

district, but it would serve no purpose to specify any others, as the details I have now given will be found applicable to them all, with little or no variation.

The agricultural population of this district differ very little in their style of life from the villagers, the farms being usually on a small scale, and there is little distinction discernible between master and servant.

The farm-houses are usually of one story, covered with thatch, and contain two apartments. The dwelling-house, cow-house, stable, and barn usually form one row of humble tenements attached to the end of each other. The family residence differs very little from the dwellings of the labouring classes, in respect of furniture or internal neatness. The kitchen is the more comfortable of the two apartments of which the dwelling usually consists, as it is more occupied, and has the advantage of a constant fire. The whole family convene here,—parents, children, and servants all sitting, eating, conversing, as well as labouring together without distinction.

The other apartment is seldom used but as a bed-room, and is in general very ill aired, cold, and damp, having an earthen floor, which is seldom dry.

There are few instances in which servants or hinds have separate establishments for themselves; and when any of the male servants happen to be married persons, their families are left to accommodate themselves where they find convenient.

These are a very healthy and robust race of people, and infectious diseases are scarcely ever known among them; they are cleaner in their habits, and more correct in their morals, than the villagers.

A great proportion of the working classes in this district are sober and industrious people, correct in their habits, and civil in their manners, and many of them are regular in their attendance upon Divine ordinances.

There are seven places of worship within the parish of Lanark; and the great body of the people who attend these churches are of the labouring classes.

In this district there are ample means for the instruction of youth, as schools are to be met with in all directions, and many of them conducted on the most approved plans, and a great many young people are in the habit of receiving instruction in the common, and some in the more ornamental, branches of knowledge. The country part of the population are very attentive in the observance of the ordinances of religion on the sabbath, and in keeping their children at school.

But while I make these favourable statements regarding the general character of the district, I am sorry to say that there are very many grievous exceptions.

A number of the lower orders, both in the town of Lanark and in all the neighbouring villages, are grossly ignorant and immoral;

these desecrate the sabbath, employing it as a day of amusement and dissipation. They never attend any place of worship,—treat with scorn all attempts made for their moral reformation: such persons cannot be persuaded to send their offspring either to week, day, or sabbath-schools, although abundant instructions, of both kinds, are offered them free of all expense. It is chiefly among these ignorant and careless people that profligacy prevails, and is followed by its usual attendants, poverty and disease. (Most of this class of people are Chartists, who are constantly declaiming against the extravagance of the government, and all who possess more property than themselves.)

When any of this class can procure the means of obtaining spirits, they are in the habit of grouping in some low tippling house, or in one of their own dwellings, and continue drinking so long as they can procure a fresh supply of whiskey: these meetings often end in a noisy scuffle, and lead to an investigation before the magistrates.

These scenes take place among the very lowest grades of society, and the vagrants, who lodge in beggaries during the night.

There are a number of loose girls in the town and neighbourhood of Lanark; and infanticide is by no means uncommon, although frequently managed so as to elude detection.

There are many petty thefts committed, and sometimes personal injuries received in drunken quarrels, which are usually brought before the magistrates in the Burgh Court, or before the sheriff, who holds a court in the town once a-week. There are occasional instances of more serious offences which require to be referred to the assizes in Glasgow; but these cases are so rare as scarcely to bear any assignable proportion to the sober and inoffensive part of the population.

No. 13.

REPORT ON THE GENERAL AND SANITARY CONDITION OF THE TOWN OF GREENOCK.

BY W. L. LAURIE, M.D.

GENTLEMEN,—It may not be deemed out of place to give a brief description of the topography, climate, &c. of this town, previous to entering upon the few facts which are to follow regarding its sanitary condition.

Greenock is situated on the banks of the river Clyde, about 20 miles lower down the river than Glasgow: the ground on which the town is built rises by a gradual ascent from the river side, it soon becomes more abrupt, and ascends to the height of about 600 feet; the great proportion of the town is built at the base of this declivity close to the river side. The soil on which the lower

portion of the town stands was originally very soft and boggy, and, as may be supposed, is very inefficiently drained; in and about the other parts of the town the soil is generally of a gravelly nature, mixed with a marly clay.

The climate is proverbially moist and variable but temperate, and in order to indicate this, it may not be deemed unimportant to give in the present place the observations of the state of the weather for the last year, which I have extracted from a register which has been regularly kept in our hospital for several years past.

