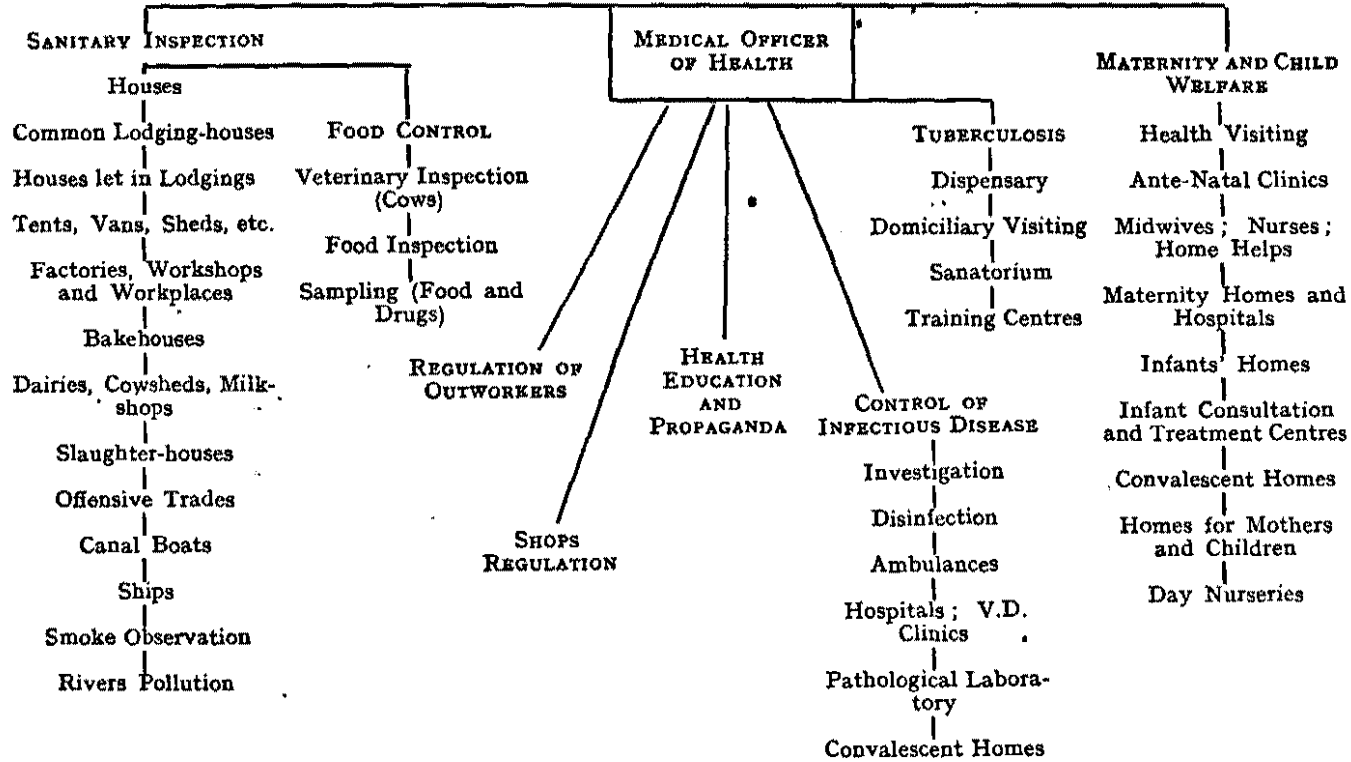


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**ENGLISH PUBLIC HEALTH
ADMINISTRATION**

DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF A PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT



ENGLISH PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

BY

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CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION	xiii
I HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT	I
II AREAS AND AUTHORITIES	12
III SOURCES OF POWERS	21
IV LOCAL LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE	33
V SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION	43
VI ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION	51
VII THE LOCAL EXECUTIVE	59
VIII THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH	68
IX THE SANITARY INSPECTOR	85
X OTHER OFFICERS.—DEPARTMENTAL CONTROL	101
XI THE POWER OF COMPLAINT	113
XII THE RIGHT OF ENTRY	121
XIII OBJECTS AND METHODS OF INSPECTION	134
XIV THE ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES	143
XV PROTECTION OF THE FOOD SUPPLY	158
XVI INFECTIOUS DISEASE	171
XVII HOSPITALS AND HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION	183
XVIII THE CONTROL OF TUBERCULOSIS	197
XIX MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE	206
XX SANITARY AUTHORITIES AND THE COURTS	218
XXI REGISTERS, RECORDS AND REPORTS	228
XXII TOWN PLANNING AND IMPROVEMENT	243
XXIII SANITARY SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	253
XXIV PUBLIC HEALTH FINANCE	262
XXV CENTRAL CONTROL	280
XXVI METHODS OF CENTRAL CONTROL	298
XXVII THE NEED FOR REFORM	311
BIBLIOGRAPHY	319
INDEX	321

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THERE are many good books dealing with sanitary administration. They are, however, as a rule, divisible into two classes; they are either purely formal legal works giving the text of various Acts of Parliament annotated by comments and references to judicial decisions, or they are practical hand-books for sanitary officers, and contain, mixed with many administrative matters, information about methods of laying and testing drains, distinctions between sound and unsound food, hints upon the cultivation and recognition of pathogenic bacteria, etc. None of them treat the public health department as an administrative unit of the system of local government. This book is an attempt to rectify this omission by providing a survey of the administrative technique of the public health department.

In so doing I hope to meet a double need: that of persons interested in the public health service as students or as electors or elected persons; and that of officials, especially the younger ones, of the public health department who are preparing for some of the examinations now held for clerks by the National Association of Local Government Officers, and for sanitary inspectors by the Sanitary Inspectors' Association, the Sanitary Inspector' Examination Board and the Royal Sanitary Institute.

It is a pleasant and necessary duty to acknowledge the debt I owe to various gentlemen for

inspection and information, without which this work could never have been undertaken or completed. To Mr. Graham Wallas I owe the original suggestion that I should make such a survey of public health administration, and throughout its preparation I have received from him that constant aid and encouragement which his friends and students know so well and appreciate so highly; my obligation to him has been greatly increased by his consenting to write an introduction to this effort of mine. For information and suggestions in various sections I am deeply indebted to Professor E. J. Urwick, J. Biernacki, Esq., M.D., Superintendent of the West Ham Isolation Hospitals, E. T. Rhymer, Esq., Barrister-at-Law, and Messrs. O. Bentley and S. F. Mann, of the Town Clerk's Department, West Ham, and C. A. J. Hunter, of the Treasurer's Department, West Ham.

To C. Sanders, Esq., M.B., the Medical Officer of Health for West Ham, and my superior officer for nearly seventeen years, my debt for his constant kindness and willingness to give or to allow me access to information is too great to be adequately expressed in words; many administrative difficulties dissolve easily when the relations of subordinate and superior officials are so uniformly friendly and harmonious as they are in the West Ham Public Health Department. To my other colleagues in the service of the West Ham Corporation I have to pay a tribute for information at all times ungrudgingly given, and specially must I mention Mr. G. W. F. Ellis, of the Public Health Clerical Staff, for his unremitting efforts in collecting information, verifying references, and making suggestions without which, I fear, my labours would have become prolonged and tedious.

For responsibility for errors which, despite great care, may possibly have crept in, and for expressions

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION. ix

of opinion which may not be palatable or appear justified to all my readers, I exonerate everyone and accept all blame. Of instances of the former I shall be glad to hear for future correction, and of contrary opinions I shall be pleased to have information, since it is only by a free and frank interchange of opinions and ideas that we can hope to arrive at the truth and keep the administrative machine working with ease, economy and efficiency.

