

WEEKLY ABSTRACT OF SANITARY REPORTS.

VOL. IV. { Abstract }
 { No. 24. }

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL,
U. S. MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE,
Washington, D. C., June 14, 1889.

Abstract of Sanitary Reports received through the Department of State from foreign countries during the week ended June 14, 1889, and information received through other channels.

(Published in accordance with section 4, act approved April 29, 1878.)

GREAT BRITAIN—*England and Wales.*—The deaths registered in 28 great towns of England and Wales during the week ended May 25, corresponded to an annual rate of 17.4 a thousand of the aggregate population, which is estimated at 9,555,406. The lowest rate was recorded in Leicester, viz., 12.1, and the highest in Preston, viz., 30.5 a thousand. Diphtheria caused 4 deaths in Salford, 5 in Birmingham, and 2 in Manchester.

London.—One thousand two hundred and sixty-seven deaths were registered during the week, including measles, 47; scarlet fever, 16; diphtheria, 21; whooping-cough, 48; enteric fever, 5; diarrhœa and dysentery, 13. The deaths from all causes corresponded to an annual rate of 15.2 a thousand. Diseases of the respiratory organs caused 177 deaths. In greater London 1,590 deaths were registered, corresponding to an annual rate of 14.7 a thousand of the population. In the "outer ring" the deaths included measles, 15; whooping-cough, 9; scarlet fever, 4; and diphtheria, 4.

Ireland.—The average annual death rate, represented by the deaths registered during the week ended May 25, in the 16 principal town districts of Ireland, was 19.9 a thousand of the population. The lowest rate was recorded in Wexford, viz., 4.3, and the highest in Drogheda, viz., 46.5 a thousand. In Dublin 197 deaths were registered, including measles, 1; whooping-cough, 2; enteric fever, 2; and erysipelas, 1.

Scotland.—The deaths registered in 8 principal towns during the week ended May 25, corresponded to an annual rate of 22.3 a thousand of the population, which is estimated at 1,314,274. The lowest mortality was recorded in Dundee, viz., 15.9, and the highest in Glasgow, viz., 28.6 a thousand. The aggregate number of deaths registered from all

causes was 571, including measles, 34; scarlet fever, 8; diphtheria, 8; whooping-cough, 53; fever, 4; and diarrhoea, 10.

Calcutta.—Eight hundred and fifty-three deaths were registered during the month of February, 1889, in a population of 433,219, showing an annual ratio of 23.6 a thousand. The proportion of male to female deaths was as 157 to 100. The monthly total is less than all the corresponding figures of the past ten years, excepting 1886. There were 94 deaths from cholera, against 154 in the preceding month. The deaths included small-pox, 6; fevers, 210; and bowel complaints, 84.

VENEZUELA.—The United States legation at Caracas furnishes the following table of vital statistics:

Vital statistics of Venezuela for the calendar year ended December 1887.

[From Report of Minister of Yomento for 1889, pp. 39, 40, and 41.]

	BIRTHS.							DEATHS.			Marriages.
	Legitimate.			Illegitimate.			Aggregate.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.					
Federal district.....	669	603	1,272	640	682	1,322	2,594	979	1,017	1,996	307
States of Guzman Blanco	3,201	3,075	6,276	5,012	5,639	10,651	16,327	5,523	5,561	11,084	3,440
Carabobo.....	1,184	1,122	2,306	2,510	2,428	4,938	7,244	2,421	2,085	4,506	709
Bernindez.....	1,401	1,389	2,790	2,691	2,770	5,461	8,251	2,623	2,633	5,256	605
Bolivar.....	262	288	550	617	615	1,232	1,782	558	496	1,054	187
Zamora.....	1,335	1,297	2,632	2,334	2,434	4,768	7,400	3,156	3,297	6,363	761
Lara.....	1,909	1,948	3,857	4,125	3,716	7,841	11,698	2,678	2,723	5,401	516
Falcón.....	1,438	1,279	2,717	1,904	1,807	3,711	6,428	2,794	2,604	5,397	646
Los Andes.....	3,410	3,152	6,562	3,118	2,999	6,117	12,679	4,127	3,835	7,962	1,259
Territories.....	250	242	492	487	383	870	1,362	346	237	583	184
Totals.....	15,059	14,395	29,454	23,438	22,873	46,311	75,765	25,205	24,397	49,602	8,614

BRAZIL—*Pernambuco*.—Eleven deaths from yellow fever and 1 from small-pox were registered during the month of April, 1889.

