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Contributors

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Y 22, 1896.

THE HEALTH OF SLOUGH.

Dr. Southey has reported to the Slough Urban District Council as follows:—

Colnbrook,
February 1896.

To the Chairman and Members of the Slough Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,—In submitting to you this my 12th annual report relating to the year 1895, I am glad to be able to say that I consider the health of the district has been satisfactorily maintained, although the death-rate from all causes (14.4) is somewhat higher than the exceptionally low rate of the preceding year (11.0). This increased rate was mainly due to the high rate of mortality among elderly persons, for no fewer than 37, or 47.5 per cent. of the registered deaths, were of persons over their 60th year. In this respect, last year was not exceptional, as several of my former reports show that when the general death rate per 1000 in the district has been comparatively high, the per centage rate relating to aged persons has also been high, and I may here state that in the 9 preceding years, 1886-94, 692 deaths from all causes were recorded, of which number no less than 263, or 38 per cent. of the registered deaths, were of persons who had attained their 60th year. This is an unusually high death-rate of elderly persons, even for rural districts.

It is, moreover, satisfactory to be able to show that not a single death was recorded in the district last year from the principal zymotic diseases. The mean zymotic death rate in the preceding 18 years, 1877-1894, was 0.9 per 1,000 of the estimated population. In the first 10 years of this period, 1877-86, it was 1.0, whereas in the more recent 9 years it had declined to 0.6 per 1,000.

The low rate of infant mortality last year was also satisfactory, it being but 8.0 per cent. of the registered births.

Table of births, deaths, and zymotic deaths for the 19 years, 1877-95, with the rates per 1,000 of the estimated population.

1877	136	25.2	81	16.8	10	1.7
1878	115	20.1	70	12.9	5	0.8
1879	144	17.4	72	13.7	12	2.1
1880	127	25.1	83	16.9	4	0.8
1881	118	23.2	56	11.2	4	0.8
1882	194	29.5	63	12.6	4	0.8
1883	129	24.2	72	13.5	7	1.3
1884	111	20.9	70	13.2	6	1.1
1885	130	24.2	74	13.8	1	0.2
1886	122	22.1	85	13.5	5	0.9
1887	126	22.9	87	13.4	4	0.7
1888	123	22.0	61	10.7	6	1.0
1889	112	21.3	93	16.4	1	0.2
1890	118	20.5	72	12.5	nil.	
1891	128	23.6	95	17.5	10	1.6
1892	119	21.9	99	17.9	1	0.2
1893	117	20.6	69	12.2	4	0.7
1894	117	20.6	63	11.0	4	0.7
1895	115	20.0	78	13.5	nil.	

Area and Population.—With an area of 401 acres, the population of the district had by the census returns increased from 5,095, in 1881, to 5,427, in 1891. Assuming that this rate of increase has since been maintained, the population may be estimated at 5,775 persons; upon which number the rates in this report have been calculated.

Births.—During the year the registered number of children born alive within the district was 115, being two less than in the preceding year, and representing the low rate of 20.0 per 1000 of the estimated population. These 115 births include 57 of males and 58 of females. The recorded birth rates last year in the Eton Rural and Eton Urban district were 29.7, and 15.4 per 1000 respectively. The general birth rate last year in the whole of England and Wales was 30.3; and in the outer ring of suburban districts around London 28.8 per 1000.

Deaths.—Last year 78 deaths from all causes were registered in the district—39 each of males and females—which were equal to a rate of 13.5 per 1000 of the estimated population. The death rate last year in the Eton Rural and Eton Urban Districts were 14.4 and 9.4 per 1,000 respectively. The general death rate last year in the whole of England and Wales was 18.7, and the outer ring of suburban districts around London 14.5 per 1,000.

Mortality at Different Ages.—These 78 registered deaths included 14 of children under 5 years of age, 4 of children and adults from 5 to 25, 15 from 25 to 50, 8 from 50 to 60, 9 from 60 to 70, 15 from 70 to 80; 11 from 80 to 90, and 2 above 90.

Infant Mortality.—The 14 deaths of children under 5 years of age included 10 of infants under 1 year, which equal a rate of 8 per cent. of the registered births. The number of deaths of infants under 1 year in this district for a single year is too small for the calculation of trustworthy rates for comparative purposes, it may be useful, therefore, to note that during the 10 years 1886-95 the proportion of infant mortality in the district averaged only 9.7 per cent. measured by the proportion of deaths under 1 year to registered births. Without attaching too much importance to this comparatively low rate of infant mortality during these 10 years, it may be regarded as satisfactory evidence of the ease of infant life in the district during this period.