B. G. BANNINGTON

WEST HAM,
July, 1915.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first edition of this book was received by both the Press and the public in a very friendly way ; serious adverse criticism or correction was singularly lacking. This fact has been a great encouragement in the preparation of a new edition which the growth of public health legislation has made necessary. The promise of a consolidation of the Public Health Acts has delayed for several years a task which might have been rendered nugatory if the promise had been fulfilled. That has not happened ; nor does the prospect appear either close or clear. And so one takes the risk always present when surveying a phase of social activity which is in a constant state of flux and growth.

The significant feature of the development of public health administration during the decade following the war has been the increasing recognition of the importance to the community of the health of the mother and her children. The tendency, commented upon in the former edition, to attach a growing importance to persons is exhibited in legislation and organization concerned with maternity and child welfare and venereal diseases. The former is so new and extensive as to need a new chapter for adequate treatment. That in order to make space for this the chapter dealing with voluntary agencies and efforts has had to be omitted is not belittling voluntary effort. Far from it. Maternity and child welfare work of a public character has grown out of, and largely utilizes, the or-

xii PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

ganizations and services initiated in an experimental way by voluntary effort. And more and more voluntary efforts in various directions are being linked up and co-ordinated with public activities so that clear lines of demarcation are difficult to find. It will be a bad sign, and one which might be fatal to progress, when the services of enthusiastic amateurs are lost to public health.

I have again to thank my many helpers for services the value of which it is hard to estimate. Some of those who gave their aid before have passed away and left the public service poorer; others have retired to enjoy a well-earned rest from labours for the commonweal. To those who remain, together with new-comers between whom it would be invidious to distinguish, is due a gratitude which can be felt better than expressed.

The preparation has again been a labour of love; that it is free from errors is my hope, and the same kindly appreciation as it before received I trust will be my reward.

B. G. BANNINGTON.

“PEARLSCOT,” FRONT LANE,
CRANHAM, ESSEX.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION.

MR. BANNINGTON and I have known each other for a dozen years, ever since he was my best student at a West Ham University Extension Course. I recognize indeed a quotation on page 3 which dates from that course. But I have a better reason than personal friendship for recommending his book. It is, as far as I know, the first general treatise (since Sir J. Simon's *English Sanitary Institutions*, now obsolete) on modern English public health administration which is likely to be equally useful to students and to officials. So far the student has had to content himself in the main either with popular handbooks on the subject or with the rather superficial chapters on public health in books dealing with local government generally. The official has used the successive editions of Lumley's *Public Health Acts*, admirable for working reference, but impossible to read or remember as a whole. Mr. Bannington aims at covering the whole ground, with perhaps a certain amount of repetition due to his desire to make each chapter complete in itself. But his book is a treatise and not a dictionary. Both the official and the student who uses it will be impelled to think for himself under the guidance of a man who for the last seventeen years has earned his livelihood not as a lecturer or writer of textbooks, but as a sanitary inspector visiting every day the homes of a great industrial district.

My own first thought as I read the book was that the administrative machinery which deals with English public health is extraordinarily new. Since

Disraeli's great Public Health Act of 1875 the current expenditure of sanitary authorities in English urban areas has been more than quadrupled. In the larger areas the single medical officer of health with perhaps a single inspector of nuisances and one assistant inspector has developed into a great specialized service of medical men and women, analysts, bacteriologists, veterinarians, clerks, lecturers, nurses, visitors and trained inspectors of food and drugs, drains, ships and canal boats, shop hours, and open-air schools.

The body of accumulated science which these men and women administer has grown even more rapidly, and Mr. Bannington would perhaps be the first to admit that the willingness of the ordinary householder to be guided by scientific authority in the management of his home, insufficient as it still is, has grown more rapidly than anything else.

Statistics show that the actual success of sanitary science in overcoming the dangers arising from the increasing density of population is also new. The death-rate per thousand of the English population only fell from 19.9 in 1850 to 19.3 in 1890, but was 15 in 1907 and 13.7 in 1913. The infantile mortality actually rose from 146 per thousand births in 1850 to 151 in 1890 and was reduced to 109 in 1913.