Maccio.—Three hundred and one deaths were registered during the month of April, 1889, in a population of 17,000. There were 407 cases of small-pox during the month, and 257 deaths from that disease. The United States consul states that the sanitary condition of the city is at present very bad.

WEST INDIES—*Barbadoes*, May 20, 1889.—Health of island good. No prevailing diseases.

CUBA—*Cardenas*, May 30, 1889.—The rains have set in, and will continue through the summer almost daily. Good health in town and bay.

Havana.—Ten deaths from yellow fever were registered during the week ended June 7, 1889.

MEXICO—*Vera Cruz*.—The United States consul states, under date of May 30, 1889: "The health of this place is generally good. There is no yellow fever here yet."

Guaymas.—Sixteen deaths were registered during the month of May, 1889. No particular or epidemic sickness. Sanitary condition good.

MORTALITY TABLE, FOREIGN CITIES.

Cities.	Week ended.	Estimated population.	Total deaths from all causes.	Deaths from—								
				Cholera.	Yellow fever.	Small-pox.	Typhus fever.	Enteric fever.	Scarlet fever.	Diphtheria.	Mensesles.	Whooping-cough.
London.....	May 25.....	5,642,015	1,590					5	20	25	62	
Paris.....	May 25.....	2,260,945	1,015			3			10	6	43	5
Glasgow.....	May 25.....	545,678	291						1	6	5	
Warsaw.....	May 18.....	445,770	218							1	3	
Calcutta.....	Apr. 27.....	433,219	232	35		2						
Rome.....	Apr. 13.....	404,449	180			4					11	
Rome.....	Apr. 20.....	404,449	176			5					7	
Amsterdam.....	May 25.....	399,051	192						1		4	
Copenhagen.....	May 18.....	309,000	119						1		8	
Edinburgh.....	May 4.....	266,900	90								12	
Edinburgh.....	May 11.....	266,900	90				1	2				
Palermo.....	May 25.....	250,000	75			1				1	12	
Belfast.....	May 25.....	229,622	95						3			
Bristol.....	May 25.....	229,361	73								2	
Rotterdam.....	May 25.....	197,724	92									12
Toronto.....	June 8.....	175,000	101					1			1	
Trieste.....	May 18.....	154,500	71									
Stuttgart.....	May 25.....	125,510	45							3	2	
Pernambuco.....	Apr. 30.....	120,000	90		3				2	1		
Pernambuco.....	Apr. 7.....	120,000	114				3	3	2			
Pernambuco.....	May 14.....	120,000	67							1		
Barmen.....	May 25.....	109,000	40				1				1	6
Havre.....	May 25.....	112,074	42			1					1	
Leghorn.....	May 26.....	102,893	26								2	
Leith.....	May 4.....	76,400	17									
Leith.....	May 11.....	76,400	18									
Cadiz.....	May 25.....	65,028	39									
Merida.....	May 17.....	47,448	49									
Merida.....	May 24.....	47,448	62				1	1				
Vera Cruz.....	May 30.....	23,800	27									
Gibraltar.....	May 19.....	23,631	11								1	
Kingston, Can.....	June 7.....	17,300	1									
St. Thomas.....	Apr. 26.....	13,500	10									
St. Thomas.....	May 3.....	13,500	5									
St. Thomas.....	May 10.....	13,500	8									
St. Thomas.....	May 17.....	13,500	8									
Cartagena, Col.....	May 18.....	13,000	10									
San Juan del Norte.....	Apr. 29.....	1,004	1									
San Juan del Norte.....	May 6.....	1,020	0									

UNITED STATES.

Report upon the disaster at Johnstown, Pa.

WASHINGTON, June 9, 1889.

To the President:

SIR: I have the honor to report for your information that I visited Johnstown, Pa., according to your verbal instructions, leaving this city at 10 p. m. on Thursday last. I arrived at Johnstown on Friday at 2:30 p. m.

