PEMBERTON
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT.

February, 1898.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my 24th Annual Report with regard to the sanitary condition of the Urban District of Pemberton, which is under my supervision, for the year ending December 31st, 1897.

The diseases threatening to affect injuriously the public health during the year were Scarlet Fever, Erysipelas, Diphtheria, Typhus and Enteric Fever, and these only in a very modified degree. No deaths were returned from Small-pox, Continued Fever, Relapsing Fever, Cholera, Ague, or Erysipelas. The births for the year number 769, as compared with 839 and 893 for the two preceding years, and 786, the average for the ten preceding years—a great falling off due probably in a great measure to the migration of workmen to other districts, owing to the stoppage of certain colliery works in the district, three in number. The removal would have been greater had not the other works in this and adjoining districts kept at full work, and found employment for some of them.

Of the 769 births, 406 took place in the first half of the year, 214 in the first quarter (110 males and 104 females), 192 in the second quarter (88 males and 104 females); in the second half of the year 363, *i.e.* 175 in the first quarter (98 males and 105 females), in the second 188 (83 males and 105 females).

The birth-rate is 36·1, as compared with 43·3, the average rate for the previous ten years, and double within a fraction that of the death-rate.

The deaths for the year total 387 as compared with 401 and 381 for the two peeceding years, and 378, the average for the next ten preceding years. Of the whole number, 175 occurred during the first half of the year, 97 in tne first quarter (41 males and 56 females), 78 in the second quarter (42 males and 36 females); during the second half of the year 212, of these—in the first quarter 121 (63 males and 58 females), in the second, 91 (38 males and 54 females). The greatest number died in August, the lowest in May. The death-rate is 18·1—low, as compared with 18·7 for the previous year; it was 18·7 for the year before, and 20·7 for the ten years before that. The year closed with a very low death-rate, for December—13·9, when the births were in the proportion of three to one. No deaths were recorded from contagious or infectious disease; one third of the total number were from Bronchitis and Pneumonia, and the district was free from Measles and Whooping Cough.

Of the total number of deaths 199 were among children two years of age and under (94 under six months).

The death-rate from the seven principal Zymotic diseases is 2·3, as compared with 3·6 for the previous year—from Scarlet Fever ·61, Measles ·42, Diarrhœa 1·03, Heart Disease and Phthisis each 1·03, Bronchitis and Pneumonia 3·2. Three deaths were registered from Influenza, 1 aged nine years with Pneumonia in June, 1 aged 78 years with exhaustion in July, and one aged 16 years with acute Meningitis in December.

Scarlet Fever caused 13 deaths, in the proportion of 1 to 9 notified cases, chiefly located in Central Ward about April, when one died, and 2 in July, 1 in August, 2 in September, 4 in October, and 3 in November, these latter in South and West Wards. I frequently visited the schools in these localities, and found a considerable falling off in attendances, as it is usual to send home children coming from infected houses. A child brought into the district died in September.

There was a smart attack of Measles in March and April, causing 9 deaths, all confined to Worsley Mesnes, adjoining Wigan; the other parts of the district remained free.

Whooping Cough only caused one death for the year.

Eight cases of Typhus Fever were notified, and 4 died, 2 at the hospital (these partook of the character of Typhoid).

The long-continued dry weather about November and December was favourable for the propagation of Enteric Fever, which was located in Tunstall Lane, causing 1 death, and 1 died in May after parturition, the mortality being 1 to 13 notified cases. The spread may have been due to infection of the sewer as the first case is connected by a water-closet, and nothing could be traced to the milk or other food supply. The dregs of previous epidemics here may have remained dormant for a time.

The cases of Influenza were not so numerous nor severe, yet the segualœ left by the disease continued for a long time in the system.

Thirteen were treated in hospital—7 males and 6 females—7 Enteric Fever, 4 Typhus, and 2 Scarlet Fever; of this number 2 died from Typhus. Of Puerperal Fever 2 cases were notified, and 1 died.

Diarrhœa caused 1 death in May, 9 in July, 10 in August, and 1 in September, chiefly in the low-lying parts of the district. Many of these cases were due to bad feeding and other causes of neglect. There was a sudden change in the temperature and weather about the middle of July.