A service so new, in a nation so unwilling as are the English to look forward in matters of organization, is almost certain to be out of date in much of its machinery and traditions. Mr. Bannington, as a result of his daily experience, constantly urges the reconsideration of both. Sanitary law should be codified and simplified. The financial and administrative relations between central and local government in sanitary matters should be reconstructed. Some order should be introduced into the overlapping relations between the local authorities, sanitary, Poor Law, educational and "insurance." It should be no

longer true that (as Mr Bannington points out on page 314) "we have members of the same household undergoing treatment in the institutions or at the hands of the officers of the sanitary authority, the guardians of the poor, the education committee, the insurance committee, and some one or more of the voluntary hospitals or nursing associations."

We should understand that the "inspector of nuisances" is no longer a humble sort of parish constable watching to see that people do not, from carelessness or selfishness, commit acts which they and every one else know to be wrong, but the administrator and exponent of a changing and growing applied science. The training of the sanitary inspectors, the examinations which they pass, their opportunities of promotion, should no longer be left to chance. The increasing importance of women in the service should be recognized and provided for. If the necessity of maintaining the sharp distinction between the medical and non-medical officials is felt to prevent even the best of the non-medical officials from reaching the most important administrative posts, opportunities of advancement should still be offered to all who show themselves possessed of the too-rare power of administrative initiative. I have myself, for instance, often thought that the officials and inspectors of the Local Government Board should be recruited to a much larger extent than at present from the best of the local officials. In every Government department local experience should be present to give life and meaning to the accumulating bundles of paper reports and returns, and, as we are now learning under the sharp discipline of war, every Government office should be a place where men are trained to be on their guard against the first symptoms of the "official mind" and to welcome instead of shrinking from the effort to realize the effect of new know-

ledge. Anyone, for instance, who reads the paragraphs of Mr. Bannington's book dealing with milk and slaughter-houses will see that we have as yet done almost nothing to apply the lessons of modern bacteriology to the problems arising from our use in the towns of animal food produced in the country.

As I write I find myself wondering how far I myself am still living in the traditions of that distant epoch which came to an end in August, 1914. When the War is over shall we not have to face the most important of all new facts, that we are a poor and no longer a rich country? Will not the problem before our statesmen be that of cutting down instead of extending our sanitary service? But I remember that in that distant epoch I was teaching a class of His Majesty's military officers the nature of local public finance. I quoted to them a sentence of the late Lord Avebury's: "It is evident that the more we spend in rates and taxes the less remains to be spent in other ways." They unanimously agreed with Lord Avebury, until I asked whether we should have more to spend in London if we saved by disbanding the London police, ceasing to pump London sewage, or selling the London schools. I argued that the cutting down of local expenditure could be so arranged as to reduce the earning capacity of the average Londoner to that of the average inhabitant of a Hindoo village, and they unanimously agreed with me.

Even if, after the War, the recovery of our financial position is to be the sole end of English life, that recovery will require wise expenditure as well as wise economy. And hard thinking, which is the most profitable of all national possessions, does not always cost money.

GRAHAM WALLAS.

LONDON UNIVERSITY,
1915.

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INDEX

- Abatement of nuisances, 142 *et seq.*
Abattoirs, public, 258
Acts, Adoptive, 23, 35
 general, 23
 private, 22-3
 public, 22-3
Administration, Hospital, 183 *et seq.*
Adulteration of foods, etc., 167
Agriculture, Ministry of, 102, 161.
Alkali works inspectors, 103
Analysis of:
 methods of abating nuisances, 150 *et seq.*
 powers of entry, 128 *et seq.*
Analysts, public, 60, 101
 qualifications of, 101
 reports of, 239
Anson, Sir W. R., 298
Areas and Authorities, 12 *et seq.*
Areas, improvement of unhealthy, 247 *et seq.*
Ashley, P., 25, 218, 293, 308
Ashley, W. J., 2
Association of Local Government Officers, National, 104
Asylums Board, Metropolitan, 19
Audit of Accounts, 272
Authorities, health, 12 *et seq.*

