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**Contributors**

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January 30th. 1904

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have much pleasure in presenting to you, what I consider a most satisfactory report as to the health and sanitary condition of the town during the past year.

It seems to be the general opinion that, in consequence of an unseasonable Summer and Autumn, the health of the Public must suffer, and that there must be an abnormal amount of sickness, ~~but~~ but such has not been the case, and I cannot remember a period in which there has been less sickness and mortality than during the past year, a state of affairs that has, I think, been pretty general throughout the Country.

The deaths of 62 persons have been registered in the town. From this number must be deducted the deaths of two persons not resident in the district - this will leave 60 deaths, which gives a death rate of 10.8 per 1000. One death occurred from Measles and one from Diphtheria in the latter case the child travelled from London with the disease in an advanced stage and the case ended fatally the next day.

The births numbered 131 equal to a birth rate of 23.6 per 1000.

I will now allude to the presence of infectious diseases during the year.

12 cases of Scarlet Fever and one case of Diphtheria, alluded to above, were the only infectious cases reported to me during the year. The cases of Scarlet Fever were of a mild character, nine were treated in the Isolation Hospital. I am sorry to say that we have not commenced this year in the same satisfactory way, as already we have had seven cases of Scarlet Fever, some of which are of rather a severe type.

At the present time there is much controversy going on in the medical journals as to the utility or otherwise of Isolation Hospitals. I am myself decidedly of ~~the~~ opinion that they are productive of much good, particularly in an Urban District like our own - as often, by the prompt removal of a case of Scarlet Fever to the Hospital, an outbreak of a serious character is prevented. If a case occurs in a family in a small cottage the rest of the children, sooner or later, are bound to be infected, and, considering that the infective stage continues for some six or seven weeks, the whole family, during that time, must be placed in quarantine; whereas, by promptly removing the source of infection, disinfection is then easily carried out and the household can go on as before.

Regular inspections, in company with the Sanitary officer, are ~~now~~ made, and monthly reports of sanitary work and defects are presented to the Council. One cottage was reported as unfit for habitation and a magistrates' order had to be obtained to enforce the closing. Four cases of overcrowding were reported and remedied. A number of new cottages have been erected in different parts of the town, some of them are situated in the vicinity of Mr Mark Hill's and Mr. J. W. Titt's works, and must be the means of bringing many workmen nearer to their work than formerly. Twelve good class cottages have also been erected at the lower end of the town. Special attention has been paid to the inspection of the cowsheds and dairies. These have generally been found in good order; the one exception only applied to the cowsheds which were badly drained and ventilated. The drainage has now been properly overhauled, but the structural defects in the buildings have not, as yet, been remedied.

The new act, respecting bakehouses, which came into force at the commencement of the present year, rendered a special inspection necessary, and I find from my monthly report on the subject that I considered all the bakehouses most satisfactory; that there was only one underground one in the town, which was of ample size, 20ft. by 12ft. 6in. by 8ft. 6in. in height, well lighted and thoroughly ventilated, and I thought the Council could, without hesitation, licence the same. The workshops were carefully inspected, the cubic space ~~was~~



2

noted , and the necessary enquiries made as to the number of workers and the requisite lavatory accomodation. The number of workshops in the town is 22. Sixteen of these employ males only, and Five females only, and in one both males and females are employed. The total number of employees is 89. viz. 54 males, 25 females, and 10 apprentices.

The provision of a Smallpox Hospital for the combined Urban and Rural Districts has been under consideration by a joint committee appointed by the two bodies, but as yet, they have been unable to obtain a suitable site. Some old building on the Sutton and Crockerton Road would be an ideal position, but unfortunately the tenure is so complicated that it is useless to attempt negotiations.

I hope some rules will be drawn up as to the proper procedure to be adopted in closing the elementary schools when considered necessary by the Medical Officer of Health. Although the M. O. H. has to give notice to the County Council and the Local Government Board of the closing of schools, and his reasons for doing so, he at the same time has not authority to act on his own responsibility, but must obtain the sanction of two or more members of the Council before doing so, or, what is often the case, the managers close the schools (frequently in the Rural district) and then ask the M. O. H. for a certificate to give to the inspector.

The lighting of the town shows some improvement and extra lamps have been fixed in places where they were much needed, a matter I mentioned in my annual report four years ago, when I remarked that the lighting of some of the courts and yards leading from the main thoroughfare was very unsatisfactory, and that some of the yards, as for instance Carson's yard and the Three Horse Shoes yard, in both of which there are a number of cottages, ought to be provided with a lamp.

With this report I submit the tables supplied by the Local Government board dealing with the mortality of the town and other matters.

I am

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully

FREDK. J. FLOWER

Medical officer of Health to the Council.

To The Chairman and members

Warminster Urban District Council.

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The provision of a Sanitary Hospital for the confined urban and rural districts has been under consideration by a joint committee appointed by the two bodies, but as yet, they have been unable to obtain a suitable site. Some old buildings on the Sutton and Crockerston Road would be an ideal position, but unfortunately the tenure is so complicated that it is useless to attempt negotiations. I hope some rules will be drawn up as to the proper procedure to be adopted in closing the elementary schools when considered necessary by the Medical Officer of Health. Although the M. O. H. has to give notice to the County Council and the Local Government Board of the closing of schools, and his reasons for doing so, as at the same time has not authority to act on his own responsibility, but must obtain the sanction of two or more members of the Council before doing so, or, what is often the case, the managers close the schools (especially in the rural districts) and then ask the M. O. H. for a certificate to give to the Inspector.

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Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully

THOMAS J. WORTH

Medical Officer of Health to the Council.

To The Chairman and members  
Tarrington Urban District Council.