

Up to 31st March, 1948, a total of 303 cases had been notified. The health district, sex, and age distribution was as follows:—

Polio-myelitis, November, 1947, to March, 1948

	0-5 Years.		5-10 Years.		10-15 Years.		15-20 Years.		Over 20 Years.		Totals.		Grand Totals.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
North Auckland ..	..	1	1	2	1	2	..	3	2	..	4	8	12
Central Auckland ..	23	14	35	9	11	12	1	5	20	11	90	51	141
Thames-Tauranga ..	..	1	1	1	1	1	..	..	1	..	3	3	6
South Auckland ..	12	6	13	10	5	3	5	5	10	5	45	29	74
Taranaki ..	2	4	8	2	3	2	1	1	4	1	18	10	28
East Cape ..	1	2	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	3	2	5
Wellington - Hawke's Bay	5	2	1	3	..	1	1	3	..	3	7	12	19
Central Wellington	..	..	1	3	1	2	1	..	3	2	6	7	13
Christchurch ..	1	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	1	3	1	4
Timaru ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
	44	30	60	30	24	23	11	17	40	24	179	124	303

In the 303 cases there were 18 deaths—a mortality of 6 per cent.

Particulars concerning paralysis have been obtained for 275 patients, and show that—

Ninety-two patients had some degree of paralysis (this includes the 18 deaths).

Eighty-three patients had paresis but no paralysis.

One hundred patients had neither paralysis nor paresis.

This outbreak differs from previous outbreaks in both the age distribution and the degree of paralysis present. Of the 303 concerned, 211 were under fifteen years of age and 92 were over fifteen years. Out of 275 patients, 18 died and 183 did not have any paralysis and are likely to make complete recoveries. It is too early yet to determine what amount of residual paralysis will be suffered by the other 74 patients.

Further Course of Outbreak: Up to the time of writing, the outbreak has continued, but has shown no tendency to extend markedly over other parts of the Dominion. A comprehensive report on the outbreak will be published in next year's annual report.

Food Poisoning.—The number of cases reported was 24, compared with 248 in 1946 and 118 in 1945.

A small outbreak of food poisoning in the Timaru Health District appears to have affected persons who had consumed oysters obtained at an oyster-bar on a racecourse. Investigation showed that the oysters had been removed from the shell the day before and stored in "clean" used egg-pulp containers. They were stored in a cool store overnight and taken a distance of thirty miles to the racecourse on the following day. As eggs are known to be sometimes infected with food-poisoning micro-organisms of the salmonella type, the infecting bacteria may have been present in the containers into which the oysters were placed.

If oysters are eaten raw, they should preferably not be opened until immediately before consumption, but if any container is used for such a purpose it should be thoroughly sterilized by heat.

In October in Invercargill 21 persons suffered from food poisoning after attending an association dinner. The infection was due to *Staphylococcus albus* and the vehicle was a trifle which was found to be heavily infected. The trifle had been prepared on the previous day and had been stored under temperature conditions that would have permitted considerable bacterial growth.