

THE LOCAL INCIDENCE OF TUBERCULOSIS.

THE following tables were compiled by Dr. Harold Scurfield, Medical Officer of Health, Sheffield, from information supplied to him by the Medical Officers of Health of the respective towns. When the tables were complete they were sent out to the Medical Officers of Health by Dr. Scurfield together with a circular entitled "Crude Comments." The Medical Officers of Health were asked to comment on the tables with a view to the publication of the tables and the comments in PUBLIC HEALTH. We give below the tables, Dr. Scurfield's circular of "Crude Comments," and the comments of the Medical Officers of Health of the districts included in the tables.

TABLE I.

Tuberculosis of the lung (including phthisis) and other forms of tuberculosis in England and Wales and the large towns with over 100,000 population*, also in four largest Scotch towns.

Average mortality-rates per annum per million persons living during ten years 1898 to 1907 (except where otherwise stated).

Towns.	Estimated Population (1907).	Tuberculosis of Lung.		Other forms of Tuberculosis.			Remarks.
		Males (All ages).	Females (All ages).	Males (All ages).	Females (All ages).	Children (under five).	
England and Wales	34,945,600	1445	1033	582	487	2839	
Birkenhead	118,441	1611	1240	336	234	1820	
Birmingham	553,155	1818	886	494	394	2354	4 years, 1904-7
Blackburn..	134,438	1330	883	737	572	3956	
Bolton	182,917	1748	1094	471	344	2549	
Bradford ..	290,323	1616	920	561	420	2550	8 years, 1900-7
Brighton ..	129,023	1889	1021	657	437	3062	
Bristol	367,979	1233	981	—	—	1681	3 years, 1905-7
Burnley ..	103,947	1568	1145	446	336	2627	
Cardiff	187,620	1341	1162	660	585	2976	
Croydon ..	154,342	1293	781	528	432	2605	8 years, 1900-7
East Ham..	136,421	827	718	419	437	2070	7 years, 1901-7
Gateshead..	125,783	1623	1199	588	488	2567	6 years, 1902-7
Hull	266,762	1287	997	560	446	1990	
Leeds	470,268	1675	1028	801	671	4337	
Leicester ..	236,124	1523	990	571	402	3015	
Leyton	120,000	1161	745	478	367	2191	5 years, 1902-4,6,7
Liverpool ..	746,144	2055	1361	662	524	3239	
London	4,758,218	2075	1168	668	515	3681	

* Eight of these towns were unable to supply the statistics asked for.

TABLE I.—continued.

Towns.	Estimated Population (1907).	Tuberculosis of Lung.		Other forms of Tuberculosis.			Remarks.
		Males (All ages).	Females (All ages).	Males (All ages).	Females (All ages).	Children (under five).	
Manchester	643,158	2433	1425	800	555	4265	
Norwich ..	119,191	1474	994	863	640	4661	
Nottingham	257,492	1581	1025	581	398	2907	
Oldham ..	141,730	1987	1202	605	465	2813	
Plymouth..	120,063	1443	1201	681	522	2980	
Portsmouth	208,291	1696	1289	373	249	2235	5 years, 1903-7
Salford	236,670	2189	1333	860	648	4526	
Sheffield ..	455,553	1523	990	571	402	3015	
S'uth'mpt'n	119,745	1644	1004	522	455	3028	
South Shields	113,460	1756	1365	792	697	3246	
Stockport..	100,986	1665	1170	699	652	3961	8 years, 1900-7
Sunderland	155,859	1664	1337	834	711	3887	
West Ham.	302,484	1523	1007	664	571	3160	
Willesden ..	144,376	1087	856	422	326	2063	
Wolverhampton, E.	40,597	1371	790	700	559	—	5 years, 1902-6
Wolverhampton, W	60,903 (1906)	1008	544	430	354	—	5 years, 1902-6
Aberdeen ..	174,579	1452	1405	782	617	3328	
Dundee....	165,748	1785	1834	1099	764	4647	
Edinburgh..	345,967	1753	1239	824	637	4360	
Glasgow ...	847,584	1856	1665	944	793	4377	

"CRUDE COMMENTS" BY DR. SCURFIELD ON THE ANALYSIS OF THE TUBERCULOSIS DEATH-RATES IN THE LARGEST TOWNS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Roughly speaking, in the English population—

1. The male death-rate from tuberculosis of the lungs is nearly half as much again as the female.

2. The female death-rate from tuberculosis of the lungs is about equal to the male and female death-rate from other forms of tuberculosis combined.

