

[Report 1944] / Medical Officer of Health, Reading County Borough.

Contributors

Reading (England). County Borough Council.

Publication/Creation

1944

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/sduqmcpk>

License and attribution

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution license.

This licence permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

HEALTH
A 25 OCT 1945
O.R. 25




County Borough of Reading.

Annual Report
OF THE
Acting
Medical Officer of Health
AND
Acting
School Medical Officer
FOR THE YEAR
1944

By
S. L. WRIGHT,, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.

READING :
GREENSLADE & Co. (READING LTD.), KINGS BRIDGE.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b30031321>

COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Acting

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1944.

INDEX.

| | Page | | Page |
|---|--------|---|--------|
| Abattoirs, Public | 16 | Medical Treatment :— | |
| Ante-Natal Clinics | 21 | Child Guidance | 34 |
| Ante-Natal Clinic (Q.V.I.) | 21 | Dental Treatment | 33 |
| | | Minor Ailments | 31 |
| Battle Hospital | 13, 22 | Nose and Throat Clinic | 31 |
| Births, Birth Rates | 3 | Nutrition | 31 |
| Blind, care of the | 26 | Skin Disease | 32 |
| Blind and Deaf, Children | 35 | Uncleanliness | 32 |
| Borocourt | 26 | Defective Vision and Squint | 31 |
| | | Mental Deficiency | 26 |
| Canal Boats | 14 | Mental Welfare | 25 |
| Cancer, Death Rate | 3 | Mentally Defective School | 34 |
| Caravans | 14 | Midwives, Municipal | 21 |
| Caversham Grove (Emergency) Maternity | | Milk Designated | 15 |
| Home for Evacuees | 22 | Milk in Schools | 15 |
| Child Guidance Clinic | 34 | Milk (Tuberculous) | 15 |
| Child Life Protection | 24 | Milk (Special Designations) Regulations, | |
| Civil Defence Services | 27 | 1936-1942 | 15 |
| Common Lodging Houses | 14 | Milligan, Dr. H. J. | 27 |
| Cremation | 27 | | |
| | | Nursing Homes | 24 |
| Dairies, Inspection of | 15 | Nutrition | 31 |
| Deaths, death rates | 3, 4 | Offensive and Allied Trades | 14 |
| Deaths, Causes of and Ages at | 4 | Open-Air School | 34 |
| Deaths, Table of | 4 | | |
| Dellwood Maternity Home | 22 | Park Hospital | 5 |
| Dental Inspection and Treatment | 32-33 | Physically Defective School | 34 |
| Diphtheria | 5, 6 | Physical Training | 34 |
| Diphtheria Immunization Clinic | 5 | Population | 3 |
| Disinfection | 11 | Premature Births | 24 |
| Disinfestation | 17 | Premises and Occupations controlled by | |
| Domestic Help | 24 | Bye-Laws or Regulations | 14 |
| Domiciliary Midwifery | 21 | Psychiatric Clinic | 26 |
| Drainage and Refuse Disposal | 17-19 | | |
| | | Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919 | 14 |
| Factories Act, 1937 | 14 | Reading Association for the Welfare of the | |
| Food and Drugs Act | 16 | Blind | 26 |
| Food, Inspection and Supervision | 15 | Refuse Disposal | 18 |
| Food, Unsound, Destroyed | 15 | Ringworm of the Scalp | 32 |
| | | | |
| Health Visiting Summary | 23 | Salvage Collection | 18 |
| Home Helps | 24 | Sanitary Circumstances and Sanitary | |
| House Refuse, Collection and Disposal | 17 | Inspection of the Area | 13 |
| Housing | 16 | Scabies | 12 |
| | | Scarlet Fever | 5 |
| Illegitimate Children | 3, 23 | School Hygiene | 30 |
| Infant Life Protection | 24 | School Meals | 35 |
| Immunization from Diphtheria | 5 | School Milk | 15, 35 |
| Infant Mortality | 3 | Sewage Disposal | 19 |
| Infant Consultation Centres | 23 | Slaughterhouses | 16 |
| Infectious Diseases | 5, 33 | Speech Therapy | 33 |
| Infectious Diseases (Table of Notifications) | 5 | Staff | 35 |
| Infestation Order, 1943 | 14 | Statistical Summary | 3 |
| Institutional Midwifery | 22 | Stillbirths | 3 |
| | | Street Cleansing | 19 |
| | | | |
| Maternity Mortality | 3, 23 | Tuberculosis Death Rate | 3 |
| Maternity and Child Welfare | 21-24 | Tuberculosis Pavilions | 9 |
| Meals, Provision of School | 35 | Tuberculosis Table of Notification | 8 |
| Meat Inspection | 16 | Tuberculosis Sanatorium Treatment | 8 |
| Medical Inspection of School Children | 30 | Tuberculosis Dispensary After-Care Asso- | |
| Medical Inspection, Findings of :— | | ciation | 9-11 |
| Dental Defects | 32 | | |
| Infectious Diseases | 33 | Venereal Diseases | 12 |
| Minor Ailments | 31 | Vermineous Conditions | 32 |
| Nose and Throat defects | 31 | Vital Statistics | 3 |
| Nutrition | 31 | | |
| Skin Diseases | 32 | War-time Day Nurseries | 25 |
| Uncleanliness | 32 | Water Supply | 20 |
| Visual defect | 31 | Welfare of the Blind | 26 |
| | | Whitley Special School | 34 |

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
OLD COLLEGE BUILDINGS,
ST. LAURENCE'S CHURCHYARD,
READING,

October, 1945.

**TO THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS
OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit an annual report, abridged and mainly factual, of the health and sanitary circumstances of the area for the year 1944.

Statistical Summary.

| | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------|
| Area of borough (in acres) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9,106 |
| Population (estimated mid-year—Registral-General) | | | | | 111,340 |
| Registered births—Total... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2,139 |
| Legitimate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,911 |
| Illegitimate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 228 |
| Birth rate (per 1,000 of the population) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 19.21 |
| Still-births | ... | ... | ... | ... | 74 |
| Infant deaths (under one year) :— | | | | | |
| Legitimate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 78 |
| Illegitimate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | ... | 87 |
| Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) :— | | | | | |
| Legitimate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 40.8 |
| Illegitimate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 39.4 |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | ... | 40.7 |
| Registered deaths (all causes) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,311 |
| Crude death rate per 1,000 of the population | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11.8 |
| Tuberculosis death rate per 1,000 of the population :— | | | | | |
| Pulmonary only | ... | ... | ... | ... | 0.49 |
| Non-pulmonary only | ... | ... | ... | ... | 0.13 |
| All forms | ... | ... | ... | ... | 0.62 |
| Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, child-birth :— | | | | | |
| From sepsis | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| From other causes | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Maternal mortality rate (per 1,000 births) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1.8 |
| Cancer death rate (per 1,000 of the population) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1.6 |

The population shows a small decline but is still much in excess of the pre-war figure.

The birth-rate is the highest recorded since 1921.

The crude death rate for the year of 11.8 cannot be compared with previous figures as no 'comparability factor' can be given by the Registrar-General. It is reasonable to assume a preponderance of the older age groups amongst the present population and the 'standardised' death rate for 1944 would probably compare favourably with other years if it could be calculated.

The infant mortality rate was 40.7, only slightly above the lowest figure yet recorded of 39.9 in 1938.

The maternal mortality rate equalled the lowest on record.