On arriving I immediately visited the "headquarters" building, where I found Dr. Groff and Dr. Sibbett, of the Pennsylvania State

board of health, and a miscellaneous mob of people in the building, most of whom were engaged in some sort of work connected with relief measures. Finding that there was nothing for me to do at that office I started out on a tour of inspection of the place. After some difficulty I pushed my way through the crowd to the desk of a Mr. Scott, who has assumed the powers of a dictator, and procured a pass to enable me to go through the guard lines.

The newspaper statements of the devastation are correct in the main. The disaster occurred on the 31st of May, at about 3 p. m. The business portion of the city of Johnstown occupied the area between the large stream known as Stony Creek and the small stream known as Conemaugh River, and is a triangular area of ground, having for its two sides the rivers aforesaid and for its base a high hill, at the base of which there is a fringe of wooden houses yet untouched by the flood. This main triangle is joined by a triangle on one side, the apex extending up the Conemaugh valley, and on the other by one extending up Stony Creek. The Pennsylvania Railroad entered by the Conemaugh, and the Baltimore and Ohio by the Stony Creek valley. These sub-triangular spaces are included in the general devastation. Scarcely a vestige of the plan of streets remained on Friday, except that Main street had been cleared in its center by gangs of men employed by Messrs. Booth & Flinn, contractors of Pittsburgh, but by Saturday morning there were several streets passable. Curb-stones were visible in a few places on this vast area and here and there a house, store, or other public building was standing in ruins to give a landmark to the workmen.

It is estimated that about 3,000 men are engaged in the work of removal of the debris. The debris consists of saw-logs, house-timbers, wreckage of furniture, floors, roofs, and wooden side-walls, with acres of splintered and crushed wood. Among the debris are found the remains of persons drowned, or killed by the falling timbers, and dead animals of all kinds. The work of clearing up the surface debris is going on well, and in my judgment ten days more of the same systematic work will suffice to clear the surface of the main portion of the late city, but the debris of the Conemaugh valley proper and that of the Stony Creek valley has yet only been touched by the gangs of laborers of the two railroads, where their respective tracks have been partially cleared.

The Pennsylvania railroad had a stone arch-bridge across the Conemaugh just below the junction of the two streams, and at this bridge there is an area of drift of about 12 acres. This drift consists of saw-logs, locomotives, iron boilers, wire from the wire works, debris from wrecked buildings, and dead bodies of human beings and animals. A strong stench was plainly perceptible at this point, and but little success had been met with in the attempt to clear it out. Many charges of dynamite have been exploded in the vain attempt, and in my judgment nothing but the most persistent effort will remove the drift, and the efforts should be intelligently directed; grapple irons and tackle, such as are used on the United States snag-boats, are necessary, and the work should be directed by some one familiar with that class of work. Adjutant-General Hastings, of the Pennsylvania National Guard, on Saturday employed Messrs. Coburn & Co., of Altoona, with 150 men, to work at this drift, with picks and hand grappling-irons. The General says that 3,000 men could be employed at this work. Mr. Coburn in-

formed me that at the same rate of progress as that made on Saturday he thought the drift could be removed in ten days. Through the generosity of Altoona this force is paid by that city, but it is apparent that the force is inadequate, and their work would be more intelligently directed if an officer of the engineer corps of the Army were instructed to advise with General Hastings as consulting engineer. This suggestion I had the honor of making to you by telegraph.

On Saturday the medical relief work was divided into ten districts by the board of health and ten local physicians placed in charge of them. There is a large beer hall converted into a hospital, which is in charge of a physician from Pittsburgh. To this hospital all the wounded are brought by the police and the different attendants.

The sick and wounded are now mainly confined to those persons working as laborers, and in the various relief organizations outside of the laborers there are few citizens left. Many are lost and many gone away from the scene of their great calamity. There are some twenty physicians, ten of whom are able to work, but no more are needed, and it would be a great relief if many of those from a distance would go away.

For a time there was great confusion in the issue of supplies of clothing and food, but on Thursday that portion of the work was turned over to the commissary-general, Colonel Leach, accompanying General Hastings' command, and system has taken the place of chaotic condition. All supplies intended for the sufferers should be sent to the care of General Hastings, and clothing supplies are believed to be now no longer necessary.

