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BOROUGH OF TORQUAY

INTERIM REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

for 1940





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ST. MARYCHURCH TOWN HALL,
TORQUAY.

*To the Worshipful the Mayor and to the Aldermen and Councillors
of the Borough of Torquay.*

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit an Interim Report for 1940, in accordance with the instructions of the Minister of Health. In view of the pressure of work it is requested that an interim report should be prepared, referring only to essential and urgent matters affecting public health ; but arrangements are made for the careful preservation of all records so that after the end of the war a more comprehensive Report can be submitted, covering the whole period.

The year was unprecedented in the seemingly endless variety of, and additions to, the manifold duties which war-time conditions in a reception area brought ; and the stage of "incessant busyness" was quickly reached. It is satisfactory that the public health services have been versatile, skilled and adaptable enough to meet these increasing demands, unusual and novel as they are, which tax to the utmost the ingenuity, the wisdom and the patience of the most fertile and understanding mind.

It is said that fortunate are the people whose history is blank, and fortunate indeed in this modern war is the area where there is little spectacular to report ; for the successes of preventive medicine are silent and usually unperceived, and the less there is to mention of the effects of war the better it is for the community. The health of the town has continued to be quite satisfactory and the nutrition of the children, perhaps a most sensitive index, has been well maintained ; no serious outbreaks of illness are recorded, and the expected epidemic of measles, although widespread, was in most cases mild and free from serious complications.

The Report, although an interim record, includes some of the salient vital statistics of 1940 and of 1939, both for comparison and for the purpose of ensuring that contact with these standards is not completely lost.

At present we are "too busy with the crowded hour" and everything is rightly subordinated to the immediate needs of the war ; but it is wise to keep as a guiding Star, and never to lose sight of, the primary and heavy enough responsibility of a Health

Department, which must remain vigilant, tireless, unceasing in its meticulous care for the well-being of every member of the community. And for that we must remain—

“ . . . with powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
Firm to their mark, not spent on other things ;
Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much been baffled, brings.”

In conclusion, it is with appreciation that I acknowledge both the encouraging support given to me by the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee, and also the co-operation and mutual helpfulness of the Medical Profession of the Borough in the many contacts of daily work during the unusually difficult times.

It is impossible for me to speak too highly of the constant willing help of the staff in the almost overwhelming maze and range of duties ; literally their work has been at all times and in all places, and no department could have more loyal and unstinted support from every individual member. Their excellent service and zeal merit the highest praise and commendation, and provide an inspiration which enshrines the path of duty and brings “ refreshment mid the dust of strife.”

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

J. V. A. SIMPSON.

STAFF

(a) Medical

Medical Officer of Health, School Medical Officer, Medical Superintendent of Isolation Hospital, and Chief Billeting Officer.

J. V. A. SIMPSON,

M.D.LOND., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.CAMB.

Acting Deputy Medical Officer of Health and Assistant School Medical Officer.

T. GIBSON, M.D.ED., C.M., D.P.H.LOND.

Medical Officer, Ante-Natal Clinic and Post-Natal Clinic.

*P. A. McCALLUM, M.B.GLASG., CH.B., D.P.H.CAMB.

Obstetric Consultants.

*P. A. McCALLUM, M.B.GLASG., CH.B., D.P.H.CAMB.

*B. VENN DUNN, M.D.ED., F.R.C.S.ED.

Ophthalmic Surgeon (School Medical Service and Maternity and Child Welfare).

†*J. MASTERTON THOMSON, M.B.GLASG., CH.B., D.O.M.S.ENG.

§*H. V. MACKENZIE, M.D.ED.

Aural Surgeon (School Medical Service, Maternity and Child Welfare, and Isolation Hospital).

*W. H. BRADBEER, M.S.LOND., D.L.O.ENG.

Pathologist and Bacteriologist.

*H. A. FIELDEN, M.D.DURH.

(b) Dental

School Dental Officer and Dental Officer for Maternity and Child Welfare.

†N. HARRIS, L.D.S., R.C.S.ENG.

Acting Dental Officers.

