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BURLEY-IN-WHARFEDALE

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.




28th Annual Report


OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

1914.



WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.



BURLEY-IN-WHARFEDALE,

FEBRUARY 1ST, 1915.

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

GENTLEMEN,

I have the pleasure of laying before you my report on the past year. In it will be found statistics referring to the health of the community during that period, and a resumé of the work of your Sanitary department.

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL FEATURES.

Burley-in-Wharfedale is an Urban District 3,133 acres in area, bounded on the north side by the river Wharfe, and on the south by the adjacent parishes of Ilkley and Hawksworth, high up on Rombalds Moor. It touches Ilkley also on the west, and Otley and Menston on the east. The higher portions owe their bold and rugged appearance to the millstone grit series of rocks of which their foundation is formed, and from which descend a series of old river terraces of alluvial clay containing many sandstone boulders and rounded pebbles of limestone. The village itself is built on one of these terraces, which in by-gone days formed the bed of the river; the present river bed has been cut through this clay, and in places exposes the underlying shale.

The valley, running almost due east and west, is exposed to south-westerly gales which, gaining power by being "cooped in" by the surrounding hills, at times approach the violence of a hurricane. This wind is the most prevalent, and, bringing heavy rain with it, assists in augmenting the volume of water in the river, which frequently overflows its banks. These periodical floods, covering the main road and interrupting traffic on both ends of the district, form an evil that requires urgent remedy, and to the lay mind it does not appear an impossible task.

The total population at the last census was 3,762, but this includes some 200 inmates of the West Riding Asylum at Scalebor, and for the purpose of this report I estimate the population at 3,625. The occupation of the inhabitants is largely of a commercial

character, either in the local worsted mill (spinning, weaving, &c.), or at the printing machine works at Otley. The land in the area is chiefly pasture, some milk being delivered to neighbouring localities.

The building trade has been very quiet during the year, one house only having been added to the inhabited list. Some are empty pending alterations, and a few due to migration from the village. During our investigations under the Housing and Town Planning Act, we have encountered very little of a nature requiring drastic remedy, and for the most part the houses are substantially built with spacious yards, mostly paved and in good condition. There are no slums nor unhealthy areas, and, with wide streets and ample open spaces, there is an appearance of comfort and healthfulness. So far, up to the time of writing, the stress of the war has not been felt locally; many of our young men have responded to the country's call, and many a home misses their weekly portion of the income, but, if need be, and it may come in the later stages of the great struggle, there are ample funds to meet any necessity. Of dire poverty we have none, and of comparative poverty the Poor-Law return is evidence that it is slight. The Out-door Relief distributed by the Wharfedale Union during the year was £212, against £164 in the previous year, the increase being due to a more generous scale adopted by the Guardians.

The rateable value for Poor Law purposes is £18,431, and the assessable value for District Rate £15,090 6s. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS.

The birth-rate for 1914 is very low—15 per 1,000, and is produced by the births of 54 children, 20 males and 34 females. In the previous year we had 58 births, with a rate of 16, in 1913 it was 17.6, and in 1912 it was 18, shewing a steady decline.

DEATHS.

The number of deaths actually occurring in the district was 62, 30 males and 32 females, yielding a gross death-rate of 16 per 1,000 of the whole population. To get the true rate of mortality we must deduct 26 deaths of non-residents which took place in the Scalebor Asylum, and add five, 1 male and 4 females, residents who died outside the district. This leaves 41 deaths of residents, or a death-rate equal to 11.3 per 1,000 for the year. This is lower than that of the previous year, 12.4, and approaches the lowest on record.

CAUSE OF DEATH.

Phthisis, or consumption of the lungs, is ascribed as the cause of death in 4 cases, giving a phthisical mortality of 1.13 per 1,000, which is rather higher than last year. This disease is much less prevalent than in former years. One death was due to tubercular meningitis. Two were due to bronchitis, in aged people, and four to other respiratory complaints, yielding a respiratory rate of 1.6 per 1,000.

