#### [Report 1946] / Medical Officer of Health, Taunton Borough.

#### **Contributors**

Taunton (England). Borough Council.

#### **Publication/Creation**

1946

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# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

# MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

MEDICAL OFFICER

FOR

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE

AND

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

OF THE

BOROUGH OF TAUNTON FOR THE YEAR 1946.



Public Health Department,
St. Paul's House,
TAUNTON.
2nd September, 1947.

The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors, THE BOROUGH OF TAUNTON.

Mr. Mayor, Madam, and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit an abridged Annual Report for the year 1946.

This is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health in Circular 13/47 of March, 1947.

It appears from the statistics of the year that the general health was satisfactory.

The Birth Rate remained above the average but was not as high as after the first World War. The illegitimate birth rate shewed a considerable reduction and was at the normal peace time level. The Death Rate was slightly lower than in the war years and was at pre-war level. The Death Rate of infants under one year of age was the lowest ever recorded.

There was a remarkable freedom from outbreaks of infectious disease. It is difficult to reconcile these satisfactory statistics with the severe overcrowding which exists. As regards infectious disease, every possible effort is made by the members of this Department to get a higher proportion of the very young protected against Diphtheria.

I am indebted to Alderman A. J. West, J.P., Chairman of the Maternity and Child Welfare and Public Health Committees for his continued interest and support and to the staff of the Department for their loyal co-operation.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN ALLEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

#### BOROUGH OF TAUNTON.

## Annual Report of the Medical Officer for the year 1946.

#### SUMMARY OF STATISTICS.

Registrar General's estimate of resident population	31,150
Number of inhabited houses at the end of 1946 according to the	
Rate Books. (approximate.)	8,230
Rateable value at the end of 1946	£241,301
Estimated product of a penny rate	£952
Births live and still :—	-
Male 281. Female 268. Total 549	17.6
Births live Male 276. Female 258. Total 534 rate per	17-1
Births still Male 5. Female 10. Total 15 1,000	0.5
Births illegitimate live and still population	1
Male 11. Female 13. Total 24	0.7
Deaths:— Male 151. Female 181. Total 332	10.6
Infant Mortality, Deaths :	
Infant Mortality Male 7. Female 5. Total 12.	
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 per live births	22.4
Infant Mortality Rate Legitimate per 1,000 legitimate live births	19.6
Infant Mortality Rate Illegitimate per 1,000 illegitimate live births	83.3
Neonatal mortality rate, deaths under one month per 1,000 live births	
Deaths per 1,000 live births from diarrhoea in infants under 2 years	
of age	3.7

#### GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

## Maternity and Child Welfare.

The Health Centre at Tower Lane has returned to use for this purpose since August, 1945. The services provided include:—

#### Ante-Natal Clinic.

Held twice a week—a doctor attending on Monday afternoon while midwives examine their own cases on Wednesday afternoon. It is regretted that staff difficulties here, prevented the organisation of a regular post-natal clinic.

The number of women who attended prior to their confinement was 345, and those who attended after confinement was 20. Six mothers who had booked a midwife to attend them were referred to their own doctor at the request of the midwife.

## Home Help Scheme.

It has again not been possible to make any definite arrangements owing to lack of female help. It was, however, possible to find home helps for two cases; one of triplets, continuing at the end of the year.

#### Obstetric Consultant.

This service was provided at the request of the doctor attending for 19 cases. A brief report on each case is provided by the consultant.

## Maternity Home, Canon Street.

This has 10 beds, including one isolation bed. The number of women admitted was 218 including six specially admitted for ante-natal care.

With the co-operation of the County Medical Officer of Health two women who could not be admitted owing to lack of beds were sent to the County Maternity Unit at Musgrove Park Hospital.

## Complicated Maternity Cases.

In accordance with the Agreement between the Council and the Taunton and Somerset Hospital, 184 mothers with complications due to pregnancy were admitted to the Taunton and Somerset Hospital where their average period of stay was just over 17 days, per case. There were three deaths of mothers among these.

#### Infant Welfare Centres.

There are at present two centres where mothers may bring their children under 5 years of age for examination and advice. One at the Health Centre, Tower Lane, is open on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and the other at Halcon Chapel on Wednesday afternoons. Both are largely attended and with the re-distribution of the population by re-housing on fresh sites it will very soon be desirable to consider the opening of a fresh centre—particularly for the Rowbarton area.

Total consultations were 6,095 while 523 new infants were brought for the first time. This represents about 98 per cent of the live births in the year.