MISS E. M. STILL, L.D.S., R.C.S., ENG.

MISS J. M. RIPLEY, L.D.S., R.C.S., ENG.

(c) Nursing

Health Visitors, Child Protection Visitors.

†Miss P. MULLINEAUX, S.R.N., S.C.M., H.V.CERT.R.S.I.

†Miss M. IRONS, S.R.N., S.C.M., H.V.CERT.R.S.I.

†Miss E. M. FARROW, S.R.N., S.C.M., H.V.CERT.R.S.I.

Matron, Isolation Hospital.

MISS M. J. STEWART, S.R.N.

(The staff at the Isolation Hospital includes the Matron, Sister, four nurses and three probationers)

(d) Sanitary

*Senior Sanitary Inspector, Food Enforcement Officer,
and Billeting Officer.*

M. G. CROOK, C.S.I.B., Meat Cert., Instructor's Cert., C.A.G.S.

*District Sanitary Inspectors, Food Enforcement Officers,
and Billeting Officers.*

†G. J. LOVELESS, C.R.S.I. and Meat Cert.

A. THOMPSON, C.R.S.I.

J. F. H. SMITH, C.R.S.I., and Meat Cert.

H. T. BEECHEY, C.R.S.I. and Meat Cert.

§R. S. DAVEY, C.R.S.I.

(e) Other

Orthoptist (School Medical Service and Maternity and Child Welfare).

*Miss M. B. DAVIES, B.A.

Clerks.

(Public Health Department).

†W. H. NICKELS.

Mrs. V. J. KNAPMAN.

†P. H. BURGE, C.S.I.B.

§Miss P. M. ROWELL.

†W. D. WHITE.

§Miss D. ROSE.

§Miss W. M. SMITH.

§Miss M. ELIAS.

(Maternity and Child Welfare).

Miss K. HUDSON.

(Billeting).

§Miss I. M. WILTSHIRE.

§Mrs. E. E. WHITE.

Assistants to Sanitary Inspectors.

E. D. TUCKER.

E. J. SELLEK.

† On Active Service.

* Part Time.

† Also School Nurse.

§ Temporary.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS
OF THE AREA

Area (in acres)	6,244
Registrar-General's estimate of population, mid-1940 ..	52,190
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1940) according to Rate Books	13,176
Rateable value (end of 1940)	£538,315
Sum represented by a Penny Rate (end of 1940) ..	£2,125

SOCIAL CONDITIONS,

*Including the chief Industries carried on in the Area and
the extent of Unemployment.*

There is nothing exceptional to record on the social conditions ; but the following figures, kindly supplied by the Manager of the Ministry of Labour Employment Exchange, show the extent of unemployment for January and July, 1940, and for January, 1941 :

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
January, 1940 ..	1741	558	96	117	2512
July, 1940 ..	376	208	65	41	690
January, 1941 ..	427	424	71	43	965

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR 1940,
*which relate to the net Births and Deaths after correction for inward
and outward transfers as furnished by the Registrar-General.*

(The corresponding figures for 1939 are given in parenthesis).

Live Births—	Total	Males	Females	
Legitimate	497 (491)	274 (249)	223 (242)	Birth-rate per 1,000
Illegitimate	46 (34)	24 (19)	22 (15)	of the estimated
				population .. 10.4 (11.7)
Stillbirths	23 (18)	10 (10)	13 (8)	Rate per 1,000 total
				(live and still) births 42.3 (34.3)
Deaths	836 (691)	383 (331)	453 (360)	Death-rate per 1,000
				of the estimated
				population .. 16.0 (14.8)

Deaths from puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List) :—

		Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births
No. 29	Puerperal sepsis	0 (0)	0.00 (0.00)
No. 30	Other maternal causes	1 (0)	1.61 (0.00)
	Total	1 (0)	1.61 (0.00)

Death-rate of infants under one year of age :—

All infants per 1,000 live births	37.0 (44.7)
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ..	36.4 (45.7)
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births ..	43.4 (29.1)

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	123 (101)
„ Measles (all ages)	1 (0)
„ Whooping Cough (all ages)	1 (0)
„ Diarrhoea (under two years of age)	0 (2)

Particulars of any unusual or excessive mortality during the year which has received or required special comment.

