventilation of drains (as mentioned in my former Report) are *not* enforced, and each drain is but seldom, if at all, provided with two untrapped openings—one a fresh air inlet and the other a foul air outlet, as is supposed to be the case under section 65.

This Report would be incomplete without a special reference to *Aberdare Junction*, which is much the same condition as it was a year ago. The *absence of a system of sewerage, the unpaved back areas, the condition of streets and back lanes, and the ventilation of drains* are highly unsatisfactory. If an epidemic were to break out here, there is everything in readiness to assist its ravages.

PRIVATE STREETS.—At Ynysybwl most of the private streets have been formed and taken over by the Council. At Aberdare Junction and Miskin, many are still unformed and dangerous to the young and aged.

The following is a summary of the requirements of the district:—

- (1) The refuse tips should be fenced in, and builders should no longer be allowed to use house refuse for building purposes.
- (2) A bye-law to the effect that no new dwellings shall be occupied until certified as being in *all respects* fit for habitation.

- (3) A systematic house-to-house inspection of the whole district should be made at intervals, with a view of ascertaining whether any dwelling houses therein are in a state so dangerous or injurious to health, as to be unfit for human habitation. Inspection for the discovery of *nuisances* should also be made systematically, in accordance with Section 92 Public Health Act, 1875.
- (4) The enforcement of the existing bye-laws.
- (5) The sewerage of Aberdare Junction and Mathewstown.
- (6) The framing of bye-laws under the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1890, now adopted with respect to—
 - (a) Adequate supply of water for closets.
 - (b) The paving of yards and open spaces in connection with dwellings.
- (7) The provision of a disinfecting apparatus.
- (8) The condition of house drains should be carefully enquired into, and all defective traps and other defects found to exist should be promptly remedied.
- (9) The regulations with respect to the cleansing, lime-washing, and management of slaughter houses should be more rigidly enforced. A public slaughter house is much needed at Ynysybwl.

30th April, 1896.

GELLIGAER AND RHIGOS RURAL DISTRICT.

As the outcome of another inspection of the most important localities of this district, I am able to state that some of the recommendations made in my Report, dated 8th April, 1895, have been carried into effect, such as :—

The extension of sewers at Pontlottyn (one side of Garth and Waterloo Streets, lately connected with main sewer).

The open drains in front of Saunder's Slaughter house, and at the back of the Methodist Chapel, Mount Street, have been covered over.

The extension of sewers at Gilfach Fargoed and Bedlinog.

Large water mains laid down at Fochriw.

Repairs to Llancaiach and Fochriw Reservoirs.

The protection of the straining tank at Bedlinog.

One hundred lip-traps condemned and replaced by earthenware gullies, at Brithdir.

And several other improvements of importance.

WATER SUPPLIES.—Nothing has been done towards protecting the water supply of Newtown Bute and Pontlottyn, so frequently reported by Dr. Dyke, the Surveyor, and myself. I must, therefore, repeat what appeared in my last Report, viz. : " This water is exposed above Rhymney Bridge to a possible and likely pollution. From the Company's Reservoir, about three-quarters of a mile above Rhymney Bridge, the water flows in an open conduit, and lower down is joined by that of the Rhymney stream, in other words, for this length it is exposed to pollution in the form of manure washings from two farm-yards, viz., those of Blaen-Rhymney Fach, and Blaen-Rhymney Fawr farms, also to manured fields." I consider this a most grave omission that may lead to most disastrous results.

There is no water laid on to the Elementary School, Brithdir, and the closets are not sufficiently flushed. There are also in the same neighbourhood some nine houses *without* a supply of water.

Although larger mains have been provided for the carriage of water to Fochriw, it is now very short and intermittently supplied, and it seems to fail at the origin.

There is no water for the upper row of houses and the School at Newtown Bute.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.—The surface slop drains at Windsor Terrace, Newtown Bute, are neglected, slops and other filth, such as house refuse, accumulate in them to the danger of the inhabitants. They should be reconstructed and more frequently flushed.