Causes of Death.—The 78 deaths from all causes in this district last year included 10 from phthisis, 9 each from bronchitis and old age, 5 each from influenza, heart disease, apoplexy, and enteritis, 4 from cancer, 3 each from meningitis and corneliae,

2 each from premature birth and nephritis, and 16 from other diseases, including 3 inquest cases, one of which was on a person unknown in the district.

Zymotic Diseases.—It is highly satisfactory to be able to mention that not a single death resulted from any of the principal zymotic diseases in the district during the year.

Non-fatal Cases.—During the year 1 non-fatal case of diphtheria and 1 of enteric fever were notified. No cause to which either disease could be referred could be detected.

Water Supply.—About the beginning of December 45 samples were sent to me for examination. Of these only one was good. The remaining 44 were all very bad, and 26 of them so much so that they might fairly be described as diluted sewage. The result of this examination points very conclusively to the necessity of your continuing to send me further samples until the water from all wells yielding the only supply to a house has been examined. I consider this to be a most essential duty on your part as well as my own as to new comers who have not the power of resisting the ill-effect of such water, which some of the inhabitants appear to have, such water is little short of poison.

W. C. Accommodation.—Each house has now a separate w.c. connected with the main sewer.

Isolation Hospital.—This building, which was so useful in the scarlatina epidemic of 1893, has for the present been removed.

Nuisances.—Only one nuisance, viz., that arising from the want of proper and efficient ventilation for the sewer near Upton Old Church, was reported to me. I believe the matter is receiving your attention.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant
(Signed) A. J. SOUTHEY.
Medical Officer of Health.

SPRING ERY, FLO S & SO

and they ought to take every opportunity they could get for saying that they appreciated their giving a great deal of time and trouble to what after all was rather an irksome task (applause). Mr. Murton then gave a masterly rendition of "The Death of Nelson."

Lieut. Allhusen said he had no blood-curdling experiences of war to relate, and not having learned any statistics about the army, his reply to the toast so ably proposed by Mr. Parry would be very short. He believed that of the three main branches of the regular army the Artillery were able to do the nation the most credit. He thought that without a doubt the horse artillery was the finest of its kind in any army; in fact, he believed they had that from as high a military authority as the German Emperor, who saw a lot of soldiers, and was very difficult to please, so that if he was satisfied we ought to be (laughter). He did not know much about the infantry, but it seemed to him at the present time they came in for a great deal of abuse, which when the time came for action proved to be quite unmerited. After all they were men who had joined of their own free will, and therefore were better than conscript men (hear, hear, and applause). As regarded his own branch of the service, the Cavalry, he believed that was looked upon as a bugbear by a large number of British tax-payers. They were supposed to hunt, play polo, and do no work, and their only advantage was that they looked nice, but they did not always do that (laughter). With regard to their work, he should like for some of the discontented tax-payers to go to Aldershot, and go through a week's training with them. He thought that at the end of the week he would be a good deal lighter in weight and a good deal heavier in experience, which would do him no harm (laughter).

Captain A. J. de Winton, in responding, said he was down at Portsmouth about a month ago and he saw a good deal which was exceedingly interesting and he was able to tell at a glance that the Navy were anything but idle. As far as his own observation went, they were a very fine set of men indeed, and he did not think they need have any fears as regarded the efficiency of the Navy. With regard to the Volunteers, it was a very great honour for him to belong to them, and he was glad to think that perhaps the time had passed when it needed apology for being a volunteer. A short time ago he was talking to somebody about the dearth of officers for volunteers and he asked what was the reason for it. He received the reply "Well, for a long time the Volunteer officer has always been considered the fool of the family (laughter). However that might be, he was assured that the volunteer officer was no longer the fool of the family but was going to be the smartest man in it."

With regard to his own regiment, they had lately had a great accession of young officers who bid fair to be a credit to the corps. Having observed that they were going to Shorncliffe Camp in August, he said he was proud to say that the Slough Company held a very high place in the battalion of the 1st Bucks, and they always received the highest commendation from the people in camp. They went about holding their heads very high, feeling that they were a sort of model as to drill and the way in which they turned out, and they naturally got themselves a great deal disliked by some of the other companies. He was sure they would all be interested to hear that in shooting the 1st Bucks stood first in 1894 in the United Kingdom. This year they stood to be very high, and as it stood they were very well first in the Home Counties Volunteer (applause). That meant that their average shot were higher than any other battalion with each of them, and that meant good, steady, regular shooting of all the men who went on. It was sometimes said that the Volunteers shot round better than the regulars, but it was a complete fallacy; it would be absurd to think that men who could only give a little time now and then could be as good as those who gave their lives to it. They could pick ten as good