The following observations were made at noon, and the degrees of the thermometer and barometer marked show the highest and lowest degrees which occurred in each month.

January.—Thermometer ranged between 33 and 50; barometer between 28·30 and 30·52; pluviometer (Crichton's), 5 inches and ·86 of an inch; wind for the most part E., occasionally N. and S.; weather very changeable, with hail, snow, and rain.

February.—Thermometer 36 and 49; barometer 29·20 and 38·89; pluviometer 2·6; wind E., S., and S. W.; weather dull, soft, and windy.

March.—Thermometer 38 and 60; barometer 29·92, and 30·92; pluviometer 8·20; wind E. and S. W.; weather alternately very fine and dull.

April.—Thermometer 44 and 63; barometer 29·64 and 30·69; pluviometer 9·84; wind E. and S. W.; weather cloudy, dull, and foggy.

May.—Thermometer 43 and 64; barometer 29·60 and 30·60; pluviometer 2·29; wind E. and S. W.; weather wet and variable.

June.—Thermometer 53 and 66; barometer 29·60 and 30·50; pluviometer 2·8; wind W. and S. E.; weather dull, soft, and squally.

July.—Thermometer 49 and 69; barometer 29·30 and 30·60; pluviometer 3·5; wind S. and S. W.; weather alternately dull and fine.

August.—Thermometer 58 and 75; barometer 29·60 and 30·60; pluviometer 3·3; wind S. and S. W.; weather alternately fine and wet; very fine towards the end of the month.

September.—Thermometer 48 and 65; barometer 29·30 and 30·40; pluviometer 4; wind E. and S. W.; weather cloudy, wet, and windy.

October.—Thermometer 45 and 59; barometer 29·40 and 30·70; pluviometer 1·1; wind E. and S. W.; weather for the most part fine, with strong breezes.

November.—Thermometer 35 and 53; barometer 28·35 and 30·70; pluviometer 2·8; wind E. and N. E.; weather very dull and windy.

December.—Thermometer 35 and 49; barometer 34·30 and 30·74; pluviometer 2·3; wind E. and S. W.; weather fine at beginning of month, dull and wet towards the end.

It appears from the foregoing report that the fall of rain here, though not in general so heavy, is more continuous than in most other places, yet the quantity which fell was not great, being indeed far below (several inches) the amount reported to fall annually in some of the western parts of England.

The lowest point of the thermometer was only 33, and the highest 75, so that, though we have in Greenock a prevailing humid and damp atmosphere, it will bear comparison in respect to mildness with most parts of this island.

According to the census of this year, the population of Greenock was found to be 38,846.

To show the rapid increase which has taken place in the population of this town, I subjoin a statistical table for the last 50 years, which I have taken the liberty to extract from the "Greenock Advertiser" newspaper, contributed by Mr. Wilson of Thornly, by which it will be seen that the population has increased with remarkably rapid strides, the increase in proportion being only below that of Glasgow by a very small per centage.

POPULATION TABLE.

Periodical Enumerations in Fifty Years.	Families.	Average to a Family.	Inhabitants.			In 1000 of Population.		Increase every Ten Years.	Rate per Cent., or ratio of Increase every Ten Years.
			Persons.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.		
Year 1791.	3,387	4·43	15,000	7,467	7,533	498	502	..	16·4 per cent.*
Year 1801.	4,050	4·31	17,458	8,196	9,262	469	531	2,458	9· per cent.*
Year 1811.	4,490	4·46	19,042	7,978	11,064	419	591	1,594	16· per cent.
Year 1821.	5,360	4·12	22,028	9,381	12,707	447	553	3,046	24·8 per cent.
Year 1831.	6,353	4·34	27,571	11,973	15,598	434	566	5,483	
Year 1841.	7,330	5·16	38,846	19,502	19,344	502	498	11,275	41· per cent.

* Increase in fifty years, 159 per cent., 23,846.

	Families.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
Families and persons within the Parliamentary bounds at 6th June, 1841	7,241	36,114	17,629	18,485
In the country districts	89	777	376	401
Absentees at 6th June, 1841—in all, 1,955 persons; whereof 1,007 are seamen . . . . .	..	1,955	1,497	458
Total	7,330	38,846	19,502	19,344

It is to be regretted that no register of births or deaths is kept in this place, so that there are no means of ascertaining correctly the average rate of mortality.

