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BOROUGH



OF NELSON.

NELSON,

25TH JANUARY, 1897.

To the

Chairman & Members of the Health Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

It is again my duty to present to you my Annual Report as to the health and sanitary condition of the Borough during the past year. I shall adhere to the plan I have hitherto adopted in these annual reports and give you the usual formal record of the births and deaths which occurred in the borough for the past twelve months. During the year 913 (472 males, 441 females) births were registered, which gives an annual birth-rate of 30·4 per 1000. The deaths registered (including premature births and inquest cases) numbered 412 (207 males, 205 females). This gives an annual death-rate of 13·7 per 1000. If we exclude premature births (45) and inquest cases (16) we get the very low rate of 11·7 per 1000.

The deaths of children under one year (including premature births) totalled 128, giving a death-rate of 14 per cent. calculated on the number born during the year.

The following table epitomises the ages at which the deaths occurred:—

Deaths under 1 year	...	...	...	...	...	...	128	} 192 under 5.
„ of 1 and under 5 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	64	
„ of 5 „ 15 „	...	...	...	...	...	...	20	} 220 over 5 years.
„ of 15 „ 25 „	...	...	...	...	...	...	21	
„ of 25 „ 65 „	...	...	...	...	...	...	120	
„ of 65 and over	...	...	...	...	...	...	56	

I enclose a detailed list of the causes of death and the ages at which they died.

Under the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act there have been reported 224 cases of Scarlet Fever, 18 Interic Fever, 1 Relapsing Fever, and 12 Diphtheria. In these cases the Health Superintendent took the requisite steps to prevent their spread, notifying not only the parents but also the School Board—thus prohibiting any other children from the same house attending school—supplying disinfectants, attending to drains, ashpits, &c.

We have had no severe epidemic of infectious disease during the year until December. Although so many cases of Scarlet Fever we seldom had more than five or six cases reported in a week.

During the last month we have had a severe epidemic of Measles, but not being notifiable, I am unable to give any adequate idea of the number of cases. I may here say that parents often fail to recognise the danger of an attack of Measles; they take fairly good care for the first week and then relax that care, the consequence being some serious complication supervenes with fatal results.

1896 has been a very healthy year, the death-rate, you may remember, being 14·2 in the first quarter, 13·3 in the 2nd quarter, 12·5 in the 3rd quarter, and 14·8 in the 4th—an average for the year of 13·7. I think few, if any, manufacturing towns can give such a record. Two great factors in preserving the health of the district—pure air and a plentiful supply of good water—have been steadily kept in view by your Council. We have had an abundant supply of good water the whole year. The addition to the Park, which was opened in April, the purchase of the land on the other side of the river, and that in the Walverden Valley, show the Council fully recognise the advantages of pure air spaces in different parts of the borough.

Owing to the demands of the County authorities a complete re-modelling of the Sewage works became necessary, and which will soon be completed.

The Surveyor (Mr. Ball) has kindly informed me that during the year plans were approved for 594 houses, 3 schools, 2 chapels, 2 weaving sheds and 109 buildings of various descriptions. Over £10,000 has been spent in private street improvements, embracing 47 streets. In Netherfield Road and Larch Street intercepting sewers and storm overflows have been carried out, and others of the same kind are now engaging his attention in order to prevent the flooding which has at times taken place after thunderstorms and heavy rains.

Plans for a new Infectious Diseases Hospital have been presented to the Local Government Board. The scheme embraces an Isolation Pavilion containing 6 beds, two fever pavilions with 28 beds, an administrative block, disinfecting rooms and the necessary out-buildings. A number of nuisances have been reported to me during the year, but Mr. Priestley (Health Superintendent) has kindly given me a detailed list which gives some idea of the work done in that department. He says 307 complaints of nuisances have been received, in the majority of which an abatement has been secured without statutory notice.

The following list shows at a glance what has been done:—

- 86 Privies to convert into W.Cs.
- 72 Ashpits to provide proper doors and coverings.
- 28 Defective waste pipes.
- 12 Slaughter-houses requiring repairs.
- 4 Mills to provide separate W.C. accommodation for the sexes.
- 28 Backyards to re-flag.
- 3 Houses requiring new drains.
- 5 Waste pipes to disconnect.
- 1 House unfit for habitation.
- 1 Case of overcrowding.
- 5 W.Cs. blocked.

Six cases of unsound meat have been examined. One carcase of a cow, 28 pieces of beef, 2 pieces of mutton, 4 of lamb and 18 of pork have been seized and destroyed. In only *one* case have legal proceedings been taken, and a fine of £10 and costs imposed.

The Slaughter-houses have been kept in fairly good condition, but until a public Abattoir is erected effectual supervision is almost impossible.