Phthisis caused 20 deaths as compared with 19 and 17 for the two preceding years.

Bronchitis and Pneumonia caused 9 deaths in January 9 in February, 8 in March, 7 in April, and 12 in December.

Rheumatic Fever caused 2 deaths in May and October, ages, 12 years and 29 years.

The cases of Diphtheria notified numbered 8, sporadic cases, and had no connection with each other.

Sewers.—The sewers are acting well, and additional ventilators have been placed where it appeared necessary.

Scavenging.—The scavenging has been fairly well done.

Water Supply.—The water supply has been good and constant. It has been necessary, owing to certain cases of Enteric Fever in the neighbourhood of the water supply gathering ground, to keep strict watch, this being without the district of the Sanitary Authority.

Flagging of Back Yards.—I would advise the Authority to pave or flag the yards and back streets.

Works.—Bakehouses, cowsheds, and slaughtsr-houses have been inspected, also tar and oil works.

Old Houses.—There are three areas in the district called "Greens." The houses were principally built years ago by small freeholders, few have three bedrooms, many houses have been pulled down, and reconstructed during the past few years.

Overcrowding.—A systematic, and house-to-house inspection has been made, and a report showing the number of inmates, rooms, back doors, and other sanitary requirements of these areas, and overcrowding abated.

Subsidence of Land.—At Newtown subsidence is still going on, owing to the getting of coal. How far this is responsible for the cause of Enteric Fever, it is difficult to say.

Treatment of Sewage.—Improvement in the treatment of sewage by more efficient irrigation is being made at some considerable expense, additional land having been acquired. The Inspector under the Joint Committee of the Rivers Pollution Act is very attentive in the matter, and the effluent is clearer and better than formerly.

In many places land under irrigation is insufficient—a great deal depends on the use that is made of it; certainly this land is growing two blades for one at great cost, still employment is found for the old men of the district.

Leaking Ashpits.—A common cause of complaint and strict measures should be enforded to make the same sanitary.

Plan.—On my advice the Nuisance Inspector has prepared a plan of a model ashpit and closet for the guidance of builders and others, which I trust will be of service and suitable for the district, as I find many builders ignorant on this matter.

As the outcome of frequent and systematic inspection of the district there was noticed and work done as follows :—

1st Quarter.

Nuisances caused from overcrowding of dwelling-houses were found at Lamberhead Green and Marsh Green as a result of house-to-house inspection. Notices were served and complied with, several of the houses being afterwards thoroughly cleaned and limewashed.

Drains stopped at different properties attended to and in one case taken up and relaid.

Notices served for a number of houses requiring limewashing at Lamberhead Green, Worsley Mesnes, and Newtown.

Passages to property in Little Lane and Newtown cleaned and ashed. Owners' attention drawn.

Defective rain-water pipes, roofs, and slop-pipes at Goose Green, Newtown, and Lamberhead Green put in order.

Dilapidated and leaky ashpits at Marsh Green and Worsley Mesnes made good. Notices served. Flagging about gullies in Enfield Street.

2nd Quarter.

Flooded cellars at Newtown emptied and cleaned.

Property with defective roofs, rain-water spouts, and slop-pipes in Goose Green and Newtown reported upon, and a case of sewer gas escaping from downspout remedied.

Nuisances from pigeon and poultry-keeping in houses in Factory Street, and overcrowding in Factory Street and Fleet Street. Notices served and nuisances abated; houses cleaned.

Defective house drainage put in order at Lamberhead Green and many stoppages of drains rectified.

3rd Quarter.

Leaky ashpits reported upon.

Pigeons being kept in back kitchen in Sarginson Street but nuisance at once abated on serving notice.

Drains taken up and relaid in Mitchell Street and Alfred Street. Other minor defects and stoppages attended to.

Accumulation of manure dealt with and smoke nuisance from aerated-water works reported upon; also houses requiring limewashing.

Abatement of nuisances from overcrowding obtained after notice served in Gibraltar district.

Property requiring limewashing at Lamberhead Green, and others rain-water spouts renewing.