3. The male death-rate from other forms of tuberculosis is higher than the female (as six to five.)

4. The death-rate among children under five from "other forms" (tuberculosis of the lungs being almost a negligible quantity at these ages) is nearly twice the female death-rate from all forms of tuberculosis.

In the London population the death-rates are

all higher than in the English, but the above-mentioned proportions remain much the same except that the male death-rate is more than three-quarters as much again as the female.

Any great departure from the English standards or any great disturbance of the relations of the various rates to one another appear to be the points requiring explanation by the local medical officers of health, according as they may be considered to be due to occupations, housing conditions, age distribution of the population, climate, etc.

TABLE 2.

Tuberculosis of the lung (including phthisis) and other forms of tuberculosis in the Administrative County of London and certain of the Metropolitan Boroughs.*

Average mortality-rates per annum per million persons living during ten years 1898 to 1907 (except where otherwise stated).

Boroughs.	Estimated Population	Tuberculosis of Lung.		Other forms of Tuberculosis.			Remarks.
		Males (All ages).	Females (All ages).	Males (All ages).	Females (All ages).	Children (under five)	
Administr'tive Cnty. of L'nd'n	4,758,218	2075	1168	668	515	3681	
Battersea ..	181,736	1638	1108	605	440	2657	
Bermondsey ..	127,856	2417	1364	789	728	4561	4 yrs., 1904-7
Chelsea ..	74,857	2231	1062	467	412	3082	7 yrs., 1901-7
Hampstead ..	91,137	1081	572	401	248	2278	
Islington ..	347,017	1901	1134	494	378	3010	
Kensington ..	180,500	1703	883	689	413	4081	
Lewisham ..	152,532	1118	685	459	331	2181	6 yrs., 1902-7
Paddington ..	149,542	1485	791	530	377	3084	
Shoreditch ..	114,700	2588	1512	1005	799	5191	
Southwark ..	209,781	2891	1723	756	683	4092	7 yrs., 1901-7
St'ke N'w'gt'n	51,247	1666	938	612	318	3117	7 yrs., 1901-7
Wandsworth..	325,850	1197	820	477	324	2503	
Woolwich ..	129,336	1632	1134	458	406	2058	5 yrs., 1903-7

* Thirteen only of the Metropolitan Boroughs were able to supply the statistics asked for.

In the seaports, except Liverpool and Southampton, the male death-rate is usually about 25 per cent. more than the female. Birkenhead has an extraordinarily low death-rate from other forms of tuberculosis among children under five in proportion to the female rate for all forms, the figures being respectively 1,820 and 1,474.

Birmingham and Sheffield are unique in having a male death-rate which is more than double the female (no doubt owing to the grinding trades); but while in Birmingham the rate for other forms among children under five is little more than

double the female death-rate from all forms of tuberculosis, in Sheffield the rate under five is almost treble the female rate. (What is the explanation of the difference between Birmingham and Sheffield?)

East Ham and Aberdeen have rates for men and women nearly equal, but in East Ham all the rates are remarkably low, while in the case of Aberdeen the male death-rate is about equal to the English rate, the female rate being high.

Dundee is unique in giving a higher phthisis rate for women than men, and also has the highest rate among children under five, except Norwich. (Is this due to the large number of women employed in the jute trade?)

In several cases the usual proportion between the rate under five years and the female rate for all forms (*i.e.*, two to one) is remarkably upset; *e.g.* :—

Blackburn	...	...	nearly 3 to 1
Norwich	...	...	„ 3 to 1
Sheffield	...	...	„ 3 to 1
Hampstead	...	...	„ 3 to 1
Kensington	...	...	over 3 to 1

(Does this indicate home conditions which are bad for children and not for women, such as a bad milk supply?)

On the other hand, the proportion is upset in the opposite direction in the case of

Birkenhead	...	18 to 14½
Gateshead	...	25 to 17
Hull	...	20 to 14
Portsmouth	...	22 to 15

Edinburgh and Glasgow show high rates both for women and children.

(How far is the "flat" system responsible for this?)

COMMENTS OF THE MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH OF THE DISTRICTS INCLUDED IN THE TABLES.

COUNTY OF LONDON.

I am much obliged for the valuable figures you have sent me with your letter. As you have invited my comments on the London figures I should like to point out that there is a disturbing element of some magnitude in the London statistics which needs to be borne in mind in drawing conclusions from the figures, and particularly in comparing the sex death-rates. The female population of many of the better circumstanced London boroughs is greatly in excess of the normal at the phthisis ages owing to the large number of females employed as domestic servants. These females are for the most part drawn from the poorer circumstanced districts in London, or from districts outside the county, whither they return when attacked by chronic illness. The deaths of these females are necessarily recorded in the district in which they occur, and this has