During the year there has been no unusual or excessive mortality.

Population.

The 1931 Census population of the area was 46,352. Owing to changes caused by the war, the Registrar-General has furnished estimates of the population exposed to risk ; during 1939 for birth-rates this was the estimated resident population, including non-civilians, as at the middle of the year, and the estimate was 44,850. For general death-rates a population estimate was constructed so as to allow for the exclusion of non-civilians during the last quarter of 1939 and of the different areal assignment of deaths adopted for the first three quarters and for the last quarter respectively : and this estimate for 1939 was 46,590. In 1940, population estimates are given for calculation of death-rates of civilians ; and as estimates of the numbers and distribution of the non-civilian population are not available, the birth-rate can only be based on the civilian population of 1940 as used for death-rates. The estimated population for Torquay in 1940 is 52,190.

Births.

The number of net births are those registered during the calendar year after correction for transfers ; and in 1939 there were a total of 525 births, 491 (249 males and 242 females) being legitimate, and 34 (19 males and 15 females) being illegitimate : the birth-rate was 11.7 for 1,000 population, compared with 15.0 for England and Wales and 15.6 for the smaller towns. The number of still-births in 1939 was 18, and the still-birth-rate was 0.40 per 1,000 population and 34.3 per 1,000 live and still births. In 1940, there were 543 births, 497 (274 males and 223 females) being legitimate and 46 (24 males and 22 females) being illegitimate : the birth-rate was 10.4 for 1000 population, compared with 14.6 for England and Wales and 15.7 for the smaller towns. The number of still-births in 1940 was 23, and the still-birth-rate was 0.44 for 1,000 population and 42.3 for 1,000 live and still births.

For the calculation of infant and maternal mortality rates, the number of live births was assessed according to the system of areal assignment adopted for deaths (viz., to the area in which a mother may be temporarily residing as a result of the war) ; and the number was 537 in 1939, and 595 in 1940.

Marriages.

There were 353 marriages in 1939, giving a rate of 7.6 per 1,000 population; and there were 419 marriages in 1940, the rate being 8.0 per 1,000 population.

Deaths.

The number of deaths in 1939 was 691 (331 males and 360 females), and the crude death-rate was 14.8 per 1,000 population, compared with 12.1 for England and Wales and 11.2 for the smaller towns. In order to make adjustments for the age and sex distribution of Torquay, the Registrar-General supplies an "areal comparability factor" (A.C.F.) with which to multiply the local crude death-rate: the A.C.F. for Torquay in 1939 was 0.76 and gives an adjusted local death-rate of 11.3.

In 1940 there were 836 deaths (383 males and 453 females); and the crude death-rate was 16.02 per 1,000 population, compared with 14.3 for England and Wales and 12.8 for the smaller towns. The A.C.F. for Torquay in 1940 was 0.75 and gives an adjusted local death-rate of 12.0.

The causes of death are given in the accompanying tables.

Infant Mortality.

There were 24 deaths of infants under 1 year of age in 1939, which gives an infant mortality rate of 44.7, compared with a rate of 50 for England and Wales and 40 for the smaller towns: the death-rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births was 45.7, and the death-rate of illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births was 29.1.