Foul smells given off from stagnant water in cellars in Enfield Street and Smethurst Lane, also three other cases of cellars flooded treated; in ~~such~~ such cases notice served and nuisance abated.

Remedies effected at leaky and wet ashpits and privies in Newtown and Lamberhead Green.

4th Quarter.

Nuisances from piggeries in Scot's Field and Enfield Street dealt with, and also stable built against house wall. This was removed after notice served.

Insanitary property in Heaton's Yard, Goose Green, reported upon, also back passages and yards at Park Lane cottages.

Several stoppages of drains, and drainage defective, at Goose Green and Worsley Mesnes, where free outlets for sewer gas were found. At the latter place two slop pipes connected direct to drains without being trapped.

At Highfield, Newtown and Worsley Mesnes, ashpits wet and leaking were cemented, or repaired and roofed over to render contents dry. Owners were ~~satisfied~~ notified.

Uncovered cesspool in Gore's court, and old watercourses at Smithy Brook where sewage matter lodged, have been filled up after communication with owners.

Sewer ventilator broken off, filled up and rendered in-active in Fleet Street, put right at once, and defective rainwater spouts renewed at Newtown.

The house gulley traps were cleaned and disinfected throughout the district by the Council's men, and a large number of old mattresses and chaff beds have been removed by them to the sewage farm and destroyed.

The Council's man has swept a very large number of house chimney flues during the year. Several cases of chimney firing occurred and some summonses taken out.

Two legal proceedings were also instituted for nuisances not being remedied at defective ashpits, and magistrates orders obtained for the work.

A considerable number of ashpits have been repaired, and fourteen privies and six ashpits re-constructed or raised and roofed.

The ashpits emptied during the year number 4,541, against 4,067 in 1896.

Disinfectants have been freely supplied and used during the year, and infected bedding and clothing from houses disinfected at the hospital in the gas stove. Fumingation carried out at a number of houses.

The hospital and outbuildings were limewashed through in December.

Thirty-six new houses and two shops have been built during the year.

Rainfall recorded at Council's Waterworks at Billinge, during the year ended 31st December, 1897:—

	1897.	1896.
January	·99	1·11
February	2·54	·96
March	2·75	4·85
April	2·78	1·52
May	1·75	·64
June	4·48	3·25
July	1·04	3·39
August	4·33	3·19
September	4·75	7·58
October	2·20	4·46
November	2·58	1·34
December	5·58	3·89
	35·77	36·18

The certificates of infectious diseases received during the year 1897, are classified as under:—

Month.	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric Fever.	Typhus Fever.	Continued Fever.	Erysipelas.	Membranous Croup.	Diphtheria.	Puerperal Fever.	Total.	North Ward.	South Ward.	East Ward.	West Ward.	Central Ward.
January	6	—	—	1	3	—	—	—	10	—	—	1	5	4
February	9	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	12	2	3	1	5	1
March	6	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	9	2	1	—	4	2
April	4	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	6	—	1	—	1	4
May	3	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	5	1	1	—	1	2
June	11	2	—	—	2	—	1	—	16	2	5	—	4	5
July	19	1	—	—	—	—	3	—	23	9	7	—	5	2
August	12	3	1	—	1	—	—	—	17	2	6	—	4	5
September	13	2	1	—	—	—	—	2	18	3	9	—	2	2
October	11	4	2	—	1	—	—	—	18	1	10	1	7	—
November	16	8	1	—	6	—	3	—	34	4	11	2	5	13
December	5	4	2	1	6	—	1	—	19	5	6	1	1	6
	115	26	8	2	25	1	8	2	187	31	60	6	44	46

	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric Fever.	Typhus Fever.	Continued Fever.	Erysipelas.	Membranous Croup.	Diphtheria.	Puerperal Fever.	Total.	Estimated Population
North Ward	19	5	1	1	3	—	2	—	31	6,500
South "	44	6	3	—	4	—	1	2	60	2,500
East "	2	1	—	—	3	—	—	—	6	2,000
West "	32	5	—	—	4	—	3	—	44	5,000
Central "	18	9	4	1	11	1	2	—	46	5,500
	115	26	8	2	25	1	8	2	187	21,500

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. HARTLEY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.