The pulmonary tuberculosis death rate was below the 1938 level and the lowest yet recorded.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH. 1944.

| CAUSES OF DEATH. | All Ages | 0-1 | 1-5 | 5-15 | 15-45 | 45-65 | 65 and up wards |
|--|-------------|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|-----------------------|
| Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Cerebro-spinal Fever ... | 2 | 1 | 1 | — | — | — | — |
| Scarlet Fever ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Whooping Cough ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Diphtheria ... | 5 | — | 1 | 2 | 1 | — | 1 |
| Pulmonary Tuberculosis ... | 55 | — | — | 1 | 26 | 21 | 7 |
| Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis ... | 14 | 2 | 3 | — | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| Syphilitic Diseases ... | 4 | — | — | — | — | 2 | 2 |
| Influenza ... | 13 | — | 2 | — | — | 3 | 8 |
| Measles ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioen- cephalitis ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Encephalitis Lethargica ... | 1 | — | — | — | 1 | — | — |
| Cancer (all forms) ... | 177 | — | — | 1 | 11 | 68 | 97 |
| Diabetes ... | 11 | — | — | — | 1 | 3 | 7 |
| Cerebral Haemorrhage ... | 155 | 1 | — | — | 3 | 41 | 110 |
| Heart Disease ... | 387 | — | — | — | 16 | 70 | 301 |
| Other circulatory Diseases ... | 87 | — | — | — | — | 8 | 79 |
| Bronchitis ... | 55 | 1 | 2 | — | 1 | 13 | 38 |
| Pneumonia (all forms) ... | 57 | 11 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 16 | 23 |
| Other Respiratory Diseases ... | 13 | 1 | 1 | — | — | 6 | 5 |
| Ulcer of Stomach or duodenum | 15 | — | — | — | 1 | 9 | 5 |
| Diarrhoea (under 2 years) ... | 13 | 12 | 1 | — | — | — | — |
| Appendicitis ... | 8 | — | — | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Other Digestive Diseases ... | 29 | — | — | — | 4 | 7 | 18 |
| Nephritis ... | 25 | — | — | — | 4 | 7 | 14 |
| Puerperal Sepsis ... | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Other Maternal causes ... | 4 | — | — | — | 4 | — | — |
| Premature Birth ... | 16 | 16 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Congenital Debility, Malforma- tions, etc. ... | 40 | 38 | 1 | — | 1 | — | — |
| Suicide ... | 8 | — | — | — | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| Road Accidents ... | 13 | — | 1 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| Other Violent Causes ... | 25 | 2 | — | 2 | 5 | 6 | 10 |
| All Other Causes ... | 79 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 11 | 53 |
| Totals ... | 1311 | 87 | 18 | 18 | 102 | 298 | 788 |

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during 1944.

| Disease | No. of Cases* | Deaths | Death Rate per 1000 of population |
|--------------------------------|------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|
| Smallpox | — | — | — |
| Measles | 31 | — | — |
| Diphtheria | 157 | 5 | 0.04 |
| Erysipelas | 27 | — | — |
| Scarlet Fever | 506 | — | — |
| Typhus Fever | — | — | — |
| Enteric Fever | — | — | — |
| Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis ... | 20 | 2 | 0.02 |
| Poliomyelitis | 3 | — | — |
| Pneumonia (all forms) | 43 | 57 | 0.41 |
| Malaria | — | — | — |
| Encephalitis lethargica | 1 | 1 | 0.01 |
| Polioencephalitis | — | — | — |
| Dysentery | 5 | — | — |

*(These figures are original notifications, before correction of diagnosis).

The incidence of scarlet fever was the highest for over 30 years. There was no special distribution in time, or area of the town. The disease was uniformly mild (only one death has been recorded from scarlet fever since 1941). The incidence of diphtheria was much in excess of 1943, but the number of deaths was not increased. No immunised child died from diphtheria, but 15 patients had been inoculated more than 3 months before falling ill. Most of these cases were clinically, sore throats from which a swab showed diphtheria organisms, and recovery was rapid and complete.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

The number of children who attended the clinic during the year and completed the full course of immunisation was 897 under 5 years of age and 508 between 5 and 15 years of age.

Approximately 67 per cent. of the children under 5 years and 61 per cent. between 5 and 15 years of age are immunised against diphtheria. In order that the disease may be eradicated, it is necessary that over 75 per cent. of the child population should be inoculated. The Council resolved to augment during 1945 the effort to persuade parents to have their children immunised.

PARK ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

The total number of patients admitted to Park hospital during the year was 630 which, together with 43 patients remaining in hospital on the 1st January, 1944, made a total of 673 patients treated there during the year. This is the greatest

number treated in a year since the hospital opened. Details of the types of cases admitted are as follows :—

| Disease | Remaining in hospital 1 Jan, 1944 | Since admitted | Since discharged | Died in hospital | Remaining in hospital 31 Dec., 1944 |
|--------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---|
| Scarlet Fever ... | 19 | 357 | 349 | 1 | 26 |
| Diphtheria ... | 4 | 161 | 145 | 5 | 15 |
| Tuberculosis ... | 20 | 106 | 88 | 18 | 20 |
| Other Diseases ... | — | 6 | 5 | 1 | — |
| Totals ... | 43 | 630 | 587 | 25 | 61 |

Diphtheria.

Diagnosis on Discharge—

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Diphtheria | ... | ... | ... | ... | 76 |
| Tonsillitis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 40 |
| „ and Adenitis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| „ after Mumps | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| „ after Rubella | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Scarlet Fever | ... | ... | ... | ... | 8 |
| Quinsey | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Other conditions | ... | ... | ... | ... | 17 |
| Total | | | | | 145 |

Complications—

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Paralysis of Palate and Myocarditis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Partial Paresis of Palate | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Paresis of Eye Muscles | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Sinusitis & Adenitis with Broncho-Pneumonia | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Palatal Paresis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Myocarditis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |

Death Causes—

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Broncho-Pneumonia | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Diphtheria Toxaemia | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Diphtheria, Paralysis of Palate and Diaphragm | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Diphtheria | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Laryngeal Obstruction (Tracheotomy) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Total | | | | | 5 |

Scarlet Fever.

Diagnosis on Discharge—

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Scarlet Fever | ... | ... | ... | ... | 347 |
| Streptoccal Rhinitis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Measles | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Total | | | | | 349 |

Complications—

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Nephritis | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Urticaria | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Albuminuria | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 41 |
| Secondary Rash | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 |
| Otorrhoea | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11 |
| Mastoiditis | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Adenitis | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 19 |
| Other minor conditions | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 25 |

Death cause—

| | |
|--|-----|
| Patient admitted with Broncho-Pneumonia died | |
| a few hours after | ... |
| | 1 |

Other Diseases.*Diagnosis on discharge—*

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----|---|
| Whooping Cough with Enteritis | ... | ... | 1 |
| Whooping Cough with Bronchitis | ... | ... | 1 |
| Tonsillitis | ... | ... | 1 |
| Pemphigus Neonatorum | ... | ... | 1 |
| „ Contact | ... | ... | 1 |
| | | | — |
| | Total | | 5 |
| | | | — |

Death causes—

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Carcinoma | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|

The shortage of nursing and domestic staff continued. The General Nursing Council were consulted regarding the recognition of the hospital as a training school for nurses, but this cannot be accomplished at present.

It was necessary to limit the admission of scarlet fever cases to those coming within the following category :—

1. Inadequate home facilities.
2. Where other members of the house were engaged in the preparation or distribution of food for human consumption.
3. Where there was an approaching confinement in the house.
4. Cases requiring hospital treatment because of the severity of the disease.

The first was the most, and the last the least, frequent reason for admission.

With the present mild type of scarlet fever, there seems good reason to adhere to this selection of cases for admission to hospital as without detriment to the patients and releasing hospital beds for more serious illnesses.

The hospital was inspected by an officer of the Ministry of Health and by the Ministry of Labour Welfare officer, who subsequently approved the institution for the direction of nurses and domestics to the tuberculosis pavilion. Unfortunately,

this did not relieve the nursing or domestic shortage to any great extent. (For details of patients in the tuberculosis pavilion, see report on tuberculosis on page 9).