In 1940 there were 22 infant deaths and the infant mortality rate was 37, compared with a rate of 55 for England and Wales and 54 for the smaller towns: the death-rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births was 36.4, and the death-rate of illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births was 43.4.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN 1939						Males	Females
All Causes						331	360
1.	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers					—	—
2.	Measles					—	—
3.	Scarlet Fever					—	—
4.	Whooping Cough					—	—
5.	Diphtheria					—	—
6.	Influenza					3	9
7.	Encephalitis Lethargica					2	1
8.	Cerebro-spinal Fever					—	—
9.	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System					24	8
10.	Other Tuberculous Diseases					1	1
11.	Syphilis					1	—
12.	General Paralysis of the Insane, Tabes Dorsalis					1	1
13.	Cancer, Malignant Disease					34	67
14.	Diabetes					6	6
15.	Cerebral Hæmorrhage, etc.					14	22
16.	Heart Disease					100	108
17.	Aneurysm					3	—
18.	Other Circulatory Diseases					18	37
19.	Bronchitis					16	11
20.	Pneumonia (all forms)					20	11
21.	Other Respiratory Disease					4	1
22.	Peptic Ulcer					3	4
23.	Diarrhoea, etc. (under 2 years)					2	—
24.	Appendicitis					—	1
25.	Cirrhosis of Liver					—	1
26.	Other Diseases of Liver, etc.					—	1
27.	Other Digestive Diseases					8	6
28.	Acute and Chronic Nephritis					7	8
29.	Puerperal Sepsis					—	—
30.	Other Puerperal Causes					—	—
31.	Congenital Debility, Premature Birth, Malformations, etc.					9	9
32.	Senility					7	7
33.	Suicide					4	2
34.	Other Violence					13	12
35.	Other defined Causes					30	25
36.	Causes ill-defined or unknown					—	—
Deaths of Infants under 1 year {						13	11
Total						13	10
Legitimate						—	—
Illegitimate						—	—
Stillbirths {						10	8
Total						9	8
Legitimate						1	—
Illegitimate						—	—

CAUSES OF DEATH IN 1940						Males	Females
All Causes						383	453
1.	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	..	..	..	..	—	—
2.	Cerebro-spinal Fever	..	..	..	..	2	—
3.	Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	1	—
4.	Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	—	1
5.	Diphtheria	..	..	..	..	—	—
6.	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	..	..	..	..	20	9
7.	Other forms of Tuberculosis	..	..	..	..	2	5
8.	Syphilitic Diseases	..	..	..	..	3	4
9.	Influenza	..	..	..	..	6	7
10.	Measles	..	..	..	..	—	1
11.	Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis	..	..	..	..	—	—
12.	Acute Infectious Encephalitis	..	..	..	..	—	—
13.	Cancer of Buccal Cavity and Oesophagus (Males only)	..	..	..	..	5	—
	Cancer of Uterus (Females)	..	..	..	..	—	6
14.	Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	..	..	..	..	6	7
15.	Cancer of Breast	..	..	..	..	—	18
16.	Cancer of all other sites	..	..	..	..	38	43
17.	Diabetes	..	..	..	..	7	10
18.	Intra-cranial Vascular lesions	..	..	..	..	41	50
19.	Heart Disease	..	..	..	..	100	132
20.	Other Diseases of the Circulatory System	..	..	..	..	11	16
21.	Bronchitis	..	..	..	..	23	28
22.	Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	18	18
23.	Other Respiratory Diseases	..	..	..	..	9	8
24.	Ulceration of the Stomach or Duodenum	..	..	..	..	9	2
25.	Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	..	..	..	..	—	—
26.	Appendicitis	..	..	..	..	5	1
27.	Other Digestive Diseases	..	..	..	..	12	8
28.	Nephritis	..	..	..	..	8	19
29.	Puerperal and Post-abortion Sepsis	..	..	..	..	—	—
30.	Other Maternal causes	..	..	..	..	—	1
31.	Premature Birth	..	..	..	..	2	1
32.	Congenital Malformations, Birth Injury, Infantile Disease	..	..	..	..	7	1
33.	Suicide	..	..	..	..	2	4
34.	Road Traffic Accidents	..	..	..	..	1	1
35.	Other Violent Causes	..	..	..	..	7	7
36.	All other Causes	..	..	..	..	38	45
Death of Infants under 1 year { Total						18	4
						16	4
						2	—
Stillbirths { Total						10	13
						10	11
						—	2

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR
THE AREA

1. (i) *Full particulars of the Public Health Officers of the Authority, including their duties, are incorporated in the beginning of the Report.*

In June, Mr. J. Masterton Thomson, Ophthalmic Surgeon, left for Active Service with the Royal Army Medical Corps, and Mr. H. V. Mackenzie is temporarily doing his work.

An additional Dental Officer, Miss J. M. Ripley, was appointed in September, as it was found impracticable to maintain the service otherwise; and a second Dental Attendant was also appointed to the temporary staff.