The Common Lodging-house continues to be well conducted. No offensive or noxious trade has been reported. Scavenging has been very efficiently carried out by the Corporation—the ashes deposited at tips, the animal and vegetable refuse treated at the refuse destroyer, which (destroyer) is a very antiquated affair and should as soon as possible be replaced by one on more modern principles.

Several chimneys have been under observation with regard to smoke nuisance, but no special action has as yet been taken.

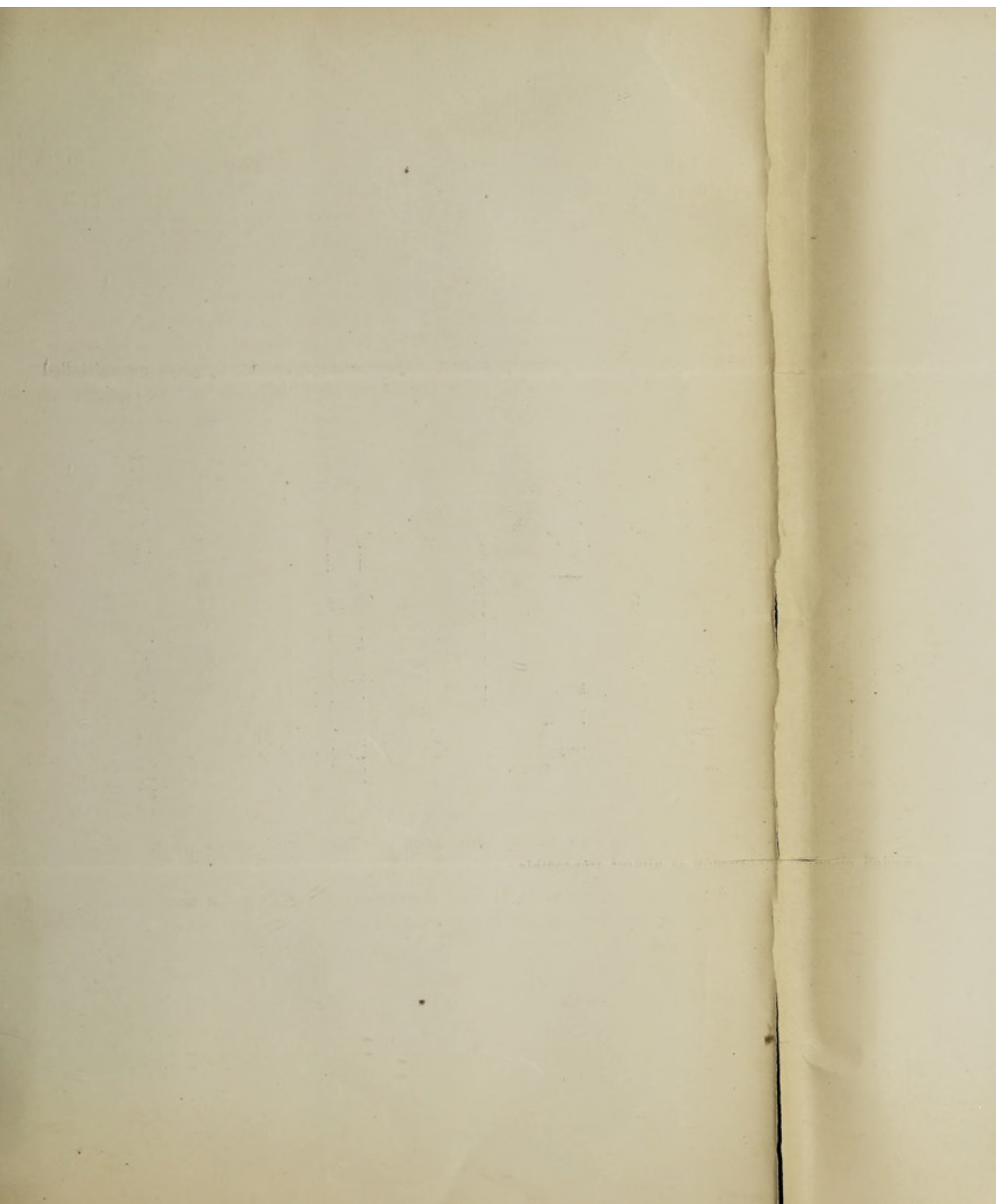
The Dairies and Cowsheds Acts have been well observed. No action has been taken under the Food and Drugs Acts.

The provision of a public disinfecting station for the borough is a matter of urgent necessity.

I have the honour to remain,

Yours obediently,

A. P. MILLAR, M.D.



NELSON CORPORATION.

1896.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

ANNUAL

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

A. P. MILLAR, M.D.,
NELSON.