The condition of the surroundings of Bute Terrace, Pontlottyn, the property of the Rhymney Iron Company, is highly disgraceful owing to the want of provision to carry away slops and excrement. All the drains are blocked; the back areas are inundated with slop water and sewage; w.c.'s are overflowing; troughs and downpipes are broken or absent. These were reported by myself over a year ago, but it seems to me that they are in a much worse condition than they were then. The six houses south of the hotel are absolutely unfit for human habitation, and should be at once remedied or closed.

Slop water is allowed to flow along Heol Evanwen, Pontllytyn, into street gullies, which are only intended for surface water.

Slop water, &c., is discharged into rivers at *Carno Bute Houses, Pontllytyn, Bargoed, Fochriw, Bedlinog, Trelewis* and *Gilfach Fargoed*.

Sewage is discharged direct to water courses from parts of King, Wine, Victoria Streets, and Greenfield and Waterloo Terraces, Pontllytyn (about 100 houses in all), and from Caeglas *Fochriw*, a large number of houses discharge in the first place to a tank, and then to a water course, and finally to the river, causing a dangerous and most offensive nuisance.

It is only in a few places that attempts have been made to prevent slop water discharging into water courses. Section 17 of the Public Health Act, 1875, reads thus:—“*Nothing in this Act shall authorize any local Authority to make or use any sewer, drain, or outfall for the purpose of conveying sewage or filthy water into any natural stream or water course, or into any canal, pond, or lake, until such sewage or filthy water is freed from all excrementitious or other foul or noxious matter such as would affect or deteriorate the purity and quality of the water in such stream or water course, or in such canal, pond, or lake.*”

The sooner the better the 60 odd houses with lip-traps at Tirphil and other places are replaced by earthenware gullies. The water-privies of the Elementary School at Brithdir should be replaced without delay with automatically flushed trough-closets.

IRRIGATION AREAS.—The irrigation areas of the district require constant care. The smaller ones, and those in close proximity to rivers in particular, should be *under-drained* and constantly *supervised* by a servant of the Authority. At present they are supposed to be looked after by the various farmers, but my experience is that farmers will distribute the sewage over the land *only* when it is mostly required.

The irrigation areas, especially at *Tirphil, Brithdir, Gilfach-Fargoed, Bedlinog*, and the proposed area at *Fochriw*, in fact all of them, should be under-drained in such a way that the effluent is only discharged into the river at one or several points where samples for analysis can be taken. I am glad to find that the owner of the proposed irrigation area at *Fochriw* will only let the land on the understanding that it will be *under-drained* and *supervised* by the Authority.

SCAVENGING.—The scavenging of the district generally is well performed, and there are noticeable improvements in several places, such as at *Bargoed*.

At Newtown Bute, house refuse is thrown in abundance over the front areas and surface water channels. At *Carno* houses, ashes are thrown to the river, because no ash-bin has been provided. Below *Tirphil* Bridge refuse is tipped too near river and public roads. In the neighbourhood of the *Dowlais Company's* houses at *Fochriw*, all the ash-bins are full, and ashes are thrown in heaps over the various areas. As far as scavenging and dilapidated house property is concerned, this is the dark spot of the district.

House refuse is commonly used for building purposes: such was the case at *Pontllytyn* and *Brithdir*. I would suggest that the Authority should not allow such a practice to go on, and the effectual remedy is to have the various refuse tips fenced in.

INSANITARY DWELLINGS.—I have already referred to the surroundings of Windsor terrace, Newtown Bute, and to the extremely unhealthy and dangerous condition of Bute terrace, Pontlottyn, both of which belong to the Rhymney Iron Co. The surroundings of the Dowlais Co.'s and other houses at Fochriw are so insanitary and dangerous to the inhabitants that I must *especially* report upon them. I refer to Martin's Row, Dynevor street, Guest street, &c.

- (1) The streets are not formed and the front pavements are most defective.
- (2) The troughs and downpipes are neglected, and, as a rule, absent.
- (3) The back areas are unpaved, and the open channels provided to take away slops are most defective and offensive, and in many instances running under back kitchens built by the occupiers as they liked and without submitting any plans for the approval of the Authority. Where gullies exist they were often found defectively constructed and placed.
- (4) The sleeping rooms are not provided with through ventilation.

