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Contributors

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THE ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

OF THE

PAIGNTON URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY,

FOR THE YEAR 1892.

GENTLEMEN,

In common with the rest of English towns, Paignton commenced the year with an epidemic of Influenza, and it was not till April that the town resumed its usual healthy condition; but still, taking the year as a whole, the general health has been quite the average, as evidenced by the low death rate.

The total number of deaths registered was 100—males 48, females 52—giving a death rate of 14.1 per 1000 per annum; but having regard to the number of persons (10) who died in Paignton, who were only visitors, this death rate is reduced to 12.7. There was no death registered as due to zymotic disease. The following table will show the number of deaths at the various ages:—

Under 1 year	...	...	...	11
1 year and under 5 years	...	...	...	8
5 years	"	15	"	3
15	"	"	25	7
25	"	"	65	22
65	"	and upwards	...	49 = 100,

thus showing that the greatest mortality has been amongst the aged. Of 20 deaths registered 2 were over 90 years, 10 were over 80 years, and of the rest the youngest was 73 years.

The following is a summary of the causes of death registered during the year:—

Phthisis	...	...	...	8
Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy	...	...	...	28
Heart Disease	...	...	...	6
Injuries	...	...	...	2
All other diseases	...	...	...	56

Of the 8 deaths due to phthisis, 3 were of visitors, leaving 5; which is an increase on last year, but not above the average, giving a death rate of only .7 per 1000 per annum.

The infant mortality is 11, and measured by the proportion of one year of age and under, to the number of births registered, is 73.8 per 1000, and a lower mortality than last year, when it was 89 per 1000, and showing a gradual decrease as compared with previous years.

The births registered during the year were 149,—males 81, females 68, giving a birth rate on an estimated population of 7065 of 22.1 per 1000, and a decrease on last year, when it was 25.6 per 1000.

As previously stated, no death has occurred during the year from infectious disease, but there were 29 cases of scarlet fever, 3 of enteric fever, and 4 of erysipelas notified. Of the cases of scarlet fever the greatest number occurred in the neighbourhood of Well Street, and 5 were in one house; and in some of the other cases 2 and 3 members of one family suffered. In all these cases, disinfectants were supplied gratuitously by the Local Board, and the houses were disinfected under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector. Special attention during the year has been given to this neighbourhood, and to cottage property generally; the town water having been laid on to about 100 small houses. No notification

Deaths.

Infant
Mortality.

Births.

Infectious
Disease.

was sent me during the last four months of the year. I have no doubt that had an isolation hospital been available, a number of these cases would not have occurred, and I would again urge upon the Local Board the desirability of providing such accommodation. Two of the cases were imported, the children coming from houses where other cases existed.

Enteric Fever, 3 cases notified; one being a visitor coming to the town ill, and not traceable to any cause here. All the cases were of a very mild type.

Bakehouses. The various bakehouses have been inspected; and beyond recommending whitewashing, I have not had to complain of the condition of any one of them.

Dairies.
Cowsheds,
and
Milk-shops. One dairy has been closed by my advice, and the licence suspended from another until the various alterations were carried out that I considered necessary. In other cases I found that a very creditable state of things existed, and where any recommendation was made, there was a general willingness to conform to the regulations.

Slaughter-houses. In my Report for June last, I reported against several of the slaughter-houses, and I think it high time all slaughtering should be done out of the immediate vicinity of dwelling-houses. Whether the town should provide a public slaughter-house or not seems to be doubtful, as there is a great objection, as I understand, on the part of the butchers to use such; still, if it were possible that all cattle were slaughtered at one place, a great benefit would arise. All meat could then be easily inspected, and the public health thereby safeguarded.

Water. The population of Paignton has increased so rapidly that a further water supply has become a necessity, and I must congratulate the Board on their efforts in this direction.

Marshes. Perhaps the most important action of the Board for the year has been the determination to purchase the Paignton Marshes, which I am sure will prove to be of the greatest benefit to the town, both sanitarily and artistically.

Housing of
the Working
Classes Act.
Preston. This Act has been put in force during the year, and a very unhealthy court closed.

This portion of the parish requires attention; and when the increased water supply is obtained, I hope the mains will be extended to this part of the town.

Conclusion. The year has been one of advance for the town in sanitary matters generally; and, with a high birth rate and low death rate, Paignton may, in my estimation, be considered as one of the healthiest towns in the county.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

C. W. VICKERS, M.R.C.S., L.S.A., & L.R.C.P.E.

Medical Officer of Health.

January 16th, 1893.