Mr. G. J. Loveless, a District Sanitary Inspector, was recalled in August from the Reserve of Officers for further service in the Army, and Mr. R. S. Davey, Sanitary Inspector of Holsworthy, was appointed as a temporary District Sanitary Inspector.

Mrs. V. E. Newcombe, one of the Health Visitors, left in February, and Miss E. M. Farrow, of the Ilford Staff, was appointed to fill the vacancy.

2. *Hospitals: Public and Voluntary.*

There has been no change in the existing Hospitals, but an Auxiliary Isolation Hospital was prepared and equipped in a wing of "Kilmorie," kindly lent by Mr. E. Whitley: this was fortunately not required for cases during the year.

3. *Midwifery and Maternity Services.*

- (i) *Midwives Act, 1936.*

The work under the Midwives Act has proceeded satisfactorily and without incident: the Queen's Institute continued to carry out the domiciliary midwifery of the Borough, and an amendment was made (to take effect on 1st July) to the existing agreement, increasing the grant to the equivalent of the service of $4\frac{1}{2}$ midwives plus a grant of 30/- per case above a minimum of 320 cases per annum. This was found necessary on account of the increased work, owing to the distances and hilly nature of the town which make domiciliary visiting more arduous and exacting, and on account of the fact that relief periods and holidays could not be adequately maintained without extra staff.

(ii) *Emergency Arrangements.*

By courtesy of the Rowcroft Convalescent Home Trustees, the facilities for the Emergency Maternity Unit were continued; this is a very satisfactory unit of eight beds with a well-equipped labour ward, and in November two whole-time midwives were appointed for the work. In the early part of the year the unit was not much used, but later the beds were more fully booked; thirteen cases were admitted, and three abnormal cases were sent to the Torbay Hospital.

Owing to requirements for another Emergency Maternity Home, preliminary preparations were made in connexion with "Hazelwood," Lower Warberry Road, one of the requisitioned houses; and arrangements are continuing for preparing and equipping this Home to accommodate 25 beds.

(iii) *Provision of Milk.*

In connexion with the provision of milk for mothers and children, the new arrangements of the Ministry of Food came into operation on July 1st, and the working of this scheme was transferred to the Milk Officer in Torquay, thus relieving the Maternity and Child Welfare Department of a duty which was never very appropriate.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. (i) *Water.*

The Borough Water Engineer, Mr. Norman G. Elliot, M.Sc., A.M.Inst.C.E., has kindly supplied the following details:—

"The consumption during 1940 was 1,224,828,000 gallons, or 3,346,524 gallons per day, which is an increase of 346,716 gallons per day over 1939.

Regarding the Fernworthy Reservoir which is now nearing completion, 110 million gallons are being stored in it to meet this summer's requirements. The total storage when the reservoir is complete will be 380 million gallons.

The supply has been satisfactory in quality and quantity during the past year."

(ii) *Drainage and Sewerage.*

The Borough Engineer, Mr. P. W. Ladmore, M.Inst.C.E., has kindly given me the following details in connexion with drainage and sewerage, public cleansing and salvage.

"No extension of the sewerage system has been carried out in the past year. Progress has been maintained on the reconstruction of the main sewers in Chelston and Torre Valleys, and sections in North Chelston and Torre have been brought into service."

(iii) *Public Cleansing.*

"No variation from last year. (Normal services up to the present have been maintained)."

(iv) *Salvage.*

The very creditable record of pre-war times has further advanced for the wider scope and ample extension of intensified salvage which the conditions of the emergency demand; and the following are the details of the articles recovered:—

				<i>Tons</i>	<i>Cwts.</i>
Paper and Cardboard	..	..	..	280	18
Aluminium	..	..	..	1	6
Brass	..	..	..	2	4
Copper	..	..	..	11	2
Lead	..	..	..	1	14
Pewter	..	..	..	—	2
Zinc	..	..	..	—	9
Scrap Iron	..	..	..	38	19
Bed Rails	..	..	..	2	13
Rags	..	..	..	4	9
Bones	..	..	..	21	7
Pig Swill (10 months)	..	..	..	986	4
Bottles	..	..	..	35	(7,117½ doz.)

