

Compared with the mean rates in the ten preceding third quarters the mortality of infants under one year of age showed a decrease of 5.9 per cent., and that of persons between one year and sixty years and upwards are equal to the average.

MORTALITY FROM CERTAIN EPIDEMIC DISEASES.

The 129,383 deaths from all causes, includes:—

22,649	that were attributed to	Diarrhoea.
1,639	"	"
1,447	"	"
1,176	"	"
770	"	"
700	"	"
5	"	"

Diarrhoea was the only one of the diseases in the foregoing list that showed a mortality above the average.

Diarrhoea was the assigned cause of 22,649 deaths last quarter, equal to an annual mortality of 2.60 per 1,000, which is greater by .38 per 1,000 than the decennial average rate for the third quarter of the year. In Radnorshire no deaths from diarrhoea were returned last year. Among counties with populations exceeding 100,000 persons the highest rates from this disease were 3.51 in Lancashire, 3.54 in Durham, 3.68 in the East Riding of Yorkshire, 3.96 in Essex, 3.98 in Middlesex, and 4.43 in Warwickshire. In the 76 great towns the average death rate from diarrhoea was 3.63 per 1,000, the rate was highest in the following towns: Sheffield 5.67, Aston Manor 5.75, West Ham 6.12, Birkenhead 6.16, Grimsby 6.36, Hanley 6.47, and Coventry 6.51. In the 142 smaller towns diarrhoea was fatal on the average to 2.83 per 1,000 of the population and caused the highest mortality in Loughborough, Barking, Southend-on-Sea, Twickenham, Batley, and Longton. In the last-mentioned town the death-rate from diarrhoea was equal to 11.00 per 1,000 annually. In the remainder of England and Wales the death-rate from diarrhoea averaged 1.38 per thousand. Among the registration sub-districts outside the 218 chief towns diarrhoea was exceptionally fatal in Whitstable, Foleshill, Warsop, Litherland, Hemsworth Western, Darfield, Ormesby, Carnforth, Bishop Auckland, and Ashington.

So you see by this return the large number of deaths from diarrhoea.

Our own rate for the past three quarters of the year is interesting, and is as follows:—

1906.	Infantile deaths.	Infantile rate.	Infantile Diarrhoea deaths.	Deaths under 24 hours.
1st qr.	104	138	—	14
2nd „	71	95	4	19
3rd „	195	261	79	21

You will observe how in the third quarter the infantile rate has gone up, and this is in consequence of the deaths from Zymotic Diarrhoea, which rose from four to seventy-nine.

With regard to the nursing out of children, I would like to impress upon you that under the Infant Life Protection Act it is not legal for any person to take in children to nurse unless the house is registered and therefore can be properly inspected by persons appointed for this purpose. In our town

it would fall under the Health Authority; in a city like Manchester they have a special inspector. It has been found there that a number of women in a street could be found to take a child each to nurse and thus avoid the visits of the inspector. So it would be well even if this Act could be amended.

Probably another means of preventing loss of infant lives would be the early notification of births to the Health Authority, but until we have a staff to follow the cases and give instruction to mothers as to how their children can be reared, it is not of much use. You can help us much in the way of giving useful instruction to those mothers whom you attend in their confinement and have also to keep up the attendance some time afterwards, of course any help I can give you, will be willingly done, but most of your patients are able to obtain medical aid, and when you find there is something wrong either with mother or infant you should advise this.

In conclusion with regard to infant feeding I have had instructions prepared, and I believe most of you have copies of these. You can get a further supply by calling at the Health Office.

Dr. Berry's paper is of special interest, coming as it does at a time when the report of the Public Health Committee of the London County Council, submitting the report of the Medical Officer of Health for the County, has just been published. In this report the continuance of the high rate of infantile mortality is discussed, which is the more noteworthy since the death rate as a whole has fallen no less than thirty per cent. since the coming into effect of the Public Health Act (London) of 1891. It is, however, probable as the report shows, that the maintenance of the high infantile rate is due, in some important degree, to a more complete registration of the deaths of infants which only survive their birth for a brief period, for there is a very extensive mortality in very young infants.

Midwifery Notes.

The midwives of Manchester and district recently held a meeting for the purpose of taking steps to form an association to protect themselves against "further adverse legislation."

The Petition of the midwives of the German Empire, regarding their selection, education, post-graduate education, and security of position, commissions the Society of German Midwives to represent to the Governments of the German States the desire of the profession for a law to secure all these objects. Whilst the demands on midwives are continually increasing, owing to the law for contagious diseases, nothing has been done to improve their economic position. Their pay differs in different places, and the contracts of some municipalities bear very hardly on the midwife. The Petition ends by asking that midwives' who are past work should be included compulsorily in the State fund for invalids.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)