Before these dwellings can be considered habitable :—

- (1) The streets should be formed.
- (2) The front and back pavements provided.
- (3) Pipe drains and trapped gullies should be provided, and those that at present are under dwelling-rooms should be abolished.
- (4) Troughs and downpipes should be provided.
- (5) The house refuse should be removed to a distance.

This is a large order but a most necessary one in the interest and safety of the inhabitants.

At the time of my visit the sewers at the lower end of Martin's Row (both sides) were and had been blocked for a long time. One of these sewers passed under a house, the back area of which was literally covered with sewage and bitterly complained of. In this connection I would remind you of the powers vested in the County Councils under section 45 of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890.

The improvement to the "huts" at Bedlinog is progressing very slowly, and the work done since 18th February, my last visit, is not much.

Throughout the district a large number of houses have been occupied without the Surveyor's certificate. This is the case at Brithdir and Gilfach-Fargoed. This is not as it should be, and I consider it the duty of the Authority to prosecute in those cases where their Surveyor has refused to grant certificates. If this was done such a practice would soon be stopped, and until it is done it will continue.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—I visited two at Pontlottyn, and one at Fochriw. The Heol Evan Slaughter House required more frequent lime-washing and cleansing. Saunder's Slaughter House, where three or four butchers kill, was as dirty as it could possibly be, and had never been lime-washed. The Fochriw Slaughter House, which was not intended for such a purpose, required lime-washing and cleansing.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.—No regulations under the *Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order* have yet been framed.

The following is a summary of what I consider to be the requirements of the district :—

- (1) The extension of sewers at Pontlottyn, Bedlinog, and Fochriw.
- (2) The under-draining and supervision of irrigation areas by the Authority.
- (3) The protection of the water supply of Pontlottyn and Newtown Bute, and more plentiful supplies for Fochriw and Trelewis.
- (4) House-refuse should not be permitted to be used for building purposes.
- (5) The more strict enforcement of Bye-laws relating to slaughter houses, and the certification of dwellings as fit for human habitation.
- (6) The replacement, wherever possible, of the useless variety of traps by earthenware gullies.
- (7) The repair or closure of dwellings at Bute Terrace, Pontlottyn, and at Fochriw, that, on account of their insanitary surroundings, are unfit for human habitation.
- (8) The better scavenging of Fochriw and a few other places.
- (9) The prevention of the pollution of rivers by sewage (where it occurs) and slop water, which is common throughout the district.

Attention has been called to these and other requirements of the district by Dr. Dyke, the Medical Officer of Health, and Mr. Jones, the Surveyor, on previous occasions, so that they are already known to the District Council, and I trust they will, without any delay, carry them into effect.

5th May, 1896.

YSTRADFODWG URBAN DISTRICT.

TYPHOID FEVER, &c., AT CLYDACH VALE.

Lately several cases of typhoid fever have occurred in various localities in Clydach Vale :—

One at No. 1, Knill Street ; one at No. 1, Ffynnon Dwym Terrace ; one (fatal) at No. 38, Morton Terrace ; one at No. 10, Jones Street ; one at 113, Jones Street ; and two at No. 28, Charles Street.

The water and milk must be exonerated, for the latter especially was obtained from a variety of sources. There is nothing in common with all the cases, but a few of the cases can be distinctly traced to house-to-house visiting of the sick by relatives, friends or neighbours, who are kind enough but ignorant of the fact that they are spreading the disease, and with a firm belief in the notion that fevers have their origin above rather than in the filth and insufficiency of water, &c., below.

Near the Bush Hotel there are three houses, known as the "Huts," *without w.c.'s, without drains, and without a water supply.* In their present condition they are unfit for habitation, and have already been condemned by Dr. James. However, they are still occupied, and the street gully close by receives the *excrement and other filth* from these dwellings, to the great annoyance of and danger to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. At times of rain, the excrement, &c., are carried down the streets and cause a nuisance in the cellar of the Bush Hotel. I trust that something effective will at once be done towards putting an end to this recurring nuisance. Either the "Huts" should be closed or provided with w.c.'s and drains.