As I before mentioned, Greenock is situated on a declivity, having a northern exposure; the chief part of the town extends along the river side from east to west, for upwards of two miles (including Cartsdylke). It is very irregularly built, each person being allowed to build how and where he pleases, with little regard to any specified plan; this is much to be regretted, as,

from the situation, it might have been made one of the finest looking towns in the kingdom, the view from the higher parts of the town being very extensive and varied, and commanding scenery seldom to be met with in the vicinity of so large a community.

The more wealthy part of the inhabitants live towards the west part of the town, and the houses are of a comparatively recent date.

Towards the east or old part of the town, the amount of population crowded into a small space can hardly be credited; the rapid increase of the population has so far over-stepped the means of accommodation that not the meanest out-house remains without its tenants.

In considering the sanitary condition of a populous town such as this, the state and nature of the dwellings of the poor ought to form a particular object of inquiry. And as the queries issued a short time ago by the Poor Law Commissioners relating specially to this object, I shall enter into the subject more in detail than I was able to do at the time that I returned the answers to these queries.

The great proportion of the dwellings of the poor are situated in very narrow and confined closes or alleys leading from the main streets; these closes end generally in a *cul-de-sac*, and have little ventilation, the space between the houses being so narrow as to exclude the action of the sun on the ground. I might almost say there are no drains in any of these closes, for where I have noticed sewers, they are in such a filthy and obstructed state, that they create more nuisance than if they never existed. In those closes where there is no dunghill, the excrementitious and other offensive matter is thrown into the gutter before the door, or carried out and put in the street. There are no back courts to the houses, but in nearly every close there is a dunghill, seldom or never covered in; few of these are cleaned out above once or twice a-year; most of them are only emptied when they can hold no more: to some of these privies are attached, and one privy serves a whole neighbourhood. The people seem so familiarized with this unseemly state of things, and so lost to all sense of propriety, that it is a matter of no small difficulty, in some of the back streets, to make your way through them without being polluted with filth.

Behind my consulting rooms, where I am now sitting, there is a large dunghill with a privy attached; to my knowledge that dunghill has not been emptied for six months; it serves a whole neighbourhood, and the effluvium is so offensive that I cannot open the window. The land is three stories high, and the people, to save themselves trouble, throw all their filth out of the stair-window, consequently a great part of it goes on the close, and the close is not cleaned out till the dunghill is full: the filth in the close reaches nearly to the sill of the back window of a shop in front, and the malarious moisture oozes through the wall on the floor.

This is one picture out of many; it is far from being overdrawn. Greenock is notoriously the dirtiest town in the west of Scotland, indeed it frequently goes by the euphonious name of "Old Dirty." I must admit that within this year there has been a little improvement in most of the principal streets, as the authorities have appointed a more efficient body of scavengers; but they never enter the closes where their services are most required. A dung-cart now goes round also every morning; but to thwart the authorities, or out of laziness, the cart is either allowed to pass before the ashes are thrown out, or they keep to the old plan of putting them where their forefathers did. When I come to speak of the cause and extension of fever, I shall mention one or two localities where extensive nuisances exist, and which, in my opinion, though perhaps not the sole origin of fever, yet mainly contributing to its extension by their baneful influence. The "lands" of houses which the poor inhabit are generally two or three stories high, divided into flats, there being four or five families on each flat, according as they possess one or two rooms each. The rent of these rooms varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 7*l.*; the average size of each room I should think would be from eight to nine feet square, and about the same measure in height. The demand for this class of houses is very great, which induces the landlords to take such high rents.

I have a district, as a deacon, in one of the parishes, and the hovels (one cannot call them houses) inhabited by some of the paupers in this district, are such abodes of wretchedness that few could imagine that such places were to be found in a Christian community.

There is one poor man who was under my care in the hospital with asthma for six months, he was dismissed as incurable, and is now living with his wife and seven children in a dark room on the ground-floor, more fit for a coal-cellar than a human being; it is lighted by a fixed window about two feet square; the breadth of the room is only four feet, and the length eight. There is only one bed for the whole family, and yet the rent of this hole is 5*l.*

Still these houses are in such request, that at last term one of the paupers living in a similar place was out-bid as to the rent by another person. He could get no other house, and for a week he slept with his wife and three children in his pigsty: he had ultimately to seek a house in a neighbouring village. There are few of these houses drained, and none of them well drained; it is an impossibility to drain them, as there are no public drains in any of the streets, excepting one or two in the principal street of the town, and these do not occupy half its length.

