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**Contributors**

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# SEGHILL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

## Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1897.

Gentlemen,

I have again to present you with my Annual Report, as Medical Officer of Health for the year 1897.

Twenty-eight deaths have occurred in the district at all ages during the year, 13 males and 15 females, as compared with 38 during 1896.

Estimating the population, as in previous years, at 2,300, this mortality shows a death-rate of 12·17 per thousand per annum. In 1896 the rate was 16·52, and during 1895 a mortality of 20 per thousand of the estimated population prevailed. The average mortality for the three years being thus at the rate of 16·23 per thousand of the estimated population.

During the year 51 births have been registered, which gives a birth-rate of 22·17 per thousand, as compared with 1896, when it was 29·13, and 33·04 during 1895. The average birth-rate is thus seen to be 28·11 for the last three years.

The various causes of death for the year were :—

Bronchitis and Pneumonia .....	2
Phthisis .....	1
Heart Disease.....	1
Debility from Birth .....	6
Injuries .....	5
Other causes .....	13
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>28</b>

The different ages at which the deaths occurred were :—

Under 1 year .....	8
1 and under 5 years .....	2
5    "    15    " .....	3
15   "    25   " .....	1
25   "    65   " .....	8
65 and upwards .....	6

The various deaths as they occurred during the different months, quarters, and half-years, are shewn as follows :—

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
	3	3	2	2	5	1	5	0	2	1	2	2
Quarters	8			8			7			5		
Half years	16						12					

**INFANT MORTALITY.**—The mortality of those under 12 months amounted to 8 out of the total of 28 at all ages, and shews a death-rate at this age of 3·47 per thousand of the population per annum, and at the rate of 156·86 per thousand births registered during the year.

Ten deaths took place under 5 years of age, shewing a mortality at this age at the rate of 4·34 per thousand per annum.

Of the 8 deaths which occurred under 12 months, the causes and ages were :—

Under 1 month .....	4
1 to 6 months.....	3
6 to 12 months .....	1
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>8</b>

The causes of these deaths were debility from birth 6, and convulsions 2.

**ZYMOTIC DISEASE.**—The only forms of zymotic disease which have come under notice during the year were typhoid fever, scarlet fever and measles.

**TYPHOID FEVER.**—In the month of April one case of this disease appeared at Mare's Close farm house, in a young man. On it being recognised a large dairy, which existed in the house, was closed, and the distribution of the milk transferred to other premises, and no communication was allowed with the infected house for five weeks, when everything in the house was thoroughly disinfected; and no further cases occurred. The case which recovered was evidently caused by emanations from a polluted stream close to the house. This condition has been much modified, and the stream is now comparatively clean and pure. Measures were also taken to prevent the cows of the dairy from drinking any polluted water, a pure supply being provided.

**SCARLET FEVER.**—This disease also appeared at the same time at the cottages at Mare's Close, and 6 cases of a fairly mild type occurred.

In October one mild case occurred in Blaketown, and in November one case was caused in Blue Row from it. The case was that of an assistant teacher in the Board Schools, and every effort was made, by keeping him from school for a considerable time, and strict isolation, to prevent spreading; which means were successful, as no further extension of the disease took place, and had disappeared from the district by the end of the year.

**MEASLES.**—In April measles appeared in Seghill Village, the disease having been imported from Seaton Terrace, where it was epidemic. Notwithstanding the precautions taken by strict isolation, &c., 7 other mild cases occurred during the month of May. No deaths, however, resulted, and the outbreak subsided.

Thus a total of ~~17~~ 14 cases of zymotic disease occurred in the district during the year, viz. :—Typhoid fever, 1; scarlet fever, 6; and measles, 8.

**ZYMOTIC MORTALITY.**—No deaths were caused by any of the forms of zymotic disease, and thus is continued the very satisfactory record of the previous year.

**SANITARY WORK.**—This work continues to be carried out very satisfactorily, no unnecessary accumulations of offensive material being allowed to take place; and the removal of the large built ashpits from various parts of the village, and the substitution of proper ash privies at present taking place, will still further, it is hoped, improve the sanitary condition and the amenity of the district.

**INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.**—During my frequent visits to Seghill district, I have, both alone and along with the Sanitary Inspector, repeatedly made inspections of the various parts of the district, and any suggestions I have made have always received immediate attention from the Council and their officials.

This report, being again of a satisfactory nature, I have to congratulate the Council, especially upon the low death-rate for the year, and the absence of any mortality from preventable disease.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ROBT. ANDERSON, M.D., &c.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Seaton Delaval, March 9th, 1898.