Heart complaints were responsible for six deaths; and cancer or other malignant disease, four. Acute appendicitis proved fatal in one instance, and several persons passed away from cerebral hæmorrhage and senile decay. Three deaths were recorded from infectious complaints, viz., two from measles complicated with broncho-pneumonia, and one from diphtheria, in the hospital. Thus we have one more death than last year, and the zymotic death-rate is .8, against .5 per 1,000.

INFANT MORTALITY.

I am pleased to be able to chronicle that no death of an infant under twelve months old was registered during the year. This is not only a record for these reports, but is, I think, almost unique for a district with the population of yours. As I have stated in previous reports, every birth is attended by a fully-trained nurse under the control of the Village Nursing Association, and thus every infant is properly cared for from the first. During the year a system of Notification of Births has been set up by the County Council, but it is only within the last month that a visiting nurse has embarked on her duties. It is too soon to say what effect this change will have on nursing-mothers and infants. The visitor will have every assistance from the medical men of the district, and there are a few houses where her services may be useful.

HEALTH OF THE YEAR.

The end of the year 1913 left us with a slight epidemic of scarlet fever, which continued during the first two months of the year, nine cases being notified during this period. We were free from the complaint during the spring and summer, but as the illness was very prevalent in surrounding districts, we could hardly expect to escape, as children from the village freely visited these places at the local feasts. In October there commenced a series of cases of such a mild nature as to be scarcely recognisable to the untrained eye. Children were seen in the desquamating stage who had had no

sickness to cause parental alarm, and so an epidemic arose which, in spite of isolation, hospital treatment, and disinfection of rooms and houses, has prevailed up to the time of writing. The initial symptoms for the most part were of a trivial nature, no case has been really severe, and it makes one feel that a change is taking place in the virulence of this disease, and some tolerance is being established in the rising generation. Altogether 33 cases were notified during the year. Diphtheria, a complaint rare in these reports, was reported in five instances. In two cases definite sanitary defects were found in the houses, but in the others no cause could be assigned for the occurrence. One of the children died immediately after removal to hospital. Erysipelas, of a mild nature, was notified four times. A few cases of measles were observed in the early months; how many I cannot say, as it is not compulsorily notifiable, but it was not very extensively spread. The well-known apathy of parents towards this complaint was shown as usual, and children were allowed to play about much sooner than they ought to have done. No other illnesses occurred to need special mention, the wonderful summer and autumn caused almost all disease to disappear, and enabled everyone to lay in a stock of health to enable them to face what has turned out a very trying winter.

Cases of infectious sickness requiring hospital treatment are taken to the Wharfedale Conjoint Isolation Hospital, one mile from the village, 31 cases having been treated there during the year from your district. At times the accommodation for scarlet fever patients was strained, and some had to be refused. This will be remedied during the present year, as a new block will be opened. Under the Tuberculosis Order, 1912, a few cases have been notified. One patient received sanatorium treatment, and others visited the Dispensary for such cases at Otley. We have one man sleeping in a hut supplied by the Committee, and extra nourishment, in the shape of milk and eggs, has been ordered in suitable cases.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS.

	1914.	1913.	ENGLAND AND WALES. 1914.	
Birth Rate	15	16	23·8*	per 1,000 living.
Death Rate	11·3	12·4	14	,,
Zymotic Death Rate....	·8	·5	1·2	,,
Phthisis Death Rate....	1·13	·8	—	,,
Respiratory Death Rate	1·6	·5	—	,,
Infantile Death Rate ...	0	103	105	per 1,000 born.

* Lowest on record.

BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS.

It has not been necessary during the past year to forward many specimens to the County Council Laboratory. In doubtful cases this establishment is of the greatest service.

The Vaccination Act is almost a dead letter in the district, so many parents adopting the free and easy course of a conscientious objection. Some day there will be a rude awakening, and a rush for protection. It will prove a costly business for any district to stamp out a vigorous epidemic of small-pox.

SANITARY MATTERS.

WATER SUPPLY.