2. *Sanitary Inspection of the Area.*

The inspection of all areas in the Borough has been carried out during the year under your Senior Inspector; owing to circumstances arising out of the war and its associated emergency measures, to which reference is made elsewhere, much of the routine work has necessarily been greatly curtailed or is less detailed than usual, but nothing essential has been omitted.

SECTION D.

HOUSING

There is nothing exceptional to record in this interim Report.

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

In this section the routine work has been generally uneventful. The scheme for Government-controlled slaughtering is in operation, the centralisation having necessitated the temporary closure of slaughterhouses other than the so-called public slaughterhouse; and this has intensified the difficulties of bad accommodation. The work of meat inspection under such conditions is rendered unnecessarily arduous, difficult and trying; and the need for adequate facilities recommended so insistently in previous years is now more than ever apparent.

Early in the year the Senior Sanitary Inspector was appointed Food Enforcement Officer and the District Sanitary Inspectors act as District Food Enforcement Officers, responsible to the Food Control Committee.

SECTION F.

**PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER,
INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES**

The incidence of infectious disease for the 52 weeks ending 30th December, 1939, and for the 52 weeks ending 28th December, 1940, is as follows:—

	1939	1940
Smallpox	—	—
Scarlet Fever	94	101
Diphtheria	16	9
Measles —Nov. and Dec.	—	603
Whooping Cough —only in 1939	15	102
Enteric Fevers	5	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	22	8
Pneumonia	51	52
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	1	6
Erysipelas	18	30
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	5	5
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—
Acute Polioencephalitis	—	—
Encephalitis Lethargica	—	1
Dysentery	—	—
Malaria (contracted abroad)	—	—

There is nothing exceptional upon which it is necessary to comment in these figures, as the incidence per 1,000 population does not show any significant variation from the average for the whole country. In connexion with non-notifiable diseases there was a widespread outbreak of rubella in the spring and early summer, but this is such a mild, short illness, with no complications or sequelæ.

The attendances at the diphtheria immunisation clinic increased slowly and 219 school children and 185 pre-school children were immunised; but following the general propaganda there was a pronounced extension of the work which began in December and is continuing through 1941, necessitating many additional sessions of the clinic. Visiting orphanages and residential schools were also immunised, if this had not already been carried out in the area from which they came.

Isolation Hospital Treatment.

The number of cases admitted to the Isolation Hospital showed a distinct increase from pre-war days, chiefly because considerable assistance was given to neighbouring Authorities in admitting cases for which other accommodation was not available. The full facilities just completed before the war have been greatly appreciated, especially the Cubicle Block and the operating theatre.

<i>Cases admitted.</i>				1939	1940
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	74	116
Diphtheria	..	..	..	19	19
Enteric Fevers	..	..	..	-	6
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	..	..	..	-	2
Measles	..	..	..	3	54
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	-	9
Erysipelas	..	..	..	1	5
Chicken-pox	..	..	..	-	15
Rubella	..	..	..	1	56
Other Causes	..	..	..	22	29
				<u>120</u>	<u>311</u>

SECTION G.

PORT HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

This section is not being published, a minimum number of copies having been reproduced for submission privately to the Local Authority and to the Ministry of Health.

SECTION H.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. *Government Evacuation Scheme.*

Under this Scheme, Torquay has remained a reception area, and your Medical Officer (who is also School Medical Officer) has continued to act as Chief Billeting Officer, with the Senior and District Sanitary Inspectors as Billeting Officers. Complete co-ordination has thus been maintained throughout between the Public Health and School Medical Services and the Evacuation Scheme.

During the year further official parties were received: in February, the Paddington and Maida Vale High School of about 270 girls and staff was transferred from Camborne; in June, nearly 2,000 children were received from London; in September, a further 500 children came from London; and in October a party of about 500 pupils came from Ealing. In addition, during the autumn there was an uncontrolled evacuation from London when a very large number of persons of the priority classes were received and billeted; while two more training colleges were transferred to Torquay, and several small boarding schools and Homes came from other areas. A residential nursery of about 30 children between the ages of 2 and 5 was also started by the Waifs and Strays Society under the auspices of the Ministry of Health.