There are few towns in the kingdom so well supplied with water as Greenock is, both for culinary and other purposes.

There is a joint-stock company, called the Shaw's Water Company, who have an unlimited command of water; it is distributed through the town in pipes. There are few good houses which are not so supplied. The town also possesses a reservoir of its own,

and the water from it is distributed through the streets at intervals of 100 yards, to which the poor have unlimited access.

After what has been stated concerning the situation and condition of the houses of the poor, proper ventilation is unattainable; I allude to the worst description of houses, where, if they had the desire, the means are absent; but the majority of the poorest classes (who are chiefly Irish) have no idea of airing their dwellings; indeed the effluvia without is often worse than that within. They very frequently change their abodes, and when once settled in a house with the prospect before them of soon removing, they lose all desire to make or keep their apartments clean and in good order. From the high rent of dwelling-houses, a man with a large family, even though in the receipt of good wages, is unable to have more than one small room. I have even found two and three families inhabiting a room not large enough for the same number of individuals.

There are necessarily a good many lodging-houses for vagrants, but none that I am aware of possessing any extent of accommodation. The charge for one night's lodging is 2*d.* and 3*d.*, 2*d.* being the charge when more than two occupy the same bed. I have hitherto only alluded to the poorest class of the inhabitants; of course there is a numerous body of respectable operatives, who live in comfort, and who feed and clothe their families well, and also give their children an education suited to their circumstances, and who even manage to save a little each week from their earnings, which is proved by the great success of the savings' bank, which has now been in operation for 26 years. Amongst this class of the community, notwithstanding the unmerited opposition it has met with, tectotalism has effected a great moral reformation; it has brought comfort and independence to many a fire-side which formerly knew only misery and degradation.

Excluding those who are addicted to the immoderate use of ardent spirits, the conduct of the working-classes is praiseworthy; the greater bulk of them attend church regularly, and likewise contribute more in proportion than the higher classes do to the various Christian charities.

Trade has for many years past been in a flourishing condition in this town, consequently the workmen are well paid: while other places are suffering from fluctuations in trade, the depression is little felt here.

A great body of the operatives have established friendly societies, which are well supported, and which in time of illness afford their sick brethren a weekly aliment sufficient for their maintenance. Several of these societies pay a medical man for attending their members while sick. It would be well for the working population if these benefit societies were more general, as too many of them are very improvident, laying past nothing, but, on the contrary, spending their whole gains, and when laid on a sick bed, depending on credit for their support; they thus run largely into debt, and

when able to resume their employment, feel little disposed to pay what they owe; they thus lose all self-respect, and are degraded in their own and in the eyes of their fellow men.

Like other towns in Scotland, Greenock has a large pauper population; the great bulk of these (I would say three-fourths) are natives of other places, having come here in search of employment, and from destitution, disease, and other causes, have been thrown a burden on the community. A great number come from Ireland and the Highlands with the express purpose of making a settlement, that is, supporting themselves in the best way they can for three years, when they can have a legal claim for relief from the parish. There are many who, though not claimants for public relief, suffer much, especially during winter, from want of food and fuel. We still here and there find some remains of that spirit of independence which would rather suffer than complain, still it must be a matter of regret to think that many, feeling unable to maintain that spirit of independence, are induced from their destitution to commit crime, perhaps their first offence, or fall a prey to disease in its most malignant form. Last winter, when visiting in my district, I was informed by a neighbour that there were two sisters in a garret in great want; I found one of them sitting over the scanty remains of a wood fire; I learnt that at one time they had been in good circumstances, but had been gradually reduced; they generally supported themselves by sewing, but owing to want of work, they had tasted almost nothing for three days; a neighbour had given them a few potatoes, and the other sister was out looking for a few chips with which to boil them; by the little relief they got, they were enabled to subsist for a week or two till they found employment. Such cases of endurance are seldom met with, but equal destitution is to be found in every close in the poor localities. Typhus fever last winter carried off many heads of families and left their children destitute. As I was passing one of the poorest districts not long ago, a little girl ran after me and requested me to come and see her mother as she could not keep her in bed; I found the mother lying in a miserable straw bed with a piece of carpet for a covering, delirious from fever; the husband, who was a drunkard, had died in the hospital of the same disease. There was no fire in the grate; some of the children were out begging, and the two youngest were crawling on the wet floor; it was actually a puddle in the centre, as the sewer before the house was obstructed, and the moisture made its way to the middle of the floor by passing under the door. Every saleable piece of furniture had been pawned during the father's illness for the support of the family. None of the neighbours would enter the house; the children were actually starving, and the mother was dying without any attendance whatever.