There has been no shortage of water in any part of the district during the year, in fact, during the later months we may be said to have had too much. With our five reservoirs, a total storage capacity of 33 million gallons, we are beyond all risk of a water famine. The purity of the supply, drawn from the moors 1,050 feet above sea level, is unquestioned, and no complaints have been made. A moorland water is sometimes too soft for distribution in leaden pipes, owing to its ability to dissolve the metal, and cause poisonous symptoms. No case of lead-poisoning has been noticed in connection with the water, but we have anticipated any such complaint by adding a quantity of slaked lime to the streams supplying the reservoirs. This method being somewhat haphazard, it was determined to add the lime in a more scientific manner, and at the same time free the water, by filtration, from the discolouring matter which it had absorbed from the peaty soil of the gathering ground. During the present year, and I believe at an early date, a filtration plant of Messrs. Bell, Ravensthorpe, will be in operation. This is housed in an ornamental building at the top of Wood Hill, and brings your water supply to up-to-date perfection.

RAINFALL.

The unequal distribution of the rain is illustrated in the table of the year's rainfall, as taken by your water manager. Out of 134 days on which a measurable amount of moisture fell, 97 were in the first three and last three months, *i.e.*, only 37 "wet" days in six months. In June and July, half the total rain of the month fell on one day, and the wettest day of the year was July 1st. Twelve and a half inches fell in November and December, *i.e.*, more than a third of the total, and is easily a record for this district. In 1913 the amount of rain measured was 28.85 inches on 130 wet days, and in 1912 43.13 inches on 178 days.

RAINFALL, 1914.

	Inches.	No. of days on which rain fell.	Greatest rainfall.	Dates of greatest rainfall.
January	1·83	15	·94	—
February	2·67	15	·49	21st
March	4·00	21	·41	5th
April	1·11	7	·28	5th
May	1·12	6	·44	8th
June	2·49	6	1·04	9th
July	3·37	6	1·63	1st
August	2·19	7	·93	1st
September	1·64	5	·84	17th
October	2·68	10	·89	25th
November... ..	5·09	17	·97	11th
December... ..	7·50	19	1·19	27th
	35·69	134		

I have frequently inspected the water courses of the area, but have found no cause for complaint.

SANITARY WORK.

The work of the men engaged in scavenging has been done without serious complaint. Street and house gullies have been regularly cleansed, and the streets have been kept tidy. There are in the district 476 closets on the water-carriage system, 57 waste water-closets, 233 moveable receptacles (of the pail persuasion), and 48 ordinary privies. Your inspector, in his report, says that he is not satisfied with the way in which owners, in spite of a liberal allowance, are reluctant to convert their old-fashioned convenience to the more sanitary modern idea.

Four additional water-closets have been passed, and two privies converted. Two cesspools, of which we have very few, have been cleaned out by your men, and others by the owners.

Much necessary work has been done in disinfecting premises after fever or other dangerous diseases. 52 rooms have been fumigated with formalin spray or vapour, and class-rooms at school have been so treated on three occasions. This is done by your staff, free of any expense to the school managers, which is not done, I understand, in all districts. Disinfecting fluids are distributed free on application, and 35 gallons have been supplied.

INSPECTION OF DISTRICT.

I have made many inspections of the district during the year with your inspector, especially in connection with the Housing and

Town Planning Act. Such defects as were found were duly reported to you. In the excellent resumé of his year's work, your inspector, Mr. Riding, gives minute evidence of his close application to his duties, and a thorough knowledge of the Public Health Acts. In it will be found details of a large amount of work, carried out in a business-like and tactful manner. The sewers have been regularly flushed, and a new ventilating shaft erected in Station Road. We never have complaints of sewer gas odours. A new sewer from the Allotments, where several dwellings have been built in recent years, to the out-fall sewer in Leither Bank, is under course of construction, and will solve a long-felt want in the locality. No drain is passed until it has been satisfactorily tested, and many old drains have had the smoke test applied. In general sanitary work, Mr. Riding has made no fewer than 275 inspections. Most nuisances found and reported have been abated; some, however, discovered in the latter part of the year, and not of an urgent character, await improvement. No legal action has been necessary, but in some instances owners, by their dilatory methods, almost drive us to this necessity.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING.