Fifty dozen pairs of rubber gloves for the use of the persons handling dead bodies would be a welcome present to the workmen clearing up the debris, especially for those at the bridge drift.

There are many private organizations having tents and temporary sheds, each working on its own plan. Some public-spirited towns, having sent relief supplies, send along a corps to attend to their issue. This is no longer necessary, and this plan reminds one of the country donation parties, where the good people of the parish, having resolved to send in a lot of good things to their minister, go along and eat them up in a single evening. It is safe to say that the relief work would be much better done by the national guard under the intelligent command of General Hastings than in any other way. The Red Cross association have a hospital above the town in the Stony Creek valley, and on Saturday started one at Kernville. At the latter place, there being no other hospital, the Red Cross hospital may be of some service. The first location served a good purpose at first, but when the regular hospital was started the patients were few that found their way up the long distance to Stony Creek valley.

Kernville is now accessible by means of the pontoon bridges placed by Captain Sears, of the engineer corps of the Army. That village is immediately opposite the area lately occupied by the business portion of Johnstown, and shared in the general wreck. Although many of the buildings are still standing, they are badly wrecked, and the question of applying the torch to them was being considered.

The government of the place is at present rather a peculiar one. No semblance of municipal government remains, and a citizen of Pittsburgh, by the name of Scott, has by consent, more or less general, assumed the functions of dictator.

The national guard were not given control of any part of the duty at first, as it seems would have been natural, at a time when all civil government was overthrown, and the able, active, and efficient General Hastings and his command are simply acting as a guard to the ruins, with the exceptions above noted. As a painful evidence of the lack of concentrated control in this form of government, it is to be noted that Mr. Scott has constituted fifteen committees, some of whom are now *functus officio*, and others have been superseded.

The committees were as follows:

1. Committee on local distribution of supplies (five men).
2. Committee on teams and messengers.
3. Committee on information and transportation (two men).
4. Committee on commissary (superseded by Colonel Leach).
5. Committee on removal of dead animals (one man).
6. Committee on morgues (two clergymen; now under State board of health).
7. Committee on removal of *debris*.
8. Committee on time-keeping and books.
9. Committee on dangerous buildings.
10. Committee on police (this committee consists of Captain Gageby, U. S. A., and is well managed).
11. Fire department (a Pittsburgh fire company is doing this service).
12. Committee on employment.
13. Sanitary committee.
14. Committee on registration.
15. Committee on valuables.

Nearly all of the above work being under the direction of persons totally unfamiliar with the work, much valuable time was lost in the training of the committeemen for the performance of duties that, even now, could be much better done under the military system.

The water supply of Johnstown is from Stony Creek, some miles above the scene of the disaster, and is pure, wholesome water. There is little danger of an epidemic among the inhabitants of Johnstown. The fringe of dwellings at the base of the mountain are somewhat overcrowded, and General Hastings has directed the pitching of hospital tents, and will invite such of the people as choose to occupy them to do so. The State board of health are on the spot, and watching with care the progress of the work. They have general charge of the morgues and keep them thoroughly disinfected, and, as already stated, they now employ ten district inspectors. The danger point, from a sanitary point of view, is the drift at the bridge, and this danger is not to the inhabitants of Johnstown, but to those people depending on the lower river for their water supply. This water, if boiled before drinking, will not be unhealthy, but the thought of drinking water contaminated by dead bodies of human beings and animals is revolting. The clearing up of this drift, while attended with great difficulty, will be accomplished.

The published statement that animals are allowed to float down the river from this drift is positively untrue. All animals and human bodies are taken out as soon as loosened, the bodies taken to the morgue, and the animals burned on the shore. In the town the same course is pursued, as all dead animals are burned with the *debris*, and there are probably a hundred fires from such piles now burning in Johnstown. The drift pack cannot now be well burned, and if it could it would only

be to the water-soaked portion, and this would not release the bodies. I saw one portion of a body of a woman, taken from this drift, at one of the morgues, in which all the upper part of the body had been burned, the pelvis and limbs, having been in the water at the time of the fire, were not burned. As it is the portion in the water that, by its decomposition, is likely to contaminate it, it is evident that burning the drift would be of little avail. Besides that, many of these bodies are believed to be held down by masses of iron, and, therefore, could not be reached by firing the drift. There is no use whatever in attempting to disinfect this drift, and the only way to cure the evil is its removal.