Many similar cases could be cited, but it were an endless task: there are few who have not like cases of misery to record.

There has been an assessment levied in Greenock for the support of the poor since the year 1816; the number of paupers on the different parish rolls for the past year are as follows:—

TABLE containing the Number of PAUPERS and ORPHANS in the different Parishes.

Parishes.	Poor.	Orphans.	Total.
West parish	186	74	260
South ditto	84	24	108
North ditto	60	19	79
East and Cartdyke	117	11	128
St. Andrew's	76	23	99
Middle parish	349	75	424
Total	872	226	1,098

1,098 paupers appear to be a large proportion out of the population, yet no case is admitted by any of the sessions without a rigid scrutiny; numerous applications, having no legal claim, but which ought to be admitted, are rejected on the plea of want of funds.

The total amount expended on the poor last year was 3,808*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.* I learn that this year, from the increase of the poor's roll, 4,600*l.* will be required.

I have been furnished by a friend of mine with the following abstract table, taken from the poor's roll of the middle parish for the previous year, which shows the proportion of orphans to paupers, and the average amount paid to each:—

TABLE of the Number of ORPHANS and PAUPERS on the Middle Parish Roll, with the average Amount paid to each.

		Amount paid per Year.		Per Month.		Per Year each.		Per Month each.					
		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.			
Paupers, exclusive of } Orphans	336	8	47	10	0	70	12	6	2	10	5½	4	2½
Orphans	80	252	6	0		21	0	6	3	3	1	5	3
Total	416	1,099	16	0		93	13	0	2	12	10½	4	5

The average of 4*s.* 5*d.* per month is high, as the board of seven insane paupers is included.

Many indigent persons only receive 1½*d.* and 1¾*d.* per diem; they are those who can do a little for themselves by any employment they can procure, or by soliciting charity; a widow with three or four children generally gets 5*s.* per month; 6*s.* per month is considered liberal for a widow with five children.

I was told of six helpless widows, whose respective ages are 88, 87, 80, 70, 68, and 56 years: one receives 5*s.* per month, one 4*s.*, and the other four 3*s.*; it takes all their allowance, or nearly so, to pay their rent; and in bad weather, when unable to go out and beg, they are very destitute.

There is a great deal done for the poor by means of private charity. The Ladies' Female Benevolent Society distribute every winter about 200 carts of coals, besides giving blankets and other articles of clothing to deserving and destitute females. In severe winters, the most of the Kirk Sessions also distribute coals amongst their own poor. For two winters past there has been a general soup kitchen established, which was the means of affording daily food to about 350 otherwise starving families. The different dissenting congregations, likewise, give their own destitute poor a little assistance, though possessing no general fund for the purpose.

Two years ago, when fever was very prevalent, three district surgeons were appointed by the United Sessions for attending the paupers in their own houses; they were much required, and have been of great benefit to the class among which they labour; but their attendance is much too restricted, as there is a more numerous class, a step removed above actual paupers, who are as unable to procure medical attendance as the paupers themselves. About eighteen months ago several influential individuals opened a subscription list for erecting a house of refuge for the destitute poor; a handsome sum was quickly raised, and the building is now nearly completed; the want of such a place has long been felt here, many a houseless wanderer being obliged to spend the night in the open air from the want of money to pay for a bed.

I shall now shortly allude to the state and extent of disease in Greenock.

Contagious fever is never absent from Greenock, and never will be, as long as the many sources of a vitiated and malarious atmosphere are allowed to remain undisturbed. Most medical men are agreed that malaria, or the noxious exhalation generated by the decomposition of vegetable and animal matter, is capable of producing fevers of various kinds. I have no means of ascertaining the total amount of cases which occur annually here, but it must be very great, if we can judge by the number of admissions into the hospital. It is not confined, however, to the lower classes, as many of our most respectable and wealthy merchants have been cut off by fever of a typhoid kind.

The majority of the cases which I admitted into the hospital last winter was of a continued form merging into typhus; fever appears to be most prevalent during the months of December and January: the number of admissions in each month during the year ending 1st May, 1841, was as follows:—

May	40	January	72
June	43	February	45
July	44	March	50
August	36	April	56
September	36		
October	60	Total	588
November	53		
December	63		

The average number for the last five years is about 430.