At the present time we have accommodation for all, without overcrowding. The building of new houses is at a standstill, and will be until a revival of trade and improvement in local industries. Under the conditions of the above Act, much good work has been done. Last year your inspector, being new to the district, had to re-inspect 178 houses in which nothing had been done and where the records were incomplete. In the year under review 123 new premises have been inspected and reported upon, and 136 have been inspected a second time. In these 259 houses only 40 defects were found, and most of these of a character easily remedied. Closing orders were issued in three cases, but I am pleased to report some effort is now being made to carry out your suggestions on these premises.

SCHOOLS.

I have made it my duty to visit all the schools and inspect the sanitary condition and water supply. One grave defect was the main drain of the National School. On more than one occasion I have found this blocked from some reason unknown, and had the drain opened and re-laid to the main sewer. During the prevalence of epidemic sickness I have instructed the teachers to report any suspicious case to me, and have visited every child absent from any indefinite cause. The school medical officer has detected

defects in many children, such as enlarged tonsils, adenoids, bad teeth, ringworm, imperfect sight and hearing. Parents have in nearly all cases consented to have the children attended to, and several small operations have been performed.

FOOD SUPPLY.

MILK.

There is nothing fresh to report on the milk trade of the village. The farms have been regularly visited and inspected, and are in fair condition. In wet weather the approaches to some byres are not clean, but the interiors are kept in better order than was the case some time ago. No samples have been analysed. Two cows suspected of tuberculosis were reported by the County Authority.

OTHER FOODS.

I am not aware of any complaint being made during the year of bad food. Slaughtering places have been inspected, and found in good condition and well conducted. I have distributed throughout the village some suggestions on the preparation of suitable and economical food in war time. So far, happily, these have not been urgently needed, but they may be, and are ready. The inhabitants of the district would be well advised to use all the garden space they can for the growing of potatoes, peas, beans, carrots, and other vegetables, for use in the lean times that are bound to follow the war.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, AND BAKEHOUSES.

These have all been inspected, and found in a satisfactory state. I have received the necessary lists of out-workers from the mill at Greenholme, and on visiting the houses have found no cause for complaint. The only work sent out is that of "burling," or mending the woven pieces of material. More attention has been paid during the year to smoke nuisances, and on several occasions it has been found necessary to call for abatement in the amount of black smoke observed.

I enclose with this the report of Mr. Riding, and full statistical details of the events of your year in my department.

I have the honour to be

Yours obediently,

H. HEBBLETHWAITE,

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1914.

DEAR SIR,

I have the honour to present to you for your consideration my second Annual Report as Inspector of Nuisances for the District.

SCAVENGING.

The whole of the scavenging within the district, including the cleansing of sink gullies, continues to be carried out satisfactorily by the Council's own workmen.

With regard to the conversion of privies and pail closets to the water-carriage system, I had hoped for better results during the year under review. Notwithstanding the Council's offer to contribute £1 towards the conversions, the property owners still adhere to more antiquated systems. The number of conveniences is as follows:—Fresh water W.C.'s, 476; waste-water W.C.'s, 57; Privies with movable receptacles, 233; Privies with fixed receptacles, 48. Total, 814.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The disinfection of 52 rooms has been carried out by spraying with a solution of formalin and fumigation with formalin lamps. The class-rooms at the National School were disinfected three times during the year. The cause of disinfection is as follows:—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	39
Measles	...	...	...	10
Consumption	...	...	...	2
Diphtheria	...	...	...	1
				—
Total	...	...	...	52

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

The sewers and manholes have been regularly cleansed and flushed, and an additional ventilating column erected in Station Road. Plans have been approved for the Allotment Gardens sewerage scheme, and a commencement made towards the close of the year. The Council have approved plans and estimates for a 12-inch outfall sewer from Sun Lane to Leither Bank, at a cost of £215. The scheme includes the construction of a thousand-gallon automatic flushing chamber, which will meet a long-felt want.

It is hoped to have the scheme in full working order by the early spring. Defective house-drainage has received careful attention, and has been partially relaid in ten instances. The smoke test has been applied to all old and new drains whenever practicable.