Bacteriological laboratories, 191
Bannington, B. G., 90, 119, 199
Baths and Washhouses, 259
Bills, procedure of:
 private, 24
 public, 25
Births, notification of, 207
Board, General, of Health, 7, 8, 282
Board, Local Government, 10, 62-3, 70, 282
Boards, Local, of Health, 7
Boards of Guardians, 12

Buildings, demolition of obstructive, 249
Bye-laws, 30, 43
 list of chief sanitary, 49, 50
 procedure, 44-5
 validity of, 43-4

Canal boats inspector, 103
 reports of, 238
Cannan, E., 262
Cemeteries, 260
Central control, 280 *et seq.*
 methods classified, 293-4, 298 *et seq.*
Certificates under Rents Restrictions Acts, 221
Certiorari, writ of, 219, 273
Chadwick, E., 6, 7, 68
Chamberlain, Right Hon. N., 215, 216, 252, 313
Cleansing of Persons Act, 190
Clerical staff, public health department, examination for, 104 *et seq.*
Clerical work, increase of, 104
Commission:
 Health of Towns, Royal, 6
 Local Government, 14, 295, 317
 Royal Sanitary, 1871, 8, 123, 141, 253, 281, 317
Committee, Local Legislative, 37, 40
Committees:
 basis of system, 51
 composition of public health, 58
 Contagious Diseases of Animals, 55
 duties and powers of health, 56 *et seq.*
 for Midwives Acts, 53
 health and housing, 53-4
 isolation hospitals, 55
 maternity and child welfare, 55, 207

- Common fund, 264
 Competition for posts in sanitary service, 100
 Complaint, powers of, 113 *et seq.*
 Complaints :
 by Health Insurance Committees, 119
 by officials and authorities, 115 *et seq.*
 by voluntary health societies, 119
 verbal and written, 115
 Consolidation of sanitary law, 313
 "Contacts," infectious disease, 174, 177-8
 Control :
 Departmental, 108 *et seq.*
 Central, 280 *et seq.*
 Corporation of London, 17
 Council, London County, 17
 Councils :
 County, 13
 County borough, 14
 London County, 17
 Metropolitan borough, 18
 Municipal borough, 14
 Parish, 16
 Rural district, 15
 Urban district, 15
 County fund, 265
 Crematoria, 260
 Cunningham, W., 2, 5

 Death-rates, 11, 206, 215, 311
 Delegation of powers, 28
 Departmental control, 108 *et seq.*
 Dicey, A. V., 22, 218
 Diseases and legislation, 5, 9
 Disinfection of goods, 177, 190
 Dispensaries, Tuberculosis, 200-1
 District councils, sanitary powers of, 15
 Documentation, 229

 Economics, London School of, 99
 Entry :
 powers of analysed, 128 *et seq.*
 Excessive sickness (National Insurance Act), 119
 Executives, Local, specialization in, 60, 104
 Expenditure—Health :
 out of rates, 266
 total, 274
 Expenses :
 general, of rural district councils, 263
 private improvement, 264
 special, of rural district councils, 263

 Fever Nurses Association, scales of salaries of, 195-6
 Food and drugs :
 adulteration, 167 *et seq.*
 standards of purity, 167-8
 Food inspection, 158 *et seq.*
 Fund :
 Borough, 265
 Common, 264
 County, 265
 General District, 264

 General district fund, 264
 General district rate, 263
 General expenses, 263
 George, Right Hon. D. L., 191, 275
 Gibbon, I. G., 37
 Gilds, 2
 Grants-in-aid, 266-7, 274 *et seq.*
 Gray, B. Kirkman, 5, 183
 Green, Mrs. A. S., 3
 Gretton, R. H., 291
 Grice, J. Watson, 266, 268

 Haldane, Viscount, 222
 Harris, G. M., 229
 Harris, Miss M. D., 2, 262
 Health :
 Board of, 6
 Essentials for, 1
 General Board of, 7, 282
 Local boards of, 7
 Ministry of, 10, 12, 282 *et seq.*
 of Towns, Royal Commission