#### Work of the Health Visitors.

There are three Health Visitors who also act as Child Life Protection Visitors—(for the supervision of foster children,) and as School Nurses. About half of their time is spent on Maternity and Child Welfare duties.

During the year they made 5,500 visits to homes; of these 264 were to expectant mothers, 2,996 to infants under one year of age, and 196 to infants aged 1 to 5 years.

## Puerperal Pyrexia.

Sixteen cases of this condition were notified—equal to a rate of 29.09 per 1,000 notified live and still births as compared with a rate of 7.63 for similar towns in England and Wales. They

occurred in three institutions caring for cases of pregnancy. Six were removed to the special unit at the Isolation Hospital which has continued to be of the greatest benefit.

There were no deaths from Puerperal and Post abortive Sepsis.

DAY NURSERY in Victoria Park, East Reach, has 45 places —14 for ages 0-2 years and 31 for ages 2-5 years.

Up to the 1st of April the cost of running the Day Nursery, after deducting payments received from parents, had been borne by the Ministry of Health. After consideration of Ministry of Health Circular 221/45 and local circumstances, it was decided to continue the Day Nursery as such and to increase the daily charge from 1/to 2/- and to alter the hours of opening from 8.30 a.m., to 5.30 p.m. on week days. These alterations have not had any adverse effect on the demand for places which is unsatisfied.

It has not been possible to make arrangements for daily guardians or sitters in.

There are no Nursery Schools in the area.

## Care of Illegitimate Children.

Illegitimate births in 1946 numbered 24 (all live and no still births) equal to an illegitimate birth rate of 0.7 per 1,000 population—a reduction on the rate of 1.9 for 1945 and 2.3 for 1944. Two of these died.

Arrangements were made, with the co-operation of the County Medical Officer of Health, for the admission of four mothers with their infants to a hostel, but for various reasons these were not completed.

Two illegitimate infants were maintained in residential nurseries;

one of these was adopted in March.

A scheme for the co-operation of the Taunton and District Society for the Welfare of Women and Girls continued with a payment to the Society of £104 a year subject to certain conditions. The Welfare Worker employed by the Society submits particulars of cases dealt with and the action she has taken. If she deems it advisable to make special arrangements for the welfare of the mother and child, such as a hostel for training or residential or day nursery for the infant, every effort is made by this Department to find suitable provision.

#### The Care of Premature Infants.

The arrangements which it has so far been possible to make are incomplete. They include:—

(1) Particulars if  $5\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. in weight or under on the birth notifica-

tion form.

- (2) Retention for a suitable period in either hospital or Maternity Home if necessary.
- (3) Notification just prior to discharge so that the Health Visitors may make special visits to the home.

Of the 534 live births 19 were notified as being  $5\frac{1}{2}$  lbs or less. Five of these died—1 at one day old, 3 between 1 day and 1 week, and 1 between 1 week and 1 month. Four of these were in hospitals or institutions, and 1 at home.

## The Promotion of Cleanliness and Elimination of Verminous Conditions

The three Health Visitors are also the School Nurses and as the latter, pay frequent visits to Schools and examine the children attending as to their cleanliness.

If a school child is found unclean, they visit the home and see the younger children who are not attending school.

Infestation by body lice is almost unknown but some children are found to have fleas.

Cases of Scabies found, have been much fewer in number. A Unit for the treatment of Scabies was removed form Belmont to Musgrove Park Hospital on 12th March. It is open on Tuesday and Friday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m. Attendances were:—

			F	rom Boro'	Out of Boro'
No. of cases		J .mo	1'	131	81
No. of treatments	-	M. John	THE COLUMN	371	169

#### Welfare Foods Service.

The distribution of these products to expectant and nursing mothers, and children under 5 years of age, through the Infant Welfare Centre at St. Paul's House and Halcon Chapel continued.

As from the 21st July, National Dried Milk was reduced from 1/2d to 10½d a tin. Cod Liver Oil (or Vitamin A & D tablets) were obtainable free of cost.

## Supply of Sheets to Expectant Mothers.

The scheme whereby an expectant mother is enabled to buy sheets at a controlled price and free of purchase tax was continued.

The expectant mother shews the midwife she has booked for her confinement her special ration book (RB 2). In suitable cases the midwife then makes out a certificate which she leaves at this Department. The appropriate number of dockets are then sent by post to the expectant mother. Four hundred and thirty two dockets were sent to 170 expectant mothers.

#### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

## Water Supply.

This is an upland surface water impounded in three reservoirs with a total capacity of approximately 160 million gallons. From these it flows by gravity to a new filtration and treatment plant at Fulwood opened in November, 1941. Here a coagulant (alumino ferric) is added and the water passed through rapid sand filters and chlorine added. The filtered and chlorinated water is stored in reservoirs having a capacity of 1½ million gallons. From these it passes through a recorder meter where the amount of flow and quantity of residual chlorine is recorded. From the Recorder House it flows by three mains to the town. The supply has been satisfactory in quantity, there being no curtailment during 1946.

Fifty one samples of main tap water were taken at approximately weekly intervals and sent to the County Laboratory, while samples of the raw water entering the treatment plant at Fulwood and of the treated water passing through the Recorder House at Fulwood were taken at fortnightly intervals to check the bacterial content of the raw water—the effect of the treatment on this and

the amount of residual chlorine in the water.

The main tap samples shewed no B. coli present in 50 c.c. in 46 samples, while five samples shewed B. coli present in 30 c.c.

In these five samples the amount of residual chlorine shewing

was less than 0.05 parts in a million.

Sixteen samples were taken from Leigh Reservoir which supplies part of Taunton Rural District. Fourteen of these shewed no B. coli present in 50 c.c. One with 0.3 parts per million Chlorine shewed B. coli present in 30 c.c. and another with 0.15 parts per million shewed B. coli present in 10 c.c.

The County Analyst gave the following chemical analysis of a sample taken on 5th November, 1946, all in parts per 100,000.

		(latin	Raw.	Main tap.
Physical Characters			clear.	clear.
Reaction			pH 7.4	pH 6.8
Alkalinity (as Ca Co3)			6.0	4.0
Total Hardness	*****	- Care . +	7.5	7.7.5
permanent	Section 11		3.0	3.0
temporary			4.5	4.5
Chlorine (in terms of Na C		4	2.2	
Nitrogen as Saline and free	Ammo	nia	200	0.0026
" Albuminoid		***	0.0	
" Nitrates		3	0.0	3 nil
" Nitrites		1 199 3	All limit	HORNARDUM DILL
Oxygen absorbed from Per	mangana	ite -	ME SIL	- Nothing the
(4 hrs. at 80°F.)	Translet 1	To bree !	0.5	0 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
Free Carbon Dioxide	****		0.5	0.9
Sediment			non	e none

As the treated water was slightly acid—measures were taken to reduce this and increase the pH—a further sample taken on 17th December, 1946, shewed a slightly alkaline water with a pH=7.3. It has a slight solvent action on Zinc.

There are about 8,230 inhabited houses and all except 51 are supplied from public mains direct to the houses. Of the 51 houses without a direct supply, 46 are condemned houses in confirmed Clearance Orders occupied by evacuees or under licence. Four are supplied from wells, and one from a spring.

#### Notifiable Infectious Disease.

Since the beginning of 1944 a new system of recording notifiable infectious disease has been in operation.

At the end of each quarter a return is made to the Registrar General giving the numbers of cases originally notified and the corrected numbers of these, checked by particulars received from the Isolation Hospital or other sources. These corrected numbers are further classified according to sex and age group.

	Orig: notified		Corr : Total	Deaths
Scarlet Fever	 44	34	43	111
Whooping Cough	 46	2	46	100
Ac. Poliomyelitis	 2	2	3	2*
Ac. Polioencephalitis	 Bridge 10	2015 111-31	John H.	
Measles	 5	solt suction :	4	The Col
Diphtheria	 9	8	1	
Ac. Pneumonia	 6	6	5	5
Dysentery	 	7		
Small Pox	 17(110)1100	and the same	ORI. OR	qu.
Ac. Encephalitis Lethargia	 divinis mi	A SPATTER	T malana	
Enteric Fever	 much of he	malling and the		or or the same
Paratyphoid Fever	 3	3		-
Erysipelas	 15	3	15	1
Cerebro-spinal Fever	 4	4	-	_
Puerperal Pyrexia	 16	6	16	-
Ophthalmia Neo natorum	 _	-	-	-

<sup>\*</sup> Neither of these was notified—one being discovered at the post-mortem.

## Small Pox.

The return of many members of H.M. Forces and others from India and the Far East, and the occurrence of Small pox on board during the voyage home, made it necessary to keep such contacts under observation for the period during which they might develop the disease.