NEW BUILDINGS.

Nothing of note has occurred in the local building trade during the year, and no additional houses erected. Two new houses have been certified for habitation, and 9 plans for alterations, drainage, etc., approved. All new drainage has been systematically inspected before being covered up, 30 such inspections having been made.

NUISANCES.

Acting under your instructions, and in accordance with the General Order of the Local Government Board, I have endeavoured by systematic inspection to keep myself informed in respect of any nuisance existing within the district. The following table shows particulars of the work done in respect to General Sanitary Work:—

Inspections and re-inspections	...	...	275
Nuisances reported	...	...	116
Nuisances abated	...	...	62
Nuisances unabated	...	...	54
Preliminary notices served	...	...	33
Statutory notices served	...	...	9
Inspections of new buildings and drains	...	...	35
Drains relaid or repaired	...	...	10
Insufficient supply of water	...	...	44
Impure supply of water	...	...	2
Choked drains liberated	...	...	17
Old drains examined	...	...	8
Defective ashpits	...	...	8
Defective pail closets	...	...	2
New gullies fixed	...	...	6
Fall-pipes repaired	...	...	3
Damp walls and water in cellars remedied	..		5
Houses inspected	...	...	6
Sink wastes trapped and repaired	...	...	6
W.C. cisterns and drains repaired	...	...	4
Additional W.C.'s	...	...	4
Privies converted to W.C.'s	...	...	2
Cesspools cleansed	...	...	2
Smoke observations	...	...	5

Miscellaneous nuisances	...	...	...	13
Inspections of workshops, bakehouses, slaughter-houses, &c.	...	...	...	31
Inspections of cowsheds	...	...	...	34

With reference to the 54 unabated nuisances, the notices were only served towards the close of the year, and include 44 houses in Peel Place and North Parade, which are at present supplied with water through an inch service pipe. The Council have extended the three-inch water main, and the various owners have received notices to make the necessary new connections. In no instance has legal redress had to be resorted to during the year, but in several instances considerable difficulty has been experienced in securing prompt execution of any necessary work.

Disinfectants have been supplied to all resident applicants; 35 gallons of fluid and one ton of powder have been used during the year.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING.

There appears to be an ample sufficiency of housing accommodation in the district. We have very few really dirty houses, most of the people are "house-proud," and little fault can be found with them as far as cleanliness is concerned.

The following is a summary of the work carried out during the year. A further 123 houses were inspected, and 136 re-inspections made, bringing the total number of inspections up to 259 for the year.

Houses inspected	...	...	...	123
Houses re-inspected	...	...	...	136
Houses where defects were found	...	...	...	40
Interviews with owners and agents	...	...	...	9
Preliminary notices served	...	...	...	35
Statutory notices served	...	...	...	42
Closing orders	...	...	...	3
Window areas increased	...	...	...	14
Windows made to open	...	...	...	17
Roofage repaired	...	...	...	14
Fall-pipes disconnected	...	...	...	12
Sink wastes trapped and repaired	...	...	...	4
Bedrooms ventilated	...	...	...	4
Insanitary yards repaired	...	...	...	2
W.C.'s repaired	...	...	...	3
Dust bins provided	...	...	...	4
Miscellaneous repairs	...	...	...	9

MILK SUPPLY.

Dairies and Cowsheds, which are registered under the Council's regulations, received 34 visits. On the whole the buildings are generally satisfactory, and limewashing is carried out thoroughly and with regularity, but in several cases better attention to keeping the surrounding pavements in a much cleaner condition would effect a desirable improvement. Two cases of tubercular milk cows were notified by the County Authorities, and were afterwards slaughtered.

FOOD INSPECTION.

I have regularly kept a vigilant eye on articles of food exposed for sale, but have not had any reason for complaint in any instance. The condition of the premises where food is exposed for sale has been satisfactory.

WATER SUPPLY.

A constant and full supply of water has been maintained throughout the year, and the reservoirs and gathering grounds have been carefully and regularly inspected. The 4-inch main from Hartley's reservoir has been cleansed of internal incrustation by the Powrcleer system for a distance of $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, and has resulted in a very considerable improvement in the volume of water discharged from the main. Lime has been frequently added to counteract any plumbosolvent action, as the principal supply is of moorland surface origin.