In conclusion, I have to say this report is confined to the portion covered by Johnstown proper. No attempts has been made to touch upon the general condition of the outlying villages, which also suffered from the calamity.

I have not spoken of the work of rebuilding; it will occupy months to get the cellars cleared so that it may be begun; nor have I given any statements of individual suffering; but the charitable people of this country ought not to cease their contribution of money for some weeks to come.

Finally, I may say that there is no danger whatever of a general epidemic."

Since writing the foregoing the military have been placed in temporary control.

DELAWARE BREAKWATER QUARANTINE STATION, *June 10, 1889.*—Acting-Assistant Surgeon Wm. P. Orr reports that "the British steamer, "Baltimore City," from Havana via Santiago de Cuba, for Philadelphia, arrived at this quarantine station yesterday with two cases of yellow fever on board. The sick were brought on shore yesterday to hospital, and are doing well. The steamer will be disinfected."

FLORIDA—*Jacksonville, June 10, 1889.*—Mortuary report of city of Jacksonville for the month of May, 1889: "Abscess of liver, 2; accidental death, 3; bronchitis, 1; consumption, 7; consumption of bowels, 1; cholera infantum, 3; convulsions, 3; dropsy, 2; diarrhœa, 4; dentition, 3; dysentery, 1; enterites, 2; erysipelas, 1; puerperal fever, 1; typhoid fever, 2; typho-malarial fever, 2; remittent fever, 1; gastritis, 2; disease of heart, 2; congestion of lungs, 1; marasmus, 5; meningitis, 1; nephritis, 3; pneumonia, 2; pleuro-pneumonia, 1; premature birth, 1; pertussis, 3; senility, 2; tumor of abdomen, 1; unknown, 1; uræmia, 1; worms, 1.—Total, 66. Whites, 28; colored, 38; males, 23; females, 43; under 1 year, 23; over 1 year and under 10 years, 6. Twelve children under 1 year died without medical attendance, the parents offering as an excuse that they had no idea that the children were sick enough to require advice of doctor. The unusual mortality for the month may be attributed to the long spell of dry weather, and the marked range of temperature between night and day."

CONNECTICUT—*New Haven*.—Month of May, 1889. Total deaths, 108, including scarlet fever, 1; enteric fever, 1; whooping-cough, 2; diphtheria and croup, 2; and diarrhœal diseases, 2.

COLORADO—*Denver*.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 100,000. Total deaths, 141, including croup, 2; dysentery, 2; diphtheria, 10; erysipelas, 1; enteric fever, 4; measles, 1; scarlatina, 1; and small-pox, 1.

ILLINOIS—*Chicago*.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 830,000. Total deaths, 1,240, including croup, 31; diarrhœa, 5; dysentery, 2; diphtheria, 70; erysipelas, 9; scarlet fever, 15; enteric fever, 16; measles, 33; small-pox, 1; whooping-cough, 6; and varicella, 1.

IOWA—*Keokuk*.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 16,000. Total deaths, 22, including diphtheria, 1; and measles, 7.

Dubuque.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 35,000. Total deaths, 28, including measles, 1.

Davenport.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 33,715. Total deaths, 30, including croup, 1; and diphtheria, 1.

KENTUCKY—*Louisville*.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 227,000. Total deaths, 253, including croup, 1; diphtheria, 3; dysentery, 2; enteric fever, 4; measles, 10; and whooping-cough, 5.

MASSACHUSETTS—*Newton*.—Month of April, 1889. Population, 21,553. Total deaths, 20, including diphtheria, 3; and enteric fever, 1.

Fall River.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 65,000. Total deaths, 93, including scarlet fever, 7; diphtheria, 2; and enteric fever, 1.

MICHIGAN.—Reports to the State board of health, Lansing, from fifty-three observers, indicate that for the month of May, 1889, diarrhœa and inflammation of kidneys increased, and influenza, remittent fever, pneumonia, erysipelas, and pleuritis decreased in prevalence.