Information of the destination of these is received from the Port Medical Officer. In this way 34 contacts were kept under observation during the period in which the disease might develop. One contact with some suspicious signs was seen in consultation

by the Regional Medical Officer. Tests made on material from the lesions shewed a negative result—for variola—vaccinia antigen, and it was apparently not small pox.

## Prevention of Diphtheria.

Facilities for the free immunisation of children against Diphtheria include a session on Saturday mornings from 10-11.30 a.m., and a session on the first Friday afternoon in each month at the Health Centre, Tower Lane, and a session on the first Wednesday in each month from 11 a.m. to 12 noon at Halcon Chapel.

Any child under the age of 8 years may be immunised by the family doctor free of charge, his fee being paid by the Corporation on receipt of a certificate giving the essential particulars.

During the year 536 children under 15 years of age were given complete courses of immunisation and 99 were given re-inforcing doses.

It is estimated that about 60% of those under five years and 84% of those between 5 and 15 years had completed a course of immunisation. It is now advised that this should begin at the age of eight months when two doses are given with an interval of at least one month in between them.

A further re-inforcing or booster dose should be given at 4-5 years of age before the child enters shoool.

## Refuse Collection and Disposal.

Up to 1st July, 1946, collection of domestic refuse was at intervals of a fortnight. After this date a weekly collection was commenced. Refuse collected is dumped on ground adjacent to the Sewer Works.

# REPORT OF THE CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR THE YEAR 1946.

Housing Repairs. The work of reconditioning houses under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936, is at a standstill. The high cost of building work and the controlled pre-war rents have created a position whereby it is impossible to execute a substantial specification of works at reasonable cost. As a result the work of housing repairs is falling into arrears. The work of repair that has been done has been carried out under Section 92 of the Public-Health Act, 1936. During the year, repairs have been executed under this Section at 77 houses.

In two cases Police Court proceedings were instituted in default of compliance with notices served. In one case an Order was obtained and the work was ultimately carried out. In the other case the work was completed before the hearing of the case which was then withdrawn.

Rodent Control. During the year 45 premises were treated for rat infestation and 362 visits were made in connection therewith.

Disinfection. Disinfection has been carried out at 24 houses after deaths from Tuberculosis or removal to Sanatoria or other addresses. Three houses were disinfected for other diseases.

Verminous Houses. The position with regard to verminous premises is considerably improved. A few years ago the methods of eradication employed were not entirely satisfactory, but with the advent of D.D.T. and similar preparations insect pests can now be controlled. Only eleven cases were reported during the year and these were satisfactory dealt with.

Movable Dwellings. There are three movable dwellings situated within the Borough licensed for occupation, and one licensed site. Conditions on the licensed site deteriorated after the death of the licensee, and it was necessary for frequent visits to be made with a view to the prevention of nuisances.

Houses Let in Lodgings. As a result of the housing shortage the division of houses into two or more separate lettings has considerably increased. This has been done in many cases without regard to suitable amenities for each tenant, and in some cases it is impossible to adapt the premises to provide the necessary amenities. No record of houses which have been so divided exists, but it is a problem that will have to be faced when the position in the building trade is easier.

Offensive Trades. There are six offensive trades established within the Borough. Two hide and skin depots, and four rag and bone merchants. These were conducted without nuisance.

Bakehouses. There are 19 bakehouses in use within the Borough. Thirty eight visits were paid to these and satisfactory conditions were found to exist. One bakehouse has been remodelled to modern standards.

Ice Cream. The manufacture and sale of ice cream increased during the year owing to allocations of ingredients being made available. There are seven manufacturers and eleven vendors operating within the Borough. Twenty three visits were made to these premises. The product of one manufacturer was found to be of a low bacteriological standard, and frequent representations were made to him to adopt improved methods of manufacture and storage. As no legal standard for ice cream existed, and being informed that the Ministry of Health intended to introduce Regulations for the manufacture of this commodity no further action was taken.

Dairies and Cowsheds. There are 5 dairy farms, 2 wholesale vendors of milk, and 18 retailers within the Borough. One hundred and thirty one visits were made to these premises.

Pasteurised Milk. There are three producers of pasteurised milk within the Borough, and 156 samples were taken for testing during the year. Five of the samples failed in the Phosphatase Test, which means that the milk was not sufficiently heated, and two samples failed in the Methylene Blue Test which indicates unsatisfactory cleansing of that part of the plant carrying milk after pasteurisation, improperly cleansed bottles, or the temperature of the storage room being too high.