Many more cases were refused for want of accommodation; this will shortly be remedied, as we have got plans drawn out for a new fever hospital.

The first question I generally put when a new case of fever is admitted is as to their abode. I was struck with the number of admissions from Market-street; most of the cases coming from that locality became quickly typhoid and made slow recoveries. This is a narrow back street; it is almost overhung by a steep hill rising immediately behind it; it contains the lowest description of houses built closely together, the access to the buildings being through filthy closes; the front entrance is generally the only outlet; numerous foci for the production of miasma lie concealed in this street, I think I could point out one in each close.

In one part of the street there is a dunghill, yet it is too large to be called a dunghill. I do not mistake its size when I say it contains 100 cubic yards of impure filth, collected from all parts of the town. It is never removed; it is the stock in trade of a person who deals in dung; he retails it by cartfuls: to please his customers he always keeps a nucleus, as the older the filth is the higher is the price. The proprietor has an extensive privy attached to the concern. This collection is fronting the public street; it is enclosed in front by a wall; the height of the wall is about 12 feet and the dung overtops it; the malarious moisture oozes through the wall and runs over the pavement. The effluvium all round about this place in summer is horrible; there is a land of houses adjoining, four stories in height; and in the summer each house swarms with myriads of flies; every article of food and drink must be covered, otherwise, if left exposed for a minute, the flies immediately attack it, and it is rendered unfit for use from the strong taste of the dunghill left by the flies. But there is a still more extensive dunghill in the street, at least, if not so high, it covers double the extent of surface; what the depth of it is I cannot say. It is attached to the slaughter-house, and belongs, I believe, to the town authorities. It is not only the receptacle for the dung and offal from the slaughter-house, but the sweepings of the streets are also conveyed and deposited there; it has likewise a public privy attached. In the slaughter-house itself (which is adjoining the street) the blood and offal is allowed to lie a long time, and the smell in summer is highly offensive. In two of the narrow closes opposite the market, there is in each a small space not built upon, and that space being the only spare ground in the close, is occupied by a dunghill; these two closes are notorious as nurseries for fever. I believe it to be a rare occurrence when fever is not to be found in them during any time of the year. Market-street is certainly one of the most filthy and unhealthy streets in Greenock; it is needless to say that many places here and there throughout the town are as bad; indeed I may state, that, from the best to the worst locality in the town, there is not a street but requires to be subjected to some rigid system for re-

moving away regularly the rubbish and impurities which are constantly exhaling forth so much miasma, and which is indirectly the cause of the yearly increase of so much destitution. I believe the authorities go as far as they are empowered to do in the removal of street nuisances; in my opinion nothing but a legislative enactment, compelling an extensive system of public and tributary drains, and prohibiting the existence of large collections of manure, &c. within the town, will effect the removal of those nuisances which are found to be so prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants. I have already alluded to the great want of drains in this town; the only public drains we have are of very small extent, and, at the corner of each street which the drain passes, there is an open grating about two feet square, out of which very bad effluvia arise during a succession of dry weather. There is a stream of running water at each end of the town; their course is rapid, and on that account not much impurity lies for any length of time. When the tide recedes, a great part of the harbours and about a quarter of a mile of the shore along by Cartsyke is left dry; a most offensive smell arises from them. There is no stagnant water or marsh of any size near the town.

Besides contagious fever, we are also frequently visited by epidemics of the various eruptive fevers, such as small-pox, chicken-pox, scarlet fever, measles, &c. Two years ago small-pox prevailed to some extent and proved very fatal; a majority of the cases assumed the confluent form. At that time, of nine cases which I admitted into the hospital, who were sailors just arrived from a voyage, the eruption was confluent, and seven of them died; the other two, when convalescent, were seized with fever and one of them died. I may mention that, from the want of hospital accommodation, we seldom admit eruptive fevers. After the admission of these men, several patients took the small-pox, and many who had other diseases were removed by their friends from the dread of infection; since that time patients hesitate more, and show more reluctance to enter the hospital than formerly, but in general there are more applicants than can be well accommodated. I cannot say that we are more frequently visited by eruptive epidemics than other communities of the same size.