Dr. L. C. W. Cane, the visiting medical officer, retired on 30th September, 1944, through ill-health after completing nine years of service. His kindness and professional skill endeared him to both patients and staff and his enforced retirement occasioned much regret. Dr. R. A. Ratcliffe was appointed temporary visiting medical officer as from 1st October, 1944.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The subjoined table shows the number of notifications and deaths due to tuberculosis, annually, since 1938.

| Year | No. of cases notified | | No. of Deaths | | Death Rate per 1,000 of population | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| | Pul-monary | Non-Pul-monary | Pul-monary | Non-Pul-monary | Pul-monary | Non-Pul-monary |
| 1928-37 Average | 117 | 22 | 76 | 15 | 0.76 | 0.15 |
| 1938 | 91 | 31 | 58 | 6 | 0.58 | 0.05 |
| 1939 | 95 | 40 | 52 | 12 | 0.50 | 0.10 |
| 1940 | 117 | 30 | 74 | 18 | 0.66 | 0.16 |
| 1941 | 137 | 50 | 68 | 16 | 0.54 | 0.13 |
| 1942 | 186 | 40 | 60 | 10 | 0.51 | 0.08 |
| 1943 | 185 | 30 | 57 | 13 | 0.51 | 0.11 |
| 1944 | 135 | 29 | 55 | 14 | 0.49 | 0.13 |

The following table shows the number of cases undergoing institutional treatment at the end of the year, other than in Park hospital :—

| Patients in Sanatoria | | | | Men | Women | Boys | Girls | Totals |
|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|-------|--------|
| Grosvenor | ... | ... | ... | 4 | 10 | — | — | 14 |
| Daneswood | ... | ... | ... | 1 | — | — | — | 1 |
| Midhurst | ... | ... | ... | — | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Heath End | ... | ... | ... | — | — | 5 | — | 5 |
| Treloar Hospital | ... | ... | ... | — | — | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Wingfield Hospital | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 1 | — | — | 2 |
| Cold Ash Hospital | ... | ... | ... | — | — | 1 | — | 1 |
| Royal Sea-Bathing Hospital | ... | ... | ... | 1 | — | — | — | 1 |
| Horton Emergency Hospital | ... | ... | ... | 1 | — | — | — | 1 |
| Victoria Home, Windsor | ... | ... | ... | — | — | — | 3 | 3 |
| | | | | 8 | 12 | 7 | 5 | 32 |

The number of patients on the waiting list for admission to sanatoria, at the end of the year, was 18. The average waiting time before admission was 13 weeks.

Tuberculosis Pavilion, Park hospital. The following table shows the cases dealt with in the two tuberculosis wards :—

Diagnosis on Discharge—

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Tuberculosis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 80 |
| Non-Tubercular | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Pleurisy | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Tubercular Rt. Sacro-Iliac Joint | | | | ... | 1 |
| Epididymitis and Orchitis | | ... | ... | | 1 |
| Total | | | | | 88 |

Complications—

Epididymitis
Rectal Fistula
Haemoptysis
Tubercular Hip
" Spine

Death Causes—

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Fatal Haemoptysis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Adenitis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Advanced Tuberculosis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 14 |
| Tubercular Nephritis | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Tuberculosis with Laryngeal Involvement | | | | | 1 |
| Total | | | | | 18 |

Although 26 beds only could be staffed, owing to the national shortage of accommodation for tuberculosis cases, these have proved of the greatest value. The x-ray apparatus installed in 1942, permits artificial pneumothorax treatment to be carried out. Re-decoration and additional heating greatly improved amenities in the old pavilion erected in 1915. Without these beds, and the unremitting efforts of the matron to keep them staffed, the shortage of treatment facilities would have been desperate. It is no exaggeration to state that to the existence of this small unit, many patients in Reading undoubtedly owe their lives.

Tuberculosis Dispensary After-care Association.

The following extracts are taken from the report of the Honorary Secretary :—

Work of the Relief Sub-Committee. During the past year the sub-committee have dealt with 65 cases.

49 grants made for extra nourishment
6 assisted to obtain clothing
6 grants for dental treatment
1 window cleaning outfit.
3 assistance considered not necessary

Grants of extra nourishment have been discontinued in 26 cases: 2 improved, 5 commenced work, 2 transferred to Public Assistance Committee, 1 referred to Assistance Board, 2 put on Scheme allowance, 2 financial circumstances improved, 4 admitted to hospital, 2 left Reading, 1 failed to attend, and 5 died. Twenty-three patients were receiving grants for extra nourishment at the end of the year.

Gifts. Gifts were made at Christmas to 20 patients, who received parcels containing "off the ration" extras, cocoa, soup, cake, and Bournvita. These were accepted with gratitude and gave great pleasure to the recipients.

At Park hospital presents of stationery, postage stamps, and cigarettes, were given to patients in the Tuberculosis Pavilions by the matron, Miss A. Weir, on behalf of the committee.

Treatment Allowances (Ministry of Health Memo. 266/T.)
Maintenance. The sub-committee have dealt with—

56 new applications for maintenance allowances.

171 reports for revisions, alteration of circumstances, renewals.

5 additional allowances for winter fuel.

Discretionary grants—

6 new applications.

2 reports for revision.

Special payments—

6 new applications.

9 reports for revision and renewals.

The welfare officer (Mr. C. E. House) has paid 424 visits to the homes of the applicants in the course of his duties to investigate their statements concerning financial circumstances, including those who are on the Scheme allowance scale in co-operation with the Public Assistance Committee.

Chronic Tuberculosis—cases not approved for Memo. 266/T. The Council resolved that all cases of chronic tuberculosis should receive any financial assistance through the agency of the Tuberculosis Welfare Officer, working at the dispensary. The application of this decision was simplified by the fact that this officer is also a Relieving Officer and because all payments are made through the Borough Accountant's department. The Welfare Officer has reported on the working of the scheme, as follows:—

"I beg to submit a report concerning the council's scheme of assistance under Memorandum 266/T to persons suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis other than 'approved cases' i.e., to those persons who are in receipt of allowances, administered by the Public Assistance Committee.

Since the scheme was brought into operation on the 14th March, 1944, 60 cases had received assistance up to the 31st December, 1944. The number of cases receiving allowances on the 31st December, 1944, were 47, made up as follows :—

Men, 36

Women, 11

Dependents—women 31, children 35.

Every endeavour is made to prevent any abuse of the scheme, and to this end, statements made by the applicants in their applications are verified. During the period from the 16th May, 1944 to 31st December, 1944, I have made 186 visits to the homes of the recipients. Visitation now forms an important side of the work, for apart from revising the monetary circumstances of the patient and his household, it affords an opportunity of discussing and advising on some of the patients' problems other than those of finance.

It has been found that, in applying the scheme of assistance under Memorandum 266/T, through the Public Assistance Committee, circumstances arise in some cases which clash with the general principles of relief under the Poor Law Acts and Orders, and have caused some concern as to whether assistance may properly be given, in particular where wives of patients are earning considerable sums of money. On the other hand, in some cases it has been found that the Public Assistance scale of relief is more beneficial to recipients than the 266/T scale.

In general, however, the scheme has worked very well, the patients themselves having no information that the assistance they receive is by way of 'public assistance'."

It is a gratifying conclusion to this summary of the work of the Tuberculosis service to note that the death rate from pulmonary tuberculosis in 1944 was the lowest ever recorded.

DISINFECTION.

All the work of disinfection rendered necessary by the prevalence of infectious disease, has been carried out during the year. The following summary shows the nature and extent of the work involved.

| | Houses | Number of | | |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| | | Separate Rooms | Beds and Mattresses | Miscellaneous Articles |
| Reading District | 815 | 925 | 246 | 2,934 |
| Adjoining Districts | 19 | — | 87 | 263 |
| Miscellaneous Institutions | — | 41 | 316 | 3,975 |
| Totals | 834 | 967 | 649 | 7,172 |

DISINFESTATION.

(See note included in the section of the report dealing with Housing on page 17).

SCABIES.

The high incidence of the complaint continued. The clinics established at first-aid posts treated the following number of cases.

| | Males | Females | Children | Total |
|--------------------------------|-------|---------|----------|-------|
| Battle F.A. Post | 17 | 26 | 39 | 82 |
| Silver Street F.A. Post | 32 | 59 | 50 | 141 |
| Caversham F.A. Post | 10 | 52 | 32 | 94 |
| Newtown F.A. Post | 16 | 62 | 30 | 108 |
| *Grovelands F.A. Post | — | 87 | 180 | 267 |
| *Whitley F.A. Post | — | 32 | 157 | 189 |
| | 75 | 318 | 488 | 881 |

* No clinic for males here.