- Hospitals—*continued*—
 isolation, charges for treatment at, 189
 isolation, objects and advantages of, 184
 joint committees, 185
 maternity, 187
 training of nurses, 194
 venereal diseases, 181
- House-to-house inspection, 123
 records of, 233-4
- Housing Act, statement of action under, 149
- Housing of working classes, loans for, 270
- Humanitarian movement, 4
- Hutchins, Miss B. L., 85
- Hutchins and Harrison, Misses, 5
- Hythe, state of, in fifteenth century, 3
- Ilbert, Sir Courtenay, 23, 28, 34, 36, 122, 294, 298
- Improvement of unhealthy areas, 247 *et seq.*
- Industrial revolution, effects of, 4
- Infant welfare, 206 *et seq.*
- Infectious diseases, 171 *et seq.*
 "contacts," 174, 177-8
 investigation of, 174 *et seq.*
 notification of, 171-2
- Inspection:
 and inquiry by Ministry of Health, 113
 objects and methods of, 134 *et seq.*
 of districts, records of, 113
 of food, 158 *et seq.*
 of meat, 160
 of milk, 163
- Inspectors:
 alkali works, 103
 canal boats, 103
 nuisances, of, 85
 sanitary, 85 *et seq.*
 combined appointments, 86
 duties of, 86 *et seq.*
 examinations, 97
 qualifications, 96
 relations with Medical Officers of Health, 108 *et seq.*
- Inspectors—sanitary—*continued*—
 whole time, 90
 women, 91, 97
 shops, of, 103
 veterinary, 102
- Insurance Acts:
 and tuberculosis, 199
 excessive sickness, 119
- Isolation hospitals, 183 *et seq.*
- Jenks, E., 218
- Joint hospital committees, 185
- Joint sanitary authorities, 19
- Kershaw, W. G., 31
- Lambert, J. M., 3
- Laws:
 ancient sanitary, 1
 bye:
 list of chief sanitary, 49, 50
 procedure in making, 44 *et seq.*
 validity of, 43-4
 mediæval sanitary, 2
 statute, 22
- Legal proceedings:
 persons who may take, 223
 procedure, 22
- Legislation, extent of sanitary, 312-13
- Loans:
 by Public Works Loans Commissioners, 268
 charges on public health services, 274
 for housing of working classes, 270
 for public health services, 267 *et seq.*
 limitations, 269 *et seq.*
 raised and outstanding, 267-8
- Local authorities and judicial functions, 221-2
- Local Government Board, 10, 62-3, 70, 282
 Officers, National Association of, examinations, 104 *et seq.*
- Local Legislation Committee, 37, 40
- Local officials:
 and legislation, 24

