

A table is added to show the infant mortality in Wellington, Sydney, and Melbourne.

Year.	Wellington and Suburbs.			Sydney and Suburbs.			Melbourne and Suburbs.		
	Total Births.	Deaths of Infants under 1 Year.	Proportion of Deaths of Infants under 1 Year to 1,000 Births.	Total Births.	Deaths of Infants under 1 Year.	Proportion of Deaths of Infants under 1 Year to 1,000 Births.	Total Births.	Deaths of Infants under 1 Year.	Proportion of Deaths of Infants under 1 Year to 1,000 Births.
1902	1,321	172	130·2	13,002	1,457	112·1	12,498	1,590	127·2
1903	1,520	141	92·8	12,749	1,483	116·3	12,012	1,493	124·3
1904	1,479	141	95·3	13,215	1,300	98·4	11,886	1,102	92·7
1905	1,715	165	96·2	13,769	1,230	89·3	11,944	1,133	94·8
1906	1,753	126	71·88	13,984	1,176	84·10	12,373	1,404	113·47
Means of five years	1,558	149	95·64	13,344	1,329	99·60	12,143	1,344	110·68

The infantile mortality for a number of countries is given by the Registrar-General of England.

Deaths of Children under One Year to 1,000 Births.

Country.	Average Annual Rate in 10 Years. 1896-1905.	Country.	Average Annual Rate in 10 Years. 1896-1905.
Chili	326	Bulgaria	144
Russia	268	Western Australia	143
Austria	223	Switzerland	139
Roumania	218	Finland	135
Hungary	215	Denmark	126
Prussia	196	Scotland	125
Spain	178	New South Wales	105
Jamaica	174	Victoria	103
Ceylon	170	Ireland	102
Italy	168	South Australia	100
Servia	154	Queensland	99
Belgium	153	Sweden	97
Japan	153	Tasmania	94
France	149	Norway	88
England and Wales	147	New Zealand	77
Netherlands	144		

Here, of European countries, Austria, which has a birth-rate of 35 to 38 per 1,000 of population, shows an infantile mortality of 223 per 1,000 births; while New Zealand, with a birth-rate of 27 per 1,000 of population, loses only 77 infants per 1,000 births. So that, whatever may be the faults of ignorance or wilfulness in this country, from a statistical point of view it would appear that far better conditions obtain than elsewhere.

INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION.

"The Infant Life Protection Act, 1907," repeals the statute of 1896. The Act renders it unlawful for any person to take charge of an infant under the age of six years, for the purpose of nursing or maintaining it apart from its parents or guardians, for a longer period than seven consecutive days, unless such person is licensed as a foster-parent.

Provision is made for the granting and revocation of licenses, and for the method of payment of maintenance-money. No payment is to be made to or received by a foster-parent except in pursuance of an agreement approved by the Secretary to the Education Department, and if default be made in payment under the agreement the amount due, or part thereof, may be paid by the Secretary, and shall be recoverable as a debt due to the Crown. When and so long as any money so recoverable remains unpaid, the Secretary shall have and may exercise the powers of a guardian until the child attains the age of fifteen years. Provision is also made for the inspection of foster-homes, and in case of the removal or death of foster-children.

The Act applies to any infant adopted under "The Adoption of Children Act, 1895," in the same manner and to the same extent as if no such adoption had taken place. The Department of Education is the authority by whom the Act is to be administered.

In his sixty-seventh annual report the Registrar-General of England remarked "that a well-devised system of early notification of births, legalised and worked in conjunction with the present registration system on the one hand, and with sanitary administration on the other, might, along with other motive forces, serve as a most effective and lasting barrier with which to stem the tide of infant mortality." The Notification of Births Act was passed accordingly in England, and the New Zealand Legislature in 1907 introduced provisions for early notification when passing the Infant Life Protection Act of that year, allowing seventy-two hours after birth if in a city or borough, or twenty-one days in any other case.