The use of benzyl benzoate emulsion was maintained, with uniformly satisfactory results.

VENEREAL DISEASES.

From the returns of the Medical Officer in charge of the clinic at the Royal Berkshire hospital, the following figures have been extracted of the number of Reading residents dealt with for the first time during the years denoted.

| | 1944 | 1943 | 1938 |
|---------------------|------|------|------|
| Syphilis | 37 | 41 | 20 |
| Gonorrhoea | 72 | 107 | 97 |
| Non-Venereal | 209 | 179 | 28 |

New drugs, and in particular penicillin, seem likely to alter completely the treatment of gonorrhoea and possibly of syphilis, but this is a matter for future report.

An additional treatment session was commenced on 1st October, 1944, and revised terms of payments agreed with the hospital.

Venereal Diseases Regulations, 33/B. The Council resolved that single notifications should be followed up by the Chief Health Visitor and the following record of her work is given.

23 cases notified living in borough of Reading, all were 1st notifications.

11 cases contacted

12 „ not contacted

8 cases attended for treatment at Royal Berkshire hospital special clinic

3 cases refused to attend at Royal Berkshire hospital

3 cases negative results (1 W.R.—2 G.C.) all three admitted contact with person who notified

5 „ completed treatment at Royal Berkshire hospital with negative results

Nil lapsed treatment

87 visits were made to all V.D. cases coming to the notice of the department, including 72 visits to those enumerated above.

BATTLE HOSPITAL.

The following is a summary of the work carried out at Battle hospital during the year, supplied by the medical superintendent, Dr. D. C. Thomas :—

| | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-------|
| Number of patients admitted | ... | ... | 3,138 |
| Number of patients discharged | ... | ... | 3,179 |
| Number of deaths | ... | ... | 326 |
| Number of operations carried out | ... | ... | 676 |
| Number of x-ray examinations | ... | ... | 3,322 |
| Number of maternity patients admitted | ... | ... | 380 |
| <i>Out-patients department—</i> | | | |
| New patients attending | ... | ... | 669 |
| Total treatments | ... | ... | 1,260 |
| <i>Gynaecological out-patients—</i> | | | |
| New patients attending | ... | ... | 155 |
| Total treatments | ... | ... | 496 |
| <i>Massage Department—</i> | | | |
| New patients attending | ... | ... | 245 |
| Total treatments | ... | ... | 4,206 |
| <i>Rehabilitation—</i> | | | |
| New patients attending | ... | ... | 373 |
| Total treatments | ... | ... | 506 |
| Accident cases treated in casualty department | ... | ... | 3,942 |

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Shortage of staff and other difficulties associated with war-time conditions continued to curtail, to some extent, the work of this section of the department. The following summary indicates the scope and nature of the work carried out :—

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-------|
| Total number of visits paid—Public Health and Housing Acts | ... | ... | 6,124 |
| Number of complaints received | ... | ... | 966 |

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|-----|
| Number of statutory notices served | ... | 2 |
| Number of prosecutions | ... .. | 1 |
| Number of informal notices served— | | |
| On owners | ... .. | 43 |
| On occupiers | ... .. | 72 |
| Number of verbal notices | ... .. | 329 |

All notices were complied with.

Premises and occupations which can be controlled by Bye-laws or Regulations.

Common Lodging Houses. There are three common lodging houses in the borough. Seventy-eight visits of inspection were paid during the year. It was noted that the general standard has depreciated owing to the inability of the keepers of the premises to renew worn-out bedding and equipment.

Factories Act, 1937.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|----|
| Number of complaints received | ... .. | 11 |
| Number of visits paid | ... .. | 42 |

Two notices were served, one of which was outstanding at the end of the year due to the inability of the occupiers of the factory to obtain the necessary material and labour.

Canal Boats. Routine visits were paid to the various wharves abutting on the rivers Thames and Kennet. No boats were seen at the wharves during the year.

Caravans. There are 18 caravans in the borough permanently used as dwellings and licensed as such. All have sufficient water supply and sanitary accommodation. Fifty-seven visits of inspection were paid during the year. No nuisances were observed.

Offensive and Allied Trades. There are six of these trade premises in the borough. All of them are well conducted and no complaints were received. One hundred and twenty-eight visits of inspection were paid during the year.

Rats and Mice Destruction Act, 1919. Infestation Order, 1943. During the latter part of the year, a rodent officer and four operatives were appointed and a scale of charges instituted to meet the cost of the service. The following is a record of the work completed up to the end of the year :—

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------|-------|
| Number of complaints received | ... .. | 636 |
| „ premises inspected | ... .. | 502 |
| „ visits of extermination | ... .. | 1,409 |
| „ premises cleared of vermin | ... .. | 443 |
| „ dead rats actually picked up... | ... .. | 940 |

Towards the latter part of the year a survey of the town was commenced.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(1) **Inspection of dairies and cowsheds.** During the year 58 visits of inspection were paid to dairy premises and 153 to cowsheds. All of these premises were found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

(2) **Milk (Special Designations) Regulations, 1936-42.** Under these regulations the local authority is the licensing authority. The number and nature of the licences issued during the year are set out in the following table :—

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----|
| Producers licences ... | " Tuberculin Tested " | 4 |
| Producers licences ... | " Accredited " ... | 4 |
| Producers licences ... | " Pasteurised " ... | 5 |
| Dealers licences ... | " Tuberculin Tested " | |
| | (Certified) ... | 2 |
| Dealers licences ... | " Pasteurised " ... | 3 |
| Dealers licences ... | " Tuberculin Tested " | 15 |
| Bottling licences ... | " Tuberculin Tested " | 5 |
| Supplementary licences— | | |
| Dealers ... | " Tuberculin Tested " | 2 |
| Dealers ... | " Accredited " ... | 1 |

One hundred and sixty-nine visits were made to farms and dairies where designated milk was produced or treated. One hundred and thirteen samples of milk were taken during the year.

Tuberculous Milk.

| Number of samples taken | Number in which tubercle bacilli present | Rate per cent. found tuberculous |
|-------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 19 | Nil | Nil |

School Milk Supplies.

| Grade supplied | Quantity in gallons daily |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Pasteurised | 450 |

Foodstuffs. During the year a considerable amount of time was taken up with the examination of foodstuffs at the various premises and food stores in the area.

Six thousand one hundred and two tins of food and 11,922 lbs. of other foodstuffs were condemned as unfit for human food and either destroyed or salvaged for animal feeding. In addition, approximately 20 tons of various tinned foodstuffs, examined on behalf of the Ministry of Food Salvage Department, were found to be unfit for food and sent to salvage.

Meat Inspection. Under wartime regulations of the Ministry of Food, there are no private slaughterhouses operating. All slaughtering for the area is done at the Corporation abattoirs and one other slaughterhouse under their control. There is one bacon factory and slaughterhouse operating under the same authority.

All animals at these slaughterhouses are examined by the meat inspector before passing on for allocation to the borough and surrounding districts.

Food and Drugs Act. The number and description of the samples submitted for examination by the public analyst are set out in the following table:—

| Articles | Number of samples | Number found to be genuine | Number not up to standard |
|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| New milk | 267 | 248 | 19 |
| Ground ginger | 1 | 1 | — |
| Ground cinnamon | 1 | 1 | — |
| Ground nutmeg | 1 | 1 | — |
| Indian cayenne | 1 | 1 | — |
| Gelatine | 4 | — | 4 |
| Gin | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Whiskey | 2 | — | 2 |
| Tonic wine | 1 | — | 1 |
| Sugar | 1 | 1 | — |
| Sherry | 2 | — | 2 |
| Totals ... | 283 | 254 | 29 |

In one case where the milk was found to be not up to standard, proceedings were instituted and the defendant was fined £7 2s. 6d. In one other case the producer was warned.

HOUSING.