Influenza prevails to some extent every year, but it is seldom fatal; it is more prevalent at present than it has been since 1835; it chiefly attacks children and aged persons, and a good many of those have died from its effects. In my opinion the inhabitants of Greenock are more subject to scrofula and rheumatic affections than the inhabitants of towns further inland, probably arising from the moist and relaxing atmosphere which prevails. Occasional cases of hooping-cough occur, but in general they run a mild course.

I shall here give a table containing the number of cases admitted into the hospital during a twelvemonth, with a list of the diseases and result of the treatment:—

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ABSTRACT of DISEASES treated during the Year ending May 1, 1841.

Diseases.	Numbers.	Cured.	Died.	Relieved.	Dismissed by desire.	Dismissed for irregularity.	Remain.
Remaining last year . . .	40	36	4	..	..	..	..
1. Abscess	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
2. Amaurosis	2	2	..	..	..	..	..
3. Asthma	12	6	..	..	6	..	..
4. Ankle, dislocation of . . .	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
5. Bronchitis	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
6. Burns	5	4	1	..	..	..	..
7. Concussion of brain	6	6	..	..	..	..	..
8. Consumption	11	..	4	..	6	..	1
9. Contusions	16	13	1	..	..	..	1
10. Delirium Tremens	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
11. Dropsy of Abdomen	3	1	2	..	..	..	..
12. Ditto general	4	2	1	..	..	..	1
13. Dysentery	5	4	1	..	..	..	..
14. Erysipelas	12	10	..	..	..	..	2
15. Fistula of Urethra	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
16. Fever	588	508	50	..	..	..	30
17. Fracture of Arm	6	6	..	..	..	..	..
18. ,, Knee-pan	2	1	..	..	..	..	1
19. ,, Ankle-joint	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
20. ,, Leg, simple	9	7	1	..	..	..	1
21. ,, Leg, compound	2	2	..	..	..	..	..
22. ,, Lower Jaw	2	2	..	..	..	..	..
23. ,, Ribs	2	2	..	..	..	..	..
24. ,, Thigh	6	4	1	..	..	..	1
25. Frost-bitten	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
26. Gonorrhœa	2	2	..	..	..	..	..
27. Gangrene of Feet	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
28. Heart, disease of	2	1	1	..	..	..	..
29. Hydrophobia	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
30. Hysteria	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
31. Iritis Syphilitic	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
32. Itch	3	3	..	..	..	..	..
33. Jaundice	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
34. Knee-joint, disease of	4	4	..	..	..	..	..
35. Liver, disease of	2	2	..	..	..	..	..
36. Lungs, disease of	10	8	2	..	..	..	..
37. Menorrhagia	2	2	..	..	..	..	..
38. Palsy	2	1	..	..	..	..	1
39. Phymosis	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
40. Piles	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
41. Prostate, disease of	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
42. Psoas Abscess	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
43. Rheumatism	13	13	..	..	..	..	..
44. Scurvy	7	6	..	..	..	..	1
45. Stricture of Urethra	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
46. Strabismus	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
47. Syphilis	19	14	..	..	..	..	5
48. Testicles, inflammation of . .	3	2	..	..	..	..	1
49. Ulcers	37	35	..	..	..	..	2
50. Wounds	17	16	1	..	..	..	..
Total	830	695	69	1	12	..	53

Four hundred and eighty-four out-patients received medicine and advice.

The mortality appears to have been 1 in 11 $\frac{2}{3}$, which cannot be thought high, considering that we only admit the most acute cases and diseases which cannot be treated elsewhere, both from the want of accommodation and means, for I am sorry to say that the institution is not so well supported as it ought to be.

Of the 588 cases of fever, I should say that only two-fifths of them bore a typhoid character. A large number of accidents are annually admitted, they occur chiefly in the ship-building yards, from the carelessness both of the masters and men in not properly fixing the gangways and planks used around the vessels in building; this negligence ought to be inquired into, and means taken to prevent the loss of life and the great number of accidents which happen in these places. There are eight ship-building yards in Greenock, each yard employing from 60 to 120 apprentices; each proprietor pays a medical man for attending his apprentices during illness.

I feel sorry that, from the want of proper data, I can furnish no account of the comparative rate of mortality of this place further than that which occurred within the hospital.

With respect to the cause and extension of fever, I need add nothing more than I have already done, as I could furnish little that is not contained in the many able reports already published.