All this influx, together with the large number of private visitors, taxed to the utmost the available accommodation; and billeting, never a very easy task, became increasingly difficult and troublesome. Uprooted children, harassed hostesses, deprived parents and panic refugees made the busy, exacting turmoil of the billeting scheme even more formidable and overwhelming, and demanded (sometimes, perhaps, to no purpose) unending patience, infinite wisdom and a wide understanding of human nature.

The influence of home on the health, character and development of the child is always intimate and profound, and under the stress of war the responsibility is very great of those who have the care of unaccompanied children; but it is very satisfactory that the temporary home in the reception area has in the majority of cases proved a reasonably good substitute. This is reflected in the physique and general health of the children, which from the results of school medical inspection are very satisfactory; indeed, the improvement in many children has been spectacular.

And perhaps the outstanding feature of it all has been the unostentatious, patient work and kindly care which the majority of hostesses, not without considerable self-sacrifice, have given to the visiting children: it requires just as much heroism and courage as for some of the glorious feats of battle to go on day after day unseen, unhonoured and unsung, and to maintain the trivial round and common task with the many "little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love." And no tribute can be too great for those who have borne the burden and the heat of providing and maintaining successful billets.

To meet the need of certain special cases or of children awaiting billets, an emergency Hostel was started in June at "St. Agnes," Reddenhill Road; and to provide for official parties of mothers and children all the suitable empty houses were requisitioned and prepared. An official clothing scheme for unaccompanied children was organised by official Helpers as part of the Evacuation Scheme and began in June in a wing of the premises at "St. Agnes"; and this has co-operated where necessary with the W.V.S. Clothing Depot which was accommodated at 65 Market Street. These organisations, together with assistance from the Personal Service League, have proved invaluable.

A number of official Helpers, billeted under the Evacuation Scheme, have assisted in the general work of the billeting scheme, and their work has been extremely effective and useful; while additional clerical assistance was obtained to keep the necessary registers and system of receipts.

In connexion with the medical arrangements, the local medical war committee working under the Central Medical War Committee was responsible for the scheme in which domiciliary treatment of billeted unaccompanied children was undertaken by medical practitioners; payment to the doctors concerned was arranged by the local medical war committee, and no charge fell upon the parents of the children or upon the householder.

Furthermore, provision has been made so that all the clinic and other facilities of the School Medical and Maternity and Child Welfare Services in Torquay are available for evacuee children.

2. *Air Raid Precautions.*

During the year there was further consolidation and, where necessary, expansion of the existing arrangements, especially in the preparation and equipment of cleansing stations.

The Torbay Area is a scheme-making authority and includes Torquay, Paignton and Brixham ; and Dr. G. E. Sawdon was appointed as Hon. Medical Officer in charge of Casualty Services. And not only has this ensured thorough co-ordination of the whole area, making the work more effective and complete, but also it has considerably lightened the duties which would otherwise have fallen on the Torquay Health Department. Dr. Sawdon gives his whole time to this important service, and the Torbay Area is indeed fortunate in having such a tireless, indefatigable and willing worker.

The duties of the Casualty Liaison Officer at the A.R.P. Control is undertaken by a rota which includes the Senior Sanitary Inspector, Mr. M. G. Crook, two of the District Sanitary Inspectors, Mr. J. F. H. Smith and Mr. H. T. Beechey, and two members of the Dental Profession, Mr. F. C. G. Turle and Mr. T. Fenn: this has involved considerable work often for long hours at night, and the invaluable help which these Officers give, in addition to their already heavy other duties, is acknowledged with much gratitude and appreciation.

A meeting of the members of the Medical Practitioners of Torquay was held at the St. Marychurch Town Hall in September, when the arrangements of the casualty services were explained and the assistance of the local doctors was sought in this connexion. The ready response which has been made by those doctors who are available to help at any incidents is very greatly valued and esteemed.

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