1 Inspection of Houses—

- | | |
|--|-------|
| (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects under Public Health Act or Housing Acts ... | 341 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | 1,170 |
| 2 (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-heading (1) above, which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 | 239 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | 239 |
| 3 Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous to health as to be unfit for human habitation (Nos. 2 and 6, Mount Pleasant and 69, Field road) | 3 |
| 4 Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of paragraph 3) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | 241 |
| 5 Remedy of defects without formal notice | 194 |

6 Action under statutory powers during the year—

A. *Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936—*

| | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|---|
| (i) Number of notices served | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| (ii) Number of houses repaired by owners | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
| (iii) Undertakings not to let ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 |

B. *Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936* Nil

C. *Proceedings under the Public Health Acts* ... Nil

Verminous Houses ((Eradication of Bugs)—

| No. of complaints received | | No. of houses disinfested | No. of rooms disinfested | No. of repeat disinfestations |
|----------------------------|-----|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Council houses | 82 | 60 | 114 | 2 |
| Other houses | 285 | 266 | 450 | 5 |
| Totals | 367 | 326 | 564 | 7 |

Number of inspections prior to disinfestation ... 204

Number of inspections including disinfestation ... 326

"Following-up" inspections ... 8

House Refuse Collection and Disposal, Salvage Collection and Public Cleansing. I am indebted to the Borough Surveyor for the following report on the work of house refuse collection, etc., carried out during the year :—

"Information with regard to house refuse collection and disposal, salvage collection and public cleansing within the borough, during the year ending December, 1944 :—

(a) *Collection.* The collection of house refuse and trade refuse in the borough has changed during the war due to the more intensified collection of salvage and the shortage of labour. It has only been possible to pay a visit to each of the 31,389 premises once weekly, this being an alternative collection of house refuse and salvage.

This work has been carried out by 13 up-to-date hygienic house refuse vehicles and 51 employees, as compared with 18 freighters and 71 employees engaged upon this work before the war.

The refuse has changed in character owing to the extraction of everything salvageable.

During the year 26 notices have been served upon owners of premises to provide sanitary dustbins under Sec. 75, of the Public Health Act, 1936.

The following table shows the quantity of house refuse weighed at the corporation weighbridge, together with the total mileage of vehicles used in this collection :—

| Quarter ending | Weight of refuse | Mileage of vehicles |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| | Tons | Miles |
| March 31st | 4,611 | 19,216.6 |
| June 30th | 3,051 | 19,078.6 |
| Sept. 30th | 2,558 | 18,590.5 |
| Dec. 31st | 4,256 | 18,979.0 |
| Totals | 14,476 | 75,864.7 |

(b) *Disposal.* The disposal of house refuse within the borough is carried out by the system known as controlled tipping. The Ministry of Health are of the opinion that, where land is available, this is the most economical and advantageous method of disposal. Controlled tipping is a method by which refuse is tipped direct from collection vehicles in layers not exceeding a consolidated thickness of 6-ft. and immediately sealed with soil or other non-combustible material. In the case of Reading, the refuse, after complete consolidation, is covered with 18-ins. of mould and converted into small holdings.

(c) *Salvage.* The salvage of waste paper, bottles, rags, non-ferrous metals, bones and kitchen waste is collected from all premises in the Borough and in addition to this there are 1,159 street bins, into which householders put their kitchen waste. All this is taken to the Manor tip where same goes through the process of sorting and baling and, in the case of kitchen waste, to the concentrator plant where same is sorted and all contraries removed and then concentrated, after which the finished concentrate is sold to farmers, etc., for feeding pigs and chickens.

The following table shows the tonnage of salvage sold after same has been sorted out :—

| | | Tons | Cwts. |
|---------------------------|-----|-------|------------------|
| Waste Paper ... | ... | 1,070 | 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ |
| Ferrous Metals ... | ... | 724 | 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ |
| Non-Ferrous Metals ... | ... | 12 | 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ |
| Textiles ... | ... | 79 | 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ |
| Rubber ... | ... | 14 | 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ |
| Bones ... | ... | 64 | 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Kitchen Waste (processed) | | 1,883 | 16 |
| Bottles and Jars ... | ... | 93 | 0 |
| Cullet ... | ... | 278 | 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ |
| Miscellaneous ... | ... | 9 | 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Total ... | ... | 4,231 | 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ |

(d) *Street Cleansing.* The 'beat' system of street cleansing by street orderlies continues to be the most satisfactory system of street sweeping in Reading. The collection of sweeping and litter is carried out by means of street orderly trucks and in the out-lying districts these trucks are taken to large street bins provided at different points, and are cleared daily by a freighter and lorry.

During the year it has been very difficult to carry out this work owing to the shortage and class of labour available, young boys and old and unfit men being only available for this work.

The number of employees engaged on this work being :—

| | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|----|
| Men | ... | ... | 36 |
| Boys | ... | ... | 6 |
| | | | — |
| Total | ... | ... | 42 |
| | | | — |

as compared with pre-war total of :—

| | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|----|
| Men | ... | ... | 19 |
| Boys | ... | ... | 55 |
| | | | — |
| Total | ... | ... | 74 |
| | | | — |

(e) *Street Gully Cleansing.* All street gulleys are emptied and sealed with fresh water by mechanically operated vehicles.

The following table shows the tonnage during the year :—

| | Tons | Mileage |
|------------|-------|---------|
| March 31st | 310 | 1,395.0 |
| June 30th | 247 | 1,675.0 |
| Sept. 30th | 339 | 1,816.9 |
| Dec. 31st | 333 | 1,519.0 |
| Totals | 1,229 | 6,405.9 |

(f) *Cesspool Emptying.* All cesspools are emptied, upon receipt of instructions, by a mechanical cesspool emptying vehicle, with a minimum of inconvenience and nuisance to householders."

Sewage Disposal. I am also indebted to the borough surveyor for the following further report in regard to the method of sewage disposal :—

" During the twelve month period ended December 31st, 1944, the average daily flow of sewage treated at Manor farm has been 3,525,000 gallons. That treated at the Caversham works was estimated to be from 500,000 to 550,000 gallons per day.

This is a reduction on the previous year's flow, and can be explained by a reduced consumption of water, and a reduced infiltration volume due to a reduced rainfall. This is borne

out by the fact that there was an increase in the 'strength of the sewage,' which was almost proportional to the reduction in flow. The pollution load to the works was therefore similar to previous war years. The works at Manor farm have continued to produce a satisfactory effluent. The filter bed load is now approximately their designed capacity. The activated sludge partial treatment plant has given purifications similar to previous years, but it is now evident that this section of the works is in need of a complete overhaul. Chlorination of the sewage ceased shortly after the commencement of hostilities, and arrangements are being made for this to be resumed in the near future.

Prior to 1939, Caversham works dealt with a considerable overload, which has been still further increased by evacuation. Every endeavour has been made to produce a satisfactory effluent, but during the winter months it was found difficult to do so."

Water Supply. I am indebted to the Manager and Engineer of the water department for the following information in regard to the water supply of the borough during the year :—

"The water supply of the area and of its several parts is very satisfactory both in quality and quantity. Regular examinations of the water supply are made as follows :—Monthly—Full chemical and bacteriological analyses from Fobney pumping and filtration works (river water).

1. Raw river water.
2. After filtration.
3. After filtration and chlorination (bacteriological only).

Southcote pumping and filtration works (river water)—

1. Final water after filtration and chlorination.

Pangbourne pumping station (borehole water—chalk)—

1. After chlorination.

Bath road reservoir—

1. Reservoir outlet main.

Weekly—Partial bacteriological examination—

- Fobney works—final treated water.
- Southcote works—final treated water.
- Pangbourne works—final treated water.

Full bacteriological examination—

- Bath road reservoir outlet main.

The reports invariably state the final treated water and the water from the reservoir is "consistent with a pure and wholesome water suitable for public supply purposes."

All houses are supplied direct, excepting an odd standpipe or two in the area of supply.

The water is moderately hard in character and has no plumbo-solvent action.

During the year, pollution of the river occurred at Newbury from a factory effluent. This case was dealt with by the Thames Conservancy Board. During the time of possible danger, the river works were closed down.

