

not appear in imminent danger of falling down; it is let to a tenant who has not complained; the rights of property have to be respected; it may be old, very old, but old age is not an offence; if the place were very bad people would not pay rent for it; and so on." This article may be a little more forcible than the occasion demands, but there is much truth in it. Probably local bodies do as well as they know how according to their lights. But moonlight is not daylight, and meaning well is not always doing well. As time goes on, and the public becomes educated to the fact that dirt spells disease, or at any rate diminished health; that the one involves expense, coupled with an inability to earn, perhaps death, and the other means reduced comfort and diminished earning-power, we shall then be able to get better attention paid to our representations, and shall find our efforts more appreciated.

I have, &c.,

FRED. DE LISLE,

District Health Officer.

J. Malcolm Mason, M.D., D.P.H., Chief Health Officer, Wellington.

WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

SIR, — Department of Public Health, District Office, Wellington, 14th June, 1907.

I have the honour to present my annual report on the work of the Wellington, Nelson, and Marlborough Districts during the year ending the 31st March, 1907.

Save for a few weeks towards the end of the year, after Dr. Valintine's return from England, and prior to his appointment as Inspector-General of Hospitals, I have had to undertake the whole of the district work, in addition to my laboratory duties, with the result that there have been too many calls on my time and attention to admit of much satisfaction or thoroughness in the work. The transfer of Dr. Frengley to the Wellington District should enable me to devote more attention to the scientific work, and the change, I trust, may be justified by results in this branch of the Department, as it certainly will in the sanitary supervision of the district.

It is a pleasure to be able to report that all the staff, clerical and inspectorial, have worked faithfully and well, despite the lack of personal supervision, and by their efficiency in each branch of our varied duties have enabled the year's work to proceed without serious hitch or oversight. While it is possible to make such a general satisfactory report, I must make special mention of the work done by Mr. Hurley in the laboratory, Mr. Schauer as Chief Inspector, and Mr. Steward as Chief Clerk.

To Mr. Hurley's work it is impossible to do justice in a few words, and were it necessary one could, I am confident, obtain enthusiastic indorsement from the many medical men with whom he comes in contact, and who alone can appreciate the skill, time, and patience he devotes to the pathological investigations. It is to be regretted that this appreciation does not extend far enough to receive adequate recognition at the hands of the Department.

Much of the district work has devolved on Mr. Schauer, who has thus had many occasions for displaying his technical skill in sanitary problems and his tact in dealing with men and affairs, and has in every instance acquitted himself well. I would specially refer to the work he has done, and is doing, in connection with the sanitation of hotels. The system of co-operation with the licensing authorities in this direction must be largely set down to his credit—a system which will, I believe, be productive of very great improvements.

The clerical work of the Wellington District Office is very great, and increases yearly, so that our very limited staff has to be both efficient and energetic to overtake it. Under Mr. Steward's management it has been effectually overtaken, and those who understand what this means will recognise that higher praise cannot be given.

VITAL STATISTICS.

As I have formerly pointed out, our data are far from satisfactory; but, such as they are, the following relate to the Wellington District:—

BIRTH-RATE.

The birth-rate for Wellington during the year 1906 was 27·26 per 1,000 of population. This shows a decrease on that for 1905, which was 29·72, but it remains higher than for the year 1904, when it was 26·16.

The average in the four centres for this year was 27·18.

DEATH-RATE.

The death-rate for Wellington City, and for city including suburbs, was, during 1906, the lowest recorded in the last five years, as the following table shows:—

Death-rate for the whole of the Colony per 1,000 Population.

	Wellington City.	Wellington and Suburbs.	Average for Four Centres including Suburbs.
1902	12·58	12·24	12·74
1903	11·30	10·93	11·73
1904	10·75	10·43	10·73
1905	10·55	10·21	10·42
1906	9·45	9·19	10·35
Mean for five years	10·92	10·6	11·19