The new mechanical lime and filtration plant, which is being erected at a cost of £1,400, is rapidly approaching completion, and will be got to work in the early spring.

The Council have entered into an agreement to supply the Menston Parish Council with water in bulk in case their own yield fails in times of drought, and the water mains have been extended, and a three-inch water meter fixed on the boundary for this purpose.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, AND BAKEHOUSES.

Twenty-nine visits of inspection to the above premises have been made during the year, and were found to be in good and sanitary condition. The district is devoid of any underground bakehouses. Five black smoke observations were made, and letters of complaint have been instrumental in securing a modification of the nuisance.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

There are three slaughter-houses within the district, including one which has not been in use throughout the year. The other two have been periodically inspected, and continue to be well conducted and kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

CONCLUSION.

It is again my desire and pleasure to record my appreciation of the valued assistance and ready advice which I have at all times received at your hands. It is an old adage that "two heads are better than one," and the many consultations which have taken place during the year have resulted in the Sanitary Department retaining the confidence of property owners, especially when "tact," the highest qualification of a Sanitary Inspector, is often put to a severe test.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

HARRY RIDING.

DR. H. HEBBLETHWAITE,
Medical Officer of Health,
Burley-in-Wharfedale.

TABLE I. Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1914 and previous Years.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.		Transferable Deaths		Nett Deaths belonging to the District.				
		Un-corrected Number.	Nett.		Number.	Rate.	of Non-residents registered in the District.	of Residents not registered in the District.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.	
			Number.	Rate.					Number.	Rate per 1,000 Nett Births.		Number.	Rate.
1909	3635	63	63	18	68	18.7	23	3	10	158	42	12
1910	3700	55	55	15.6	54	14.6	20	2	3	54	34	9.6
1911	3775	67	69	19.3	66	17.5	25	3	4	58	44	12.3
1912	3800	63	63	17.5	65	18	32	4	7	111	37	10.5
1913	3825	58	58	16	79	20.6	40	6	6	103	45	12.4
1914	3825	54	54	14.9	62	16	26	5	0	0	41	11.3

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water) ... 3133

Total population at all ages ... 3762 }
 Number of inhabited houses... 858 }
 Average number of persons per house (excluding inmates of Scalebor Asylum) 4.16 } At Census of 1911.

TABLE II.

Cases of Infectious Disease Notified during the Year 1914.

Notifiable Disease.	At all Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 to 5 years.	5 to 15 years.	15 to 25 years.	25 to 45 years.	45 to 65 years.	65 and upwards.	Total Cases
									Removed to Hospital.
Diphtheria (including croup)	5	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	5
Erysipelas	4	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	-
Scarlet Fever	33	-	7	23	2	1	-	-	26
Totals	42	1	7	28	2	3	1	0	31

TABLE III.

Causes of and Ages at Death during the Year 1914.

Causes of Death.	All ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and	2 and	5 and	15 and	25 and	45 and	65 and
			under 2	under 5	under 15	under 25	under 45	under 65	upwards.
Measles	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Diphtheria & Croup	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	4	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-
Tuberculous Meningitis	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cancer, malignant disease	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
Meningitis	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Organic Heart Disease	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4
Bronchitis	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Other diseases of respiratory organs	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1
Appendicitis and Typhlitis	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Other Defined Diseases	11	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	4
Diseases ill-defined or unknown	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
All causes.....	41	0	3	0	3	2	3	13	17

Deaths in Public Institutions in the district :—

Diseases of Respiratory Organs, 2; Nephritis and Bright's Disease, 1; Other Defined Diseases, 19; Diseases ill-defined or unknown, 4; Total, 26.

TABLE IV.

Infant Mortality during the Year 1914.

NIL.

TABLE V.

Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

Factories (including Factory Laundries)	...	...	...	...	...	3
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	...	...	...	...	...	25
Workplaces	...	...	...	...	...	8
					Total	36