A new borehole at Pangbourne was brought into operation at the end of 1944.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

(a) ANTE-NATAL CLINICS.

Two sessions weekly have been held at Star Lane and one session every other week at the Whitley clinic. The following is a record of the attendances :—

| Star Lane. | New cases attending. | Total attendances. |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Tuesday morning | 356 | 2,327 |
| Tuesday afternoon | 385 | 1,187 |
| Whitley Clinic | 156 | 442 |

During the war, an additional clinic, for evacuees only, has been held at Star Lane on Wednesday mornings. The number of new cases attending this clinic during the year was 171, with a total of 770 attendances.

A post-natal clinic is held in conjunction with the ante-natal clinics at Star Lane and Whitley, 219 patients attending during the year.

Ante-natal clinics are also conducted by the midwives of the Queen Victoria Nursing Institute and were attended by 242 patients during the year. Patients requiring further examination are referred to the council clinics.

(b) DOMICILIARY MIDWIFERY.

Municipal Midwives. There are five midwives employed directly by the local authority, each of whom is responsible for a certain district of the town. The following is a record of the work carried out by these midwives during the year :—

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Number of midwifery cases attended | ... | 374 |
| „ „ cases attended in the capacity of | | |
| maternity nurses, i.e., where | | |
| doctor is in attendance | ... | 4 |

In addition to the above, there are six midwives employed through the agency of the local branch of the Queen Victoria Nursing Institute. The number and description of the cases attended by them during the year was as follows :—

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Midwifery cases | ... | ... | ... | ... | 442 |
| Maternity cases | ... | ... | ... | ... | 105 |

(c) INSTITUTIONAL MIDWIFERY.

Dellwood maternity home. Dellwood maternity home may be said to have completed a satisfactory year's work. The number of patients admitted during the year was 349. The number of infants born there represents a little under 18 per cent. of all births occurring in the borough during the same period, a rate which compares favourably with that of previous years.

The following further details in regard to the working of the home during the year may be of interest :—

| | | |
|--|--------|-----|
| Number of patients delivered by midwives | ... | 286 |
| " " doctors | ... .. | 63 |
| " cases in which medical assistance was sought by the midwife in cases of emergency | ... .. | 107 |
| " cases of puerperal pyrexia | ... .. | 10 |
| " " ophthalmia neonatorum | ... .. | Nil |
| " infants wholly breast-fed | ... .. | 323 |
| " maternal deaths | ... .. | Nil |
| " foetal deaths— | | |
| (a) stillborn | ... .. | 3 |
| (b) within 10 days of birth | ... .. | 8 |

Battle Hospital. The following is a record of the work carried out in the maternity ward of Battle hospital during the year :—

| | | |
|--|--------|-----|
| Number of patients delivered by midwives | ... | 345 |
| " " doctors | ... .. | 31 |
| " " admitted after delivery | ... .. | 4 |
| " cases in which medical assistance was sought by the midwife in cases of emergency | ... .. | 33 |
| " cases of puerperal pyrexia | ... .. | 5 |
| " " ophthalmia neonatorum | ... .. | Nil |
| " infants wholly breast-fed | ... .. | 293 |
| " maternal deaths | ... .. | Nil |
| " foetal deaths— | | |
| (a) stillborn | ... .. | 17 |
| (b) within 10 days of birth | ... .. | 7 |

Caversham Grove (Emergency) Maternity Home for Evacuees. A very satisfactory year of work was completed at this home, as evidenced by the fact that 523 expectant mothers were confined there during the year ; with no untoward incident occurring. The home was established at the outbreak of war as part of the Government Evacuation Scheme. The mothers are sent down from London in officially recognised parties under arrangements made by the London County Council. They are admitted in the first place to one or other of the ante-natal hostels established for the purpose at "Ashcroft," Albert road,

Caversham, and "Wychcotes," St. Peter's avenue, Caversham, afterwards proceeding to Caversham Grove for their confinements. I am also pleased to report that the work of these two hostels has been very satisfactory during the year.

Maternal Mortality. During the year there occurred the deaths of four mothers from causes associated with child-birth, representing a maternal mortality rate of 1.8 per 1,000 births. All four deaths occurred in institutions. The certified causes of death were pneumonia, following caesarean section; caesarean section, following uraemia; eclampsia; and ectopic pregnancy.

Infant Consultation Centres. These centres, situated in all parts of the town, continued to be well attended during the year. The total number of children who attended during the year were as follows :—

| | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Under one year of age | ... | ... | ... | 1,871 |
| Between the ages of one and five years | ... | ... | ... | 1,684 |

Health Visiting Summary. The scheme of health visiting has been maintained on the same lines as in previous years. Children are visited in their homes from soon after birth until they attain the age of five years. The following summary shows the total number of visits paid by the health visitors during the year :—

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----|--------|
| First visits after receipt of notification | ... | ... | 1,870 |
| Visits to children aged one to five years | ... | ... | 14,475 |
| Re-visits to children under one year | ... | ... | 7,803 |
| Special visits | ... | ... | 704 |
| Visits to expectant mothers | ... | ... | 1,053 |
| Special visits to cases of measles | ... | ... | 35 |
| Special visits to cases of ophthalmia | ... | ... | 2 |
| Special visits in regard to stillbirths | ... | ... | 63 |
| Special visits in regard to infant deaths | ... | ... | 60 |
| Special visits to nursed-out children | ... | ... | 245 |
| Total | | | 26,310 |

Illegitimate Children. It will be noted that births of illegitimate children were 10 per cent. of the total for the year. The figure for 1938 was 4 per cent. It is a remarkable fact that the infant mortality rate for illegitimate children was below that for legitimate. Whatever the exact significance of this record may be, it is clear that the efforts under the terms of Circular 2866 have not been unsuccessful. During the year three mothers and their babies were sent to hostels for unmarried mothers.

Premature births. Ministry of Health Circular 20/44, dealing with the care of premature infants, came into force during the early part of the year. Whilst it was not possible to put into immediate operation all the recommendations laid down in the Circular, routine notification by midwives and doctors was instituted and the health visitors have paid more frequent visits and kept a special check on those premature babies born during the year, to ensure that the special care and attention which these children should receive is carried out and to give all advice and assistance necessary to the mothers.

Infant Life Protection. The health visitors are all officially appointed Infant Life Protection Visitors for the purposes of this Act. Regular visits are paid to the various homes where the children are boarded out and the foster mothers concerned are all registered as such with the local authority. No foster mother has been registered where the home conditions were found on inspection to be not up to standard. At the end of the year, the number of foster mothers on the register was 33 and the number of children in the care of these foster mothers was 38.

Home Helps. As mentioned in the report of the medical officer of health for last year, it was not possible to bring the home helps scheme into operation that year, despite repeated advertisements in the press and otherwise. During the year under review, however, further intensified efforts were made to obtain suitable staff which resulted in one applicant coming forward. She commenced duty on the 12th June, 1944, and up to the end of the year had completed eight cases. The number of days spent in the homes averaged 14 and the average charge made for her services was £1 7s. 6d. per week. Although it was the earnest desire of the local authority to amplify this important branch of the maternity and child welfare service, this was not possible as no further applicants for posts as home helps were forthcoming.

Domestic Help. A further circular (179/44) dealing with this subject, was issued by the Ministry of Health on the 14th December, 1944, but by the end of the year it had not become possible to take any action in regard thereto.

NURSING HOMES.

There are at the present time 11 homes registered with the local authority, providing bed accommodation for 34 maternity patients and 71 others, a total of 105 beds. All the homes were visited and inspected during the year, and were found to be carried on in a satisfactory manner. No new homes were registered during the year.

WAR-TIME DAY NURSERIES.

The war-time day nurseries situated in all parts of the town continued to be well attended throughout the year, as will be seen from the following return :—

WARTIME NURSERIES.