Defective recording instruments were responsible in the first case, but it is not possible to state definitely the failure in the Methylene Blue Test. Any failure to pass the prescribed tests are immediately taken up with the producer with a view to preventing a recurrence.

Tuberculosis in Cattle. Three samples of milk from dairy herds within the Borough were taken for examination for Tuberculosis. The results were negative.

Food Premises. One hundred and twenty three visits of inspection of food premises were made. In addition 223 visits were made to food premises for the purpose of the examination of

foodstuffs. This resulted in the condemnation of the following commodities:—

Sacar he		C	The state of		t the nethings.
		Canned	Food.		
Fish					174 tins.
Fruit	t 1				55 ,,
Jam		The state of the			27 ,,
Vegetables		12.10 201	1	1 7 10	108 ,,
Meat					355 ,,
Peas and Beans					328 ,,
Evaporated Milk					786 ,,
Stewed Steak	W		W		90 ,,
Tomatoes				3017	24 ,,
Macaroni Cheese	4.1711			124	6 ,,
Dried Milk	See Est	Land I	20015	A	2 ,,
of the language of the second	at inte	111 201			1 was there are
about the first of the first		- Pla	EO.		
special contraction with	Service of	Other	Foods.		THE PERSON NAMED IN
Dried Fruit	Clarittes	a graver	status a fee		959 lbs.
Butter and Margarine	1000	41 61	Top Land	BUILD ST	38
Dried peas and beans	100	F	10000 100	1000	345
Fish (wet)	Piller b	MIN GOS	N STILL OF	Sipoly	1/09
Dagge			4		103
Coursesse		· Don	mobilery ru	rei inte	124
Sweets and Chocolate			***		45
Sausage rolls, meat pies		7.77			103 (in number)
Fish Cakes	. 21 11	1	Take I		77
Pikelets			3		71
Swiss Rolls			1900		108
Marmite cubes			Control	:	72 "
Pickles			06.12	London Links	17 jars. "
Cheese	bu		Jin.	11.12 1-32	4½ lbs.
Turkeys					16½ ,,
Grapes					15½ ,,
Vegetable Salad	10				20 ,,

Meat Inspection. There are two slaughter-houses in use within the Borough; the Government Slaughter-house and a Bacon Factory. The former supplies meat for Taunton Borough, Taunton Rural, Wellington Urban, Wellington Rural and Langport Rural Districts, and in addition carcases are frequently sent to London and other centres.

Meat (Bone taint)

Edul Bul

The following animals were slaughtered during the year :-

1358 "

emine o			114, -	Tot	al	43869
Pigs	·		1 1			19239
Calves						1598
Sheep		70	124,659			19529
Cows	0	Check !	11300	111	1000000	1401
Beasts			****			2102

For the purposes of inspection of the above, 834 visits were made to the slaughter-houses, which resulted in the condemnation of the following meat:—

			T	berculos	sis.				
		Total arcases		Part arcases		tons	Weigh cwts.	t qrs.	lbs.
Beasts		82		49		20	6	3	21
Calves		3		_			3	0	10
Pigs		52		1414		12	19	1	7
				Offals.					
Daneta	(Uanda	- Lunar	livers	boarts	No.				
Beasts	(Heads,		livers,		1988	10	18	0	0
Pigs (	Lungs, li	vers, stor		The state of the s	2163	7	19	1	11
Total w	eight of	Tubercula	r meat co	ndemned.		53	2	2	21
	196	28.				-	HO OIL	1000	190916
		13	Otl	er Dise	ases.				
		Total		Part					
	C	arcases	C	arcases		No.	- 19	du di	1011/
Beasts		21		49		5	10	1	18
Calves		8		3			3	3	5
Pigs		9		5			9	1	20
Sheep		51		32		1	5	1	6
				Offals.					
					No.				
Beasts	1080				1640	6	7	3	4
Pigs	nd.bin	Legist.		M .mid	24		1	3	17
Sheep	and a selection	and a			1243	1	3	0	14
Calves					8				24
					Total	15	1	3	24
To	tal weigh	nt of meat	condem	ned		67	5	2	7

## **FACTORIES ACT, 1937**

## 1.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health.

	Number	Number of				
Premises (1)	on Register (2)	Inspections (3)	Written notices (4)	Occupiers prosecuted (5)		
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	27	20	6			
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 applies  (a) Subject to the Local Authorities (Transfer of Enforcement) Order, 1938 †	2) 2	2	LATION _	-		
(b) Others	83	29	2	-		
(iii) Other Premises under the Act‡ (excluding out-workers' premises)	4	4	_	_		
TOTAL	116	55	8	-		

<sup>†</sup> S.R. & O. 1938 No. 488.