- London County Council, 17
 sanitary authorities, 18
 School of Economics, 93
- Lowell, A. L., 59
- Maltbie, M. R., 51, 102, 181, 293
- Mandamus*, 219, 248, 249, 254, 257,
 272, 275, 301, 308, 309
- Markets, 259
- Marshall, A., 253
- Maternity and child welfare, 206 *et seq.*
 centres, 210
 committees, 55, 208
 day nurseries, 212
 expenditure upon, 215
 maternity beds, 210
 midwives, 212-13
 provision of milk, 166, 211
 schemes for, 208-9
- Medical Officers of Health, 59, 68 *et seq.*
 combined appointments, 70-1
 duties, etc., 74 *et seq.*
 extension of duties, 83
 joint appointments, 71
 qualifications, 73
 relations with Sanitary Inspector, 108 *et seq.*
 reports, etc., 234, *et seq.*
 salaries, 64
 sanction of appointment of, 62
 whole time appointment, 71-2
- Metropolitan Asylums Board, 19
 sanitary authorities, 18
 Water Board, 19
- Midwives, registration and regulation of, 213
- Milk depots, 166
- Milk, special designations of, 164-5
 tuberculous, 163 *et seq.*
- Mill, J. Stuart, 51, 58, 59, 111, 253
- Ministry of Health, 10, 12, 282 *et seq.*
 advisory powers, 309
 appellate jurisdiction, 220, 302
 approval by, 300
 audit by, 222
- Notices, 144 *et seq.*
- Notification :
 of births, 207
 of infectious diseases, 172, 212
 tuberculosis (bovine), 161
 of intention to slaughter, 160
- Nuisances :
 abatement of, 142 *et seq.*
 analysis of methods of abatement, 150 *et seq.*
- Nurses :
 Fever, Association of, 194
 salaries, 195 *et seq.*
 training, 194 *et seq.*
- Objects and methods of inspection
 134 *et seq.*
- Orders :
 and Regulations, list of recent,
 31 *et seq.*
 closing and demolition, 149,
 221-2
 of Home Secretary, 29, 299
 of Ministry of Agriculture, 29,
 300
 of Ministry of Health, 28, 299
 Provisional, 27, 41, 299
 Shops Acts, under, 46 *et seq.*
- Organization, local administrative,
 51 *et seq.*
- Overcrowding, 136
- Parish councils and meetings, 16
- Parochial committees, 17, 53
- Parsons, H. F., 183
- Poor Law Commissioners, 6
- Population, distribution of, 316
- Port sanitary authorities, 18-19
- Powers of entry analysed, 128 *et seq.*
- Powers of sanitary authorities :
 adoptive, 23
 delegation of, 17
 mandatory, 24
 permissive, 23
 sources of, 21, *et seq.*
- Private Bills, disadvantages of, 25
- Private improvement expenses, 264

- Procedure—*continued*—
 provisional orders, 27, 41
 public bills, 24
 regulations, local, 46
 Provisional Orders, 27, 41, 299
- Rateable values, distribution of, 316
- Rates :
 character of local, 265
 expenditure on public health
 out of, 266
 general district, 263
 legal limitation to, 265
 sanitary, 262
- Receipts from and expenditure upon
 public health services, 274
- Redlich and Hirst, 66
- Reform, need for, 311 *et seq.*
- Refuse removal and disposal, 257-8
- Registers of persons and premises,
 230-1
- Regulations :
 list of chief sanitary, 31 *et seq.*
 local, 30, 45
- Reports of :
 canal boats inspectors, 238
 medical officers of health, 234
et seq.
 public analysts, 239
 sanitary inspectors, 237-8
- Sanatoria, 202-3
- Sanitary areas and authorities, 12 *et seq.*
- Sanitary authorities :
 and the Courts, 218 *et seq.*
 joint, 19
 subordinate to Parliament, 21
- Sanitary Inspectors, 60
 Association, 109
 combined appointments, 86
 duties of, 80 *et seq.*
 examinations for, 97-8
 joint appointments, 89
 qualifications, 96
 relations with medical officer of
 health, 108 *et seq.*
- Sanitary Inspectors—*continued*—
 reports, 237
 salaries, 64
 sanction of appointment of,
 62-3, 301
 security of tenure of, 67
 whole time, 90
 women, 91, 97
- Sanitary Institute, Royal, 97-8
- Sanitary rates, 262
- School of Economics, London, 99
- Security of tenure, 64 *et seq.*
- Sewerage and sewage disposal, 256
- Shops Acts :
 difficulties of inspection for
 purposes of, 47, 140 *et seq.*
 inspectors, 103
 orders under, 46 *et seq.*
- Simon, Sir J., 3, 68-9, 295
- Smith, G. Armitage, 265
- Specialization of officials, 90
- Staffs, public health, 61-2
- Statistics, Vital, 11, 206, 215, 311
- Syllabus of examination for clerical
 workers, 104 *et seq.*
- Town planning, 243 *et seq.*
- Tuberculosis, 197 *et seq.*
 dispensaries, 200-1
 institutions for treatment of,
 203
 National Insurance Act and,
 199
 notification of (bovine), 161
 officers, 200-1
 sanatoria and hospitals, 202
 village settlements, 204
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