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCES OF CHILDREN DURING
THE YEAR, 1944.
0-5 Years.

| | Jan. | Feb. | Mar. | April | May | June | July | Aug. | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. | Totals |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|-------|-----|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|--------|
| Whole-Time— | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Holybrook House | 26 | 29 | 30 | 29 | 34 | 33 | 41 | 35 | 36 | 43 | 37 | 35 | 408 |
| 74, Bulmershe Road | 19 | 25 | 29 | 26 | 28 | 33 | 35 | 34 | 23 | 26 | 27 | 27 | 332 |
| 74, London Road ... | 27 | 21 | 28 | 26 | 19 | 18 | 35 | 33 | 33 | 33 | 32 | 29 | 334 |
| 11, Victoria Square | 31 | 34 | 38 | 40 | 42 | 43 | 56 | 50 | 50 | 52 | 40 | 34 | 510 |
| Norcot Nursery ... | 29 | 25 | 28 | 24 | 28 | 16 | 25 | 34 | 33 | 35 | 43 | 32 | 352 |
| Blagrave Nursery | 20 | 22 | 19 | 25 | 21 | 19 | 21 | 21 | 22 | 24 | 28 | 22 | 264 |
| Caversham Nursery | 39 | 35 | 32 | 25 | 20 | 31 | 34 | 41 | 46 | 33 | 41 | 33 | 410 |
| Whitley Park Nursery | 38 | 36 | 34 | 30 | 44 | 43 | 47 | 42 | 44 | 41 | 45 | 45 | 489 |
| Totals | 229 | 227 | 238 | 225 | 236 | 236 | 294 | 290 | 287 | 287 | 293 | 257 | 3099 |
| Part-Time— | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bridge Street ... | 16 | 17 | 24 | 23 | 21 | 18 | 29 | 28 | 25 | 25 | 30 | 28 | 284 |
| Denmark Hall ... | 17 | 15 | 6 | 10 | 14 | 13 | 10 | 14 | 11 | 14 | 16 | 15 | 155 |
| Torrington Road ... | 35 | 27 | 29 | 31 | 29 | 31 | 34 | 24 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 23 | 353 |
| Nurseries now closed | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| *Oxford Hall ... | 28 | 30 | 30 | 33 | 32 | 30 | | | | | | | 183 |
| †Whitley Com. Centre | 24 | | | | | | | | | | | | 24 |
| Totals ... | 349 | 316 | 327 | 322 | 332 | 328 | 367 | 356 | 352 | 356 | 370 | 323 | 4098 |

*Closed 5/7/44

†Closed 10/1/44.

These two nurseries had to be closed because the buildings were required for other purposes.

MENTAL WELFARE.

I am indebted to Dr. William Ogden, the medical superintendent of Berkshire mental hospital for the following report on the working of the hospital during the year :—

“ The total accommodation provided by the hospital is :—

| | | |
|------|--------|-------|
| Male | Female | Total |
| 427 | 647 | 1,074 |

This includes the 110 beds at Hungerford Public Assistance Institution.

Of this total, the number of Reading patients dealt with were as follows :—

| Admissions— | | | | Male. | Female. |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|---------|
| Certified | ... | ... | ... | 16 | 31 |
| Voluntary | ... | ... | ... | 22 | 20 |
| Temporary | ... | ... | ... | — | 1 |
| Discharges— | | | | | |
| Certified | ... | ... | ... | 13 | 21 |
| Voluntary | ... | ... | ... | 16 | 21 |
| Deaths— | | | | | |
| Certified | ... | ... | ... | 5 | 6 |
| Voluntary | ... | ... | ... | 2 | 2 |
| Temporary | ... | ... | ... | — | 1 |

Attendances at Out-patient Clinic (Psychiatric) at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. The number of Reading patients dealt with during the year were as follows :—

| | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| New patients | ... | ... | ... | 196 |
| Patients who had been in the mental hospital | | | | 32 |
| Old patients returned | ... | ... | | 27 |
| Cases carried on from previous year | | | | 17 |
| | | | Total | 272 |

Total recorded attendances made by these patients 957

Mental Deficiency—Accommodation. The number of patients accommodated in Borocourt during the year was 100, of whom 50 were males and 50 females. Three males and one female were accommodated in other mental institutions.

WELFARE OF THE BLIND.

The blind people of Reading are cared for by the Reading Association for the Welfare of the Blind. At the end of the year ended 31st March, 1945, the number of blind persons on the register was 76 males and 103 females, making a total of 179. The Association pays out domiciliary assistance to the necessitous blind, arranges for the blind to be visited and taught to read in their own homes, and holds pastime classes twice a week at 49, Minster Street, when handicrafts are taught. The association provides the blind, through the kindness of the British Wireless for the Blind Fund, with free wireless sets and pays for the up-keep of the same. It arranges for free wireless licenses, free passes on the Corporation buses and free passes to the cinemas, also for the provision of white walking sticks.

CREMATION.

The Medical Officer of Health is the medical referee to the Reading Crematorium and issues the necessary authority to cremate. During the year under review 346 cremations were carried out.

CIVIL DEFENCE SERVICES.

No attacks by hostile air-craft or missiles were sustained. Towards the end of the year the fixed first-aid posts were closed and their staffs released or transferred to the mobile unit. Tilehurst first-aid post remained on a voluntary basis as a first-aid post, the premises being retained for other A.R.P. purposes. The Civil Defence ambulance service was transferred to the administrative control of the transport manager, its extraneous duties having attained a whole-time character.

DR. H. J. MILLIGAN.

It is fitting that a special note should be made in this report of your late Medical Officer of Health. In May, 1944, Dr. Milligan was suddenly totally incapacitated by the illness from which he died three months later. The Council have already expressed their appreciation of his high qualities, both personal and professional, displayed during his 24 years service as Medical Officer of Health. I take the opportunity to add my testimony of his kindness and help to me during the period I was his deputy.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I must thank the members of the Council for their unfailing encouragement and help during this most difficult year, and the staff of the department for their zeal and loyalty, without which the burden of work could not have been sustained.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Acting

School Medical Officer

FOR THE YEAR

1944.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
 OLD COLLEGE BUILDINGS,
 ST. LAURENCE'S CHURCHYARD,
 READING,
October, 1945.

**TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
 EDUCATION COMMITTEE.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit the annual report, abridged and factual,
 on the School Medical Service in Reading for 1944.

Estimated school population 12,866.

SCHOOL HYGIENE.

The general difficulties relating to the supply of domestic labour extended to school cleaning and much concern was expressed by head teachers at the enforced reduction in their standards of environmental hygiene. Whilst this problem could not, unfortunately, be solved under war conditions, it is gratifying that its importance is so fully recognised, both from the viewpoint of the immediate health of the children, and from the educative aspect of inculcating high standards of personal hygiene.

ROUTINE MEDICAL INSPECTIONS.

| | | | | |
|--|-----|-------------|-----|--------|
| Group 1—Entrants | ... | ... | ... | 1,309 |
| Second age group | ... | ... | ... | 1,372 |
| Third age group | ... | ... | ... | 1,057 |
| | | | | <hr/> |
| | | Total | | 3,738 |
| Other routine inspections | ... | ... | | 57 |
| | | | | <hr/> |
| | | Grand Total | | 3,795 |
| | | | | <hr/> |
| Special inspections and re-inspections | | | | 12,028 |

It was still possible to retain the intermediate age group examinations and arrears were slowly being overtaken. In addition, the practice of giving special attention to children specifically referred is reflected in the 'special inspection' figures which remain some 30 per cent above pre-war level.

NUTRITION.

| Year | No. of children inspected | A (Excellent) | | B (Normal) | | C (Slightly sub-normal) | | D (Bad) | |
|------|---------------------------|------------------|------|---------------|------|----------------------------|-----|------------|---|
| | | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| 1943 | 3,490 | 987 | 28.3 | 2,303 | 65.9 | 200 | 5.7 | — | — |
| 1944 | 3,795 | 889 | 23.4 | 2,745 | 72.3 | 161 | 4.2 | — | — |

These findings show little change from previous years and the general impression of all examiners was that there was no falling off in the nutritional standard of the children.

Treatment of Minor Ailments.

(Excluding uncleanliness) ... 3,139

Treatment of Defective Vision.