In my opinion much might be done to improve the sanitary condition of this town by proper measures; for however men may differ in regard to the primary cause of fever, there exists no discrepancy of opinion with regard to the fact, that a poor population, living in small and ill-ventilated houses, exposed to the various impurities contained in a vitiated atmosphere, have a tendency to have their vital functions disordered, and are thereby rendered liable to be attacked by nervous and other debilitating diseases.

That there exist in this place innumerable nuisances no one will deny; what is the extent of the evils they produce we cannot prove, but it is beyond a doubt that they do produce evils, and those of no small magnitude, and it is high time that some remedy was devised to counteract their baneful influence.

Among the many measures which would require to be adopted, I beg leave to suggest the following:—

1st. That a well organized Board of Health be established, with power to recommend to the local authorities any measures which they thought likely to exert a beneficial influence on the health of the inhabitants.

2nd. It would be desirable that proper persons be appointed to make periodical visits to the worst localities, and inspect the dwellings of the poor as to their state of cleanliness, &c., especially during the prevalence of fever; this was done during the time of cholera, and it was never objected to.

3rd. An extensive system of drainage and sewerage, not con-

fined to populous and detached portions of the town, but a large drain in every street, whether wholly occupied by houses or not, having tributary drains from every close and every house. Few towns could be drained at less expense than Greenock, the great proportion of the streets having a slope towards the river: there is a great deal of waste water about the town, which, instead of being allowed to run over the surface, might at little expense be turned into the main drains at the higher parts of the town, and which would effectually carry away all the liquid refuse which is apt to obstruct narrow drains.

4th. The removal of all dunghills and other collections of filth kept at present in the closes; in other well-regulated towns they are not to be found, and there is no necessity for having them here if the inhabitants were compelled to throw out their ashes, &c. at a proper time, when they could be carried away by the dung-carts. Public privies would require to be erected in suitable places and cleaned out at proper intervals.

5th. An effective body of scavengers, who should have power to enter every close and sweep away all the rubbish which cannot enter the drains; these closes ought to be so paved that their impurities could be easily distinguished and removed.

6th. That the cattle-market, slaughter-house, and certain manufactories and trades be removed beyond the precincts of the town. There are many minor points with regard to the size and distribution of drains, proper regulations for lodging-houses, and other inconveniences, having only a local bearing, which I need not now mention.

I have now gone over the chief points contained in your special inquiries, the other information which I have added I can vouch for as being correct, though it is not so extensive as I could have wished. If there be any of the subjects on which you would wish more minute information, or if I have omitted anything which would tend to forward your views, I shall feel most happy to supply it to the best of my ability.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient servant,
W. L. LAURIE, M.D.

To
The Poor Law Commissioners.

Greenock, 5th December, 1841.

No. 14.

REPORT ON THE SANITARY CONDITION OF THE LABOURING CLASSES OF THE TOWN OF STIRLING.

By W. H. FORREST, Esq., Surgeon.

President of the Stirling Medical Association, Ordinary Medical Attendant on the Stirling Dispensary, &c.

1.—Have diseases of the various forms of continued fever, and other contagious febrile diseases, been prevalent in any, and what parts of your parish or district; and do such diseases recur at regular intervals, or are they rare and occasional only?

This question is best answered by a Table from the records of the Stirling Dispensary, showing the comparative prevalence of fever in the different streets of the town and in some of the adjacent villages during the last ten years:—

TOWN.			
	Cases.	Population.	Equal to
Saint Mary's Wynd	75	651	1 in 8·68
Saint John-street	44	493	1 in 11·20
Broad-street and Bow	53	657	1 in 12·20
Spital-street	22	307	1 in 13·95
Castle Hill	52	866	1 in 16·46
Baker-street	57	943	1 in 16·49
King-street	45	815	1 in 18·11
Cowane-street	37	851	1 in 23·
Upper and Lower Bridge-street	24	575	1 in 23·95
Craigs	10	492	1 in 49·20
Port-street and Mill-lane	8	444	1 in 55·5
Friar's Wynd	5	390	1 in 78·
VILLAGES.			
Saint Ninians	35	1369	1 in 39·11
New House	7	344	1 in 49·15

Twenty cases occurred in other parts of the country, the population of which is unknown. Added together, they form a total of 494 cases. Many other cases, however, occurred during the same period, which were treated privately by myself and other practitioners. During the past year, for example, eight persons, enjoying all the necessaries and many of the comforts of life, died in the upper part of the town alone of this disease.