The scavenging of many streets, and especially back lanes, in Clydach Vale is not satisfactorily done, and in their present condition they are certainly conducive to ill-health and the spread of disease.

6th May, 1896.

ABERDARE URBAN DISTRICT.

The general sanitary condition of Aberdare is very fair, and has been considerably improved since my last Report on the district, dated the 25th March, 1895.

The following statement, kindly supplied me by Mr. Owen Williams, the Surveyor, shews the amount of work done during 1895, together with other particulars of importance:—

- About 500 yards of new footways formed, curbed, and channelled.
- Two public conveniences erected.
- Portions of semi-main roads widened.
- About 300 yards of new sewers constructed.
- About 1,900 yards of lead mains taken up and cast-iron pipes substituted therefor.
- Four streets completed under the Private Streets Works Act, and taken over.
- Number of houses built and certified, 185.
- Number connected during the year, 426.
- Number still unconnected within the statutory distance, 31.
- Number unconnected outside the statutory distance, 348.
- The new reservoir is advanced, about a third of the work remaining to be done.
- Three houses were condemned and closed.
- Seven houses condemned and repaired.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.—It cannot be said that there are many dwellings that are actually unfit for habitation, but there are many cellar and other buildings very defective and out of repair, and only *habitable* when the greatest care is exercised on the part of occupiers, owners, and Sanitary Authority.

The cellars, Dumfries Street, are practically in the same condition as they were a year ago, all of them, except No. 7a, which is filthy in the extreme, are kept fairly clean, indeed some are models of cleanliness. The pavement all along is defective, and the drain pipes from the houses above are generally leaky. The ceilings also in a few instances require repairs. The drains should be remedied, and a new pavement from end to end provided.

The cellars of Lewis Street have been slightly improved in a few instances. Those of Dagger's Court and back of Cardiff Road are fair, but some of the drains from the houses above are leaky and cause dampness in the cellars. All the gullies are trapped, the w.c.'s in good order, but the pavement is somewhat defective. It is highly important that all these cellar dwellings be under constant supervision, and that the necessary repairs be executed at once, for it is only under these conditions that several of them can be considered as fit for habitation.

A large number of excellent houses have been erected during 1895, and it is worthy of mention that *no* house is allowed to be occupied unless previously certified by the Surveyor as fit for occupation.

At Hirwain all houses are *now* practically connected with the public sewers, and all privy cesspits replaced by w.c.'s. This great improvement has completely altered the appearance of the village.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.—These are in a somewhat better condition and seemed to have received more attention. The model lodging-house, which is registered for 66 lodgers, is fairly clean. Lindsay's

Court, *i.e.*, the surroundings of Hodge's three lodging-houses, (some of which are dilapidated), is as usual in a filthy condition, and the river abutting on it is the refuse tip and filth receptacle of the neighbourhood.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—I have no fault to find with any of the slaughterhouses, except the one at Hirwain, which requires more frequent lime-washing, &c. The public abattoir is in excellent order.

WATER SUPPLY.—The storage capacity of the existing reservoir is about 47 million gallons. The construction of the new reservoir on Nantmelyn stream, which will store some 50 million gallons, is being rapidly proceeded with, and when completed it is reckoned that there will be a total storage sufficient for 180 days.

DISPOSAL OF REFUSE.—The scavenging seems to be well performed everywhere except at Capcoch. The various refuse tips are well isolated and attended to.

POLLUTION OF THE CYNON.—The pollution of the Cynon by the Tinsplate Works still continues unabated—the pickling tanks are daily emptied direct to a culvert leading to the river. No copperas is manufactured, and no attempt made to purify the contents of the tanks before they are discharged into the river. At the time of my inspection the water was low and the pollution very apparent. Such a water is not fit for the animals which are dependent upon it lower down. In the vicinity of the works there are two privies (used by 150 persons), discharging into a brook, and two more privies on the same brook at the Gadlys Brickworks. It is high time that this pollution be put an end to.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, AND MILKSHOPS ORDER.—No Regulations have been framed under this Order, so that these buildings as such are not under special supervision at the hands of the Authority. The making of Regulations is optional with Local Authorities, but those relating to cowsheds (of which there are many) are much needed in the important town of Aberdare. The Regulations include the inspection of cattle and dairies, provisions for regulating the lighting, cleansing, draining, the ventilation, and water supply of cowsheds and dairies; for the cleansing of milk stores and shops, and milk vessels, and for prescribing precautions to be taken against infection and contamination.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—*Aberdare is the only district in the County where the Infectious Disease Notification Act, 1889, has not been adopted.* The District Council can no longer expect the Medical Practitioners of the district to supply them with gratuitous information respecting Infectious Disease, now that the law has provided means whereby this information can be acquired. It is of the greatest importance that the Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector be immediately informed of the first cases of Infectious Disease, and unless these are immediately notified, it becomes impossible to prevent its spread.