Errors of refraction (including squint) 662
Other defect or disease of the eyes ... 53

Total 715

Number of children for whom spectacles
were prescribed ... 546
obtained ... 544

Advantage has been taken of the establishment of a first-aid post at Grovelands to treat minor ailments in children from schools in the surrounding area of the town. This experience showed the need for such a subsidiary clinic and it was resolved to continue it, after the post closed in December.

Treatment of Defects of Nose and Throat.

Received operative treatment ... 237
„ other forms of treatment 69

Total 306

Operative treatment for enlarged tonsils and adenoids is performed at the Royal Berkshire hospital. Owing to reservation of beds for war casualties, a considerable waiting list of children for operation has accrued.

VERMINOUS CONDITIONS.

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| (1) | Average number of visits per school made during the year by the school nurses or other authorised persons | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 8 |
| (2) | Total number of examinations of children in the schools by school nurses or other authorised persons | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 36,559 |
| (3) | Number of individual children found unclean | ... | | | | | 1,713 |
| (4) | Number of individual children cleansed under Section 87 (2) and (3) of the Education Act, 1921 | | | | | | 39 |
| (5) | Number of cases in which legal proceedings were taken— | | | | | | |
| | (a) Under the Education Act, 1921 | ... | ... | | | | Nil |
| | (b) Under school attendance byelaws | | ... | | | | Nil |

Ringworm of the scalp gave concern. The number of cases in 1944 was 91. In 1938 it was 19. It was not possible to arrange for x-ray treatment at local hospitals. Advances in technique and complexity of apparatus precluded the possibility of arranging for treatment by x-rays at the school clinic. It is generally agreed that x-rays are the only effective means of dealing with the infection. Arrangements with a London hospital were commenced but held up because of the risk to children by enemy missiles during this period. The increase in ringworm of the scalp is not confined to Reading. It appears to run parallel with the war-time increase in scabies, and a similar increase was noted in the last war. With the return of peace conditions and the possibility of energetic treatment, it should be eradicated as effectively as in the last post-war period.

DENTAL INSPECTION AND TREATMENT.

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| (1) | Number of children inspected by the dentist— | | | | | | |
| | (a) Routine age-groups | ... | ... | ... | ... | | 3,278 |
| | (b) Specials | ... | ... | ... | ... | | 1,694 |
| | (c) Total (routine and specials) | ... | ... | | | | 4,972 |
| (2) | Number found to require treatment | ... | ... | | | | 3,911 |
| (3) | Number actually treated | ... | ... | ... | ... | | 2,356 |
| (4) | Attendances made by children for treatment | ... | | | | | 6,047 |
| (5) | Half-days devoted to— | | | | | | |
| | Inspection | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 23 |
| | Treatment | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 762 |
| | Total | ... | | | | | 785 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| (6) | Fillings— | | | | | |
| | Permanent teeth | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2,974 |
| | Temporary teeth | ... | ... | ... | ... | 332 |
| | | | | | Total | 3,306 |
| (7) | Extractions— | | | | | |
| | Permanent teeth | ... | ... | ... | ... | 719 |
| | Temporary teeth | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2,846 |
| | | | | | Total | 3,565 |
| (8) | Administrations of general anaesthetics for extractions | ... | ... | ... | ... | — |
| (9) | Other operations— | | | | | |
| | Permanent teeth | ... | ... | ... | ... | 762 |
| | Temporary teeth | ... | ... | ... | ... | 352 |
| | | | | | Total | 1,114 |

These figures show a great improvement, as two full-time dentists were available during the year. It is regretted that endeavours to re-establish an effective dental service have been continuously frustrated by staffing changes, as there is unquestionably much treatment urgently required.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There was a high incidence during the year of scarlet fever. The difficulty of controlling the infection is shown by the following circular letter addressed to all parents of one school where the number of cases exceeded the average :—

“Several cases of scarlet fever have recently occurred in scholars attending this school. The illness is usually quite mild, most of the children feeling ill for a few days only. The rash may disappear very quickly and the true cause of the illness may not be recognised. If, therefore, your child is suddenly unwell, complains of sore throat, is feverish, flushed and possibly sick, it would be advisable to call in your doctor to decide the cause of the illness without delay.”

A letter was also sent to the Chief Education Officer for distribution to head teachers, drawing attention to the need for observing closely and re-stating the usual rules for school hygiene.

SPEECH THERAPY.

This work was gravely held up by the resignation during the month of August of Miss M. Pechey. The council resolved to appoint, in her place, a whole-time speech therapist but no applicants were forthcoming.

PHYSICAL TRAINING.

These activities were fully continued under the Organisers of Physical Training.

Considerable difficulty arose owing to shortages of suitable gymnasium clothing and shoes for children. The desirability of every child having his or her own equipment, in spite of rationing, was appreciated by the Council. A sum of £900 for this purpose was, therefore, included in the estimates for 1945-1946, it being understood that special efforts were being made by the Ministry of Education to ensure that these articles would be available.

CHILD GUIDANCE.

The clinic headquarters for Reading are now established at 27, Kidmore road, Caversham. As indicated in the annual report of the Medical Director, from which I am quoting, this has eased and brightened their work considerably, and there is now room for playtherapy, interviewing parents and office work as well as a permanent home and common meeting ground for discussion and welcoming all interested visitors. Two diagnostic and 5 treatment sessions are held weekly. The figures of attendance applying to Reading for the year are as follows:—

Diagnostic interviews—

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|----|
| Maternity and child welfare | ... | ... | 5 |
| Mental welfare | ... | ... | 1 |
| School children | ... | ... | 70 |

WHITLEY SPECIAL SCHOOL.

No important changes are recorded. The number of children in attendance during the year were as follows—

| Mentally defective school— | | | | Boys. | Girls. |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|--------|
| On roll January 10th, 1944 | ... | ... | ... | 55 | 21 |
| Admitted during year | ... | ... | ... | 5 | 10 |
| Left | .. | .. | ... | 16 | 5 |
| On roll December 23rd | ... | ... | ... | 44 | 26 |
| Physically defective school— | | | | | |
| On roll January 10th, 1944 | ... | ... | ... | 35 | 16 |
| Admitted during year | ... | ... | ... | 12 | 3 |
| Left | .. | .. | ... | 10 | 9 |
| On roll December 23rd | ... | ... | ... | 37 | 10 |
| Open-air school— | | | | | |
| On roll January 10th, 1944 | ... | ... | ... | 17 | 27 |
| Admitted during year | ... | ... | ... | 8 | 7 |
| Left during year | ... | ... | ... | 4 | 6 |
| On roll December 23rd | ... | ... | ... | 21 | 28 |

The close co-operation between the open-air school and the tuberculosis officer continued. To assist the school medical staff the tuberculosis officer assumed the duty of routine medical inspections at the open-air school.

BLIND AND DEAF CHILDREN.

The total number of almost totally blind and deaf children who are *not* at the present time receiving education suitable for their special needs, is as follows :—

| | 1 At a Public Elementary School | 2 At an Institution other than a special School | 3 At no School or Institution |
|----------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Blind Children | — | — | 1 |
| Deaf Children | — | — | 2 |

SCHOOL MEALS.

The extension of the schools meals service was continued and 531,626 meals were served during the year.

SCHOOL MILK.

The admirable milk in schools scheme was continued and the average number of children receiving milk during the year remained at the high figure of 80 per cent.

STAFF.

It is with great regret that I record the death of the School Medical Officer, Dr. H. J. Milligan, on the 31st July, 1944. The Council have expressed their appreciation of his work as School Medical Officer during his 24 years of office. It will be remembered that he was their first medical officer to combine the post with that of Medical Officer of Health for the borough, and as his deputy in that capacity I take this opportunity of paying my personal tribute.

There was no other change to report in the staff of the department.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I must thank the members of the committee and especially of the school medical services sub-committee, for their unfailing encouragement and help in maintaining and improving the scope of the school medical services. My thanks are also due to the senior assistant school medical officer and the staff who have, in spite of adverse conditions, shown unswerving loyalty and keenness.