Reports from fifty-three observers during the week ended June 1, indicate that influenza and consumption increased, and rheumatism and measles decreased in area of prevalence. Including reports by regular observers and others, diphtheria was reported present during the week, and since, at eleven places; scarlet fever at thirteen places; enteric fever at four places; measles at six places; and small-pox at two places—one case in hospital at Detroit and one at Battle Creek.

Grand Rapids.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 70,000. Total deaths, 43, including measles, 1.

MISSOURI—*St. Louis*.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 440,000. Total deaths, 600, including measles, 1; scarlatina, 9; diphtheria, 33; croup, 7; whooping-cough, 5; enteric fever, 5; diarrhœal diseases, 19; and erysipelas, 5.

NEW YORK—*Rochester*.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 130,000. Total deaths, 150, including croup, 4; diarrhœa, 1; diphtheria, 3; and whooping-cough, 3.

TEXAS—*San Antonio*.—Month of May, 1889. Population, 50,000. Total deaths, 95, including diphtheria, 1; diarrhœa, 3; dysentery, 5; enteric fever, 2; and measles, 2.

VIRGINIA—*Lynchburg*.—Month of May, 1889. Total deaths, 27, including croup, 1; and dysentery, 1.

MORTALITY TABLE, CITIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

Cities.	Week ended.	Estimated population.	Total deaths from all causes.	Deaths from—										
				Cholera.	Yellow fever.	Small-pox.	Varioloid.	Varicella.	Typhus fever.	Enteric fever.	Scarlet fever.	Diphtheria.	Measles.	Whooping-cough.
New York, N. Y.	June 8	1,568,684	688							4	26	41	10	11
Philadelphia, Pa.	June 8	1,040,245	386							14	3	2	3	1
Chicago, Ill.	June 8	830,000	329							3	2	2	2	1
Brooklyn, N. Y.	June 8	821,525	322							1	1	16	2	4
Baltimore, Md.	June 8	500,343	134							3	3	6		1
San Francisco, Cal.	May 31	330,000	97							2	4			
Cincinnati, Ohio.	June 8	325,000	117							2		12	4	
Detroit, Mich.	June 1	230,000	57											
Washington, D. C.	June 8	225,000	94							2				
Milwaukee, Wis.	June 8	210,000	65							1	1			
Minneapolis, Minn.	June 1	200,000	34							1	2			1
Minneapolis, Minn.	June 8	200,000	43							2	1			
Newark, N. J.	June 4	183,563	87							1	2	7	1	2
Kansas City, Mo.	June 1	180,000	40											
Rochester, N. Y.	June 8	130,000	22									1		
Providence, R. I.	June 8	127,000	42									2	1	2
Denver, Colo.	June 7	100,000	32			1						2		
Richmond, Va.	June 8	100,000	31							1				
Toledo, Ohio.	June 7	83,500	17											
Nashville, Tenn.	June 8	65,153	20							1				
Fall River, Mass.	June 8	65,000	18									1		
Charleston, S. C.	June 1	60,145	43									1		
Charleston, S. C.	June 8	60,145	41							2			2	
Lynn, Mass.	June 8	50,000	11											
Manchester, N. H.	June 8	42,000	12											
Portland, Me.	June 8	42,000	13											
Galveston, Tex.	May 24	40,000	10											
Council Bluffs, Iowa.	June 1	35,000	4								1			
Council Bluffs, Iowa.	June 8	35,000	5								1			
Davenport, Iowa.	June 8	33,715	9									1		
Altoona, Pa.	June 1	30,000	6											
Altoona, Pa.	June 8	30,000	5											
Binghamton, N. Y.	June 8	30,000	6											
Auburn, N. Y.	June 8	26,000	4											
Haverhill, Mass.	June 8	25,000	7											
Newport, R. I.	June 6	22,000	2											
Keokuk, Iowa.	June 8	16,000	3								2			
Pensacola, Fla.	June 1	15,000	8							2				
Pensacola, Fla.	June 8	15,000	2											

JOHN B. HAMILTON,
Supervising Surgeon-General, Marine-Hospital Service.