

The Midwife.

356,000 Babies Expected in June and September Quarters.

THE QUARTERLY ESTIMATE of the numbers of live births to be expected in England and Wales during the six months April to September, 1951, was announced recently by the Registrar General.*

The final estimate for the June Quarter is 183,000, and the provisional estimate for the September Quarter is 173,000, giving an estimated total of 356,000 births in the six months.

Last year there were 181,784 live births registered in the June Quarter, and 170,180 in the September Quarter—a total of 351,964.

During the week ended May 5th there were 7,532 live births registered in the Great Towns of England and Wales, compared with 7,189 in the previous week. This brings the total in those towns from the beginning of the year to 131,588 compared with 135,630 in the same period a year ago.

* The Registrar General's Weekly Return No. 18/H.M.S.O. price 9d. net (or post free from P.O. Box 569, London, S.E.1, price 10d.).

Population Estimates for 1950.

THE REGISTRAR GENERAL has recently issued his estimates* of the population of each local government area in England and Wales as at June 30th, 1950.

These estimates include members of the armed forces stationed in each area and distinguish the numbers of persons under 15 years of age.

The population actually in this country at the date stated is estimated to have been 43,830,000 with 9,630,000 under 15 years of age, compared with 43,595,000 and 9,497,000 respectively a year earlier.

These will be the last estimates for local areas before the publication of the first results of the Census which was taken recently. They are being issued as they are required for certain administrative purposes which for various reasons cannot await the new Census figures.

* The Registrar General's "Estimates of the Population of England and Wales—Populations of each Administrative Area at June 30th, 1950." H.M. Stationery Office, price 6d. net (or by post from P.O. Box 569, London, S.E.1, price 7d.).

New Records in Saving Lives.

Fewer Mothers and Babies Die

BRITAIN HAS AGAIN set up new low records for the number of mothers dying in childbirth and babies in the first month of life.

The Registrar General announces that the provisional rate of maternal mortality (excluding abortion) per thousand live and stillbirths in 1950 is 0.72. This is a new low record. It is broadly comparable with a rate of 0.82 in 1949, a more exact comparison not being possible at present because of changes in classification.

The provisional neo-natal death rate—children under four weeks of age—last year is 18.5 per thousand related live births—another low record. In the previous year the rate was 19.3 and in 1939 it was 29.6.

Rise in Cancer Death Rate

There has been a rise in the cancer death rate. Under the new Classification introduced in 1950, Hodgkin's disease, leukaemia and aleukaemia are now included with cancer, and the provisional rates for last year are 2,058 per million

population for men and 1,840 per million for women. The provisional rates, excluding these diseases, are 1,992 for men and 1,792 for women, and these are comparable with rates of 1,981 and 1,771 in the previous year.

A Ministry of Health official, referring to the maternal and neo-natal death rates, commented: "New drugs, especially the anti-biotics, are undoubtedly playing an important part in saving the lives of more mothers and babies. It is also fair to say that contributory factors include a better standard of obstetric care and increasing attention to the care of the premature baby."

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