The advantages which have been found, after a lengthened trial, to accrue to a community from compulsory notification are :—

- (1) The nature, locality, and amount of infectious disease is known.
- (2) Precautions can thus be taken to prevent its spread.
- (3) Insanitary dwellings, defective water supplies, &c., acting as foci of disease, are at once discovered, and their defects remedied.
- (4) Some diseases such as Small Pox and Typhus Fever, can be completely controlled.
- (5) Mortality from Infectious Disease is found to be greatly reduced.

These are some of the chief advantages of notification, and they fully justify the sum expended in fees to the Medical profession.

After your last Committee Meeting the Clerk wrote to the Aberdare District Council urging them to adopt this useful measure. Again at the last meeting of the District Council the matter cropped up, when the Clerk read a letter from the Local Government Board, urging the Council to adopt the Act, and pointing out the advantages to be derived therefrom. A conversation took place, but no resolution was passed. Such indifference, especially when small pox is raging at Gloucester, and has appeared in Glamorgan, even in Aberdare, is dangerous. In the interest of the public health and safety of the inhabitants the Act should be adopted, and if an epidemic breaks out the District Council *alone*, the custodians of the public health, will be to blame.

The District is supplied with a well-equipped Isolation Hospital, but a disinfecting apparatus has not been provided. It is not unreasonable to expect a district of over 40,000 inhabitants to provide one, for the efficient disinfection of articles of bedding and clothing which cannot be performed without it.

Streets, &c.—The condition of some public and many private streets are far from being satisfactory. Although a great improvement has taken place in this respect lately, there yet remains a great deal to be done. Dumfries and others at Aberdare, most of the streets at Aberaman and Capcoch, are *unformed*, and not taken over by the Council.

9th May, 1896.

MERTHYR URBAN DISTRICT.

POLLUTION OF THE MORLAIS BROOK.

The Morlais brook has an extensive gathering area over the hills above Pantscallog and Dowlais, and receives the waters of two streams, viz., the Morlais and Dowlais, the latter passing through the Dowlais Works. These join to form the Morlais brook under the old refuse tip south of the Dowlais road. Above Gellifaelog Bridge there is little or no pollution caused by sewage, but at Cwmrhydybedd, I noticed a quantity of manure in the brook, and also a drain from a pigstye and the contents of a filthy water course from the neighbourhood of Gittersham's houses, discharging into it. Below the bridge it receives the sewage and other filth from 6 houses situated in the hollow, and from 30 or more houses known as Gas Row, the sewer from which discharges into the brook under the refuse tip. Below the confluence of the Dowlais stream till it joins the Taff at the Knoll, the brook is densely thick and highly offensive. Below Pontmorlais in its passage through the town it is very offensive, and contains much house refuse and other filth, especially in the neighbourhood of the old mill sluice, where it is complained of by the inhabitants who live in close proximity to its banks. It seems as if the bulk of the pollution is caused within the Dowlais Works, and I have asked for information as to the number of men employed, the number and description of the closets or privies, the stables made use of &c., &c., within these works, but so far I have received no answer.

Below the outfall from the Dowlais Works till it joins the Taff, the brook practically receives *no* sewage, and above this outfall there is not enough to account for the pollution which exists. On receiving your instruction I shall be glad to make an inspection of these works, with a view of ascertaining what pollution does take place within them, and before any definite steps can be taken I think it advisable that this should be done.

29th May, 1896.