<sup>†</sup> i.e. Works of Building and Engineering Construction Electrical Stations should be reckoned as Factories.

## 2.—Cases in which DEFECTS were found.

	Number o	Number of			
Particulars (1)	Found (2)	Remedied	Refe To H.M. Inspector	By H.M.	cases in which prosecut- tions were instituted (6)
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	. 3	3	_	1	_
Overcrowding (S.2)	. –	-	_	_	
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	137 2	11900	) —	-	_
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	. –	<u> </u>	_	_	- 1
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	. –	_		_	
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)  (a) insufficient	. 5	3	_	3	_
(b) Unsuitable or defective	. 3	2	-	2	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	. 1	1	- 17	_	_
Other offences (not including offence relating to Homework)	1 .	2	_	_	_
TOTAL	. 14	11	w (1) 6 at	6	1 (a) East

## OUTWORK (Sections 110 and 111)

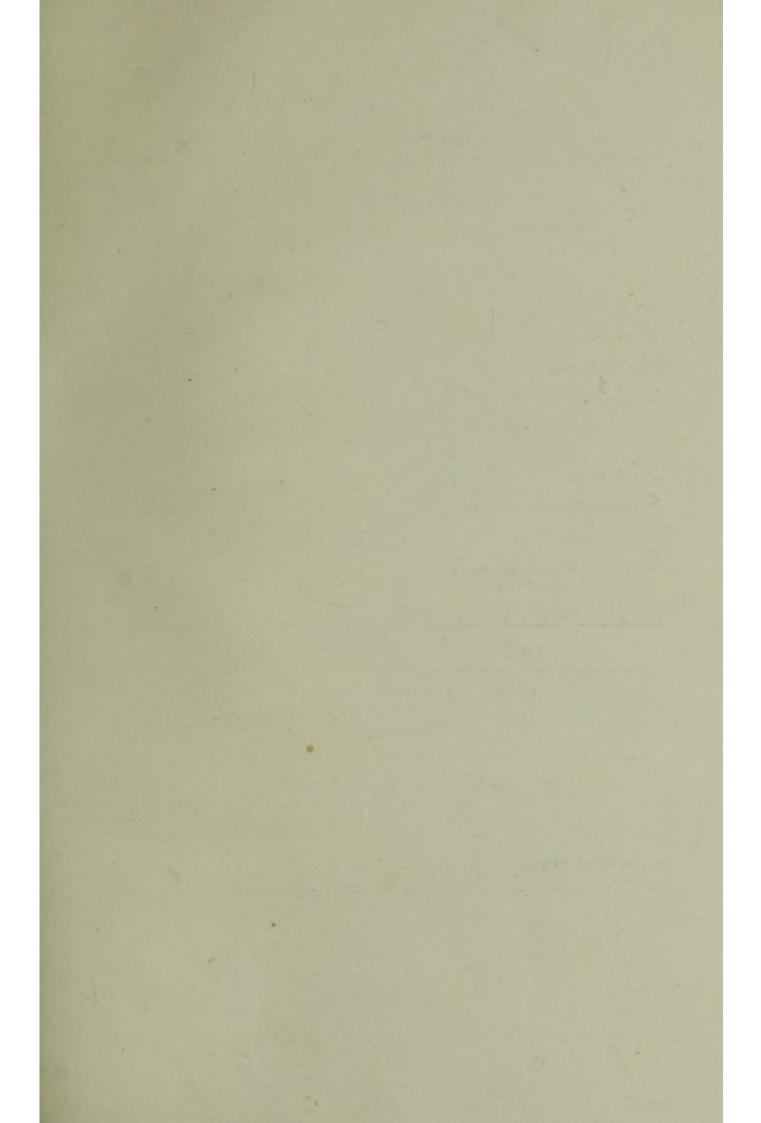
	4	Section 110	-10	Section 111			
Nature of Work	No. of out- workers in August list required	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the	No. of prosecu- tions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwhole- some	Notices served	Prosecu- tions	
	by Sect. 110 (1) (c)	Council	no mino	premises		NOW ALL	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	
Wearing apparel, Making,	75	_	_			_	

I am,

Your obedient servant,

P. J. GOUGH,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.



Harris with the 



PRINTERS:

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