

Here, of European countries, Prussia, which has a birth-rate of 33 to 37 per 1,000 of population, shows an infantile mortality of 173 per 1,000 births; while New Zealand, with a birth-rate of 27 per 1,000 of population, loses only 68 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.

The principal causes of mortality in children under one year for New Zealand are given, with the numbers of deaths for five years from such causes. Premature birth stands first in order of importance, diarrhoea and enteritis next, followed by marasmus or debility. Here it is seen how much mortality is attributed to these causes according to the medical certificates.

Causes of Deaths of Children under One Year.—1905-9.

Causes.	Number of Deaths from each Cause.					Percentage of Total.				
	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
Whooping-cough ..	2	17	207	31	28	0.13	1.13	9.29	1.76	1.71
Convulsions ..	96	90	84	76	107	6.00	5.98	3.77	4.32	6.55
Bronchitis and pneumonia	207	170	269	148	168	12.95	11.29	12.08	8.40	10.28
Diarrhoea and enteritis	285	232	557	418	249	17.82	15.40	25.00	23.74	15.24
Premature birth ..	360	337	359	388	347	22.51	22.38	16.11	22.03	21.24
Marasmus, &c. ..	258	267	303	264	256	16.14	17.73	13.60	14.99	15.67
Other causes ..	391	393	449	436	479	24.45	26.09	20.15	24.76	29.31
Totals	1,599	1,506	2,228	1,761	1,634	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

The proportions of deaths of children under one year of age to every 100 births for 1908 and 1909 at the chief centres are,—

	1908.	1909.
Auckland (including suburbs) ..	8.19	6.18
Wellington ..	8.17	8.42
Christchurch ..	6.78	6.28
Dunedin ..	7.45	4.86

The percentage of deaths of children under 5 to the total number of deaths is—in Dunedin, 18.18; in Christchurch, 22.35; in Auckland, 23.71; in Wellington, 29.53.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

A comparison of the causes of deaths in 1908 and 1909 arranged according to an abridged classification, the percentage of each group to the total deaths, and the proportion per 10,000 persons living, is given in the following table:—

Class.	Number of Deaths.		Proportion to Total Deaths.		Proportion per 10,000 living.	
	1908.	1909.	1908.	1909.	1908.	1909.
I. General diseases ..	Total. 2,206	Total. 2,187	Per Cent. 24.40	Per Cent. 24.41	23.34	22.50
II. Diseases of the nervous system and of the organs of special sense	930	920	10.28	10.27	9.84	9.47
III. Diseases of the circulatory system ..	1,251	1,369	13.83	15.28	13.24	14.09
IV. Diseases of the respiratory system ..	830	784	9.18	8.75	8.78	8.07
V. Diseases of the digestive system ..	1,042	843	11.52	9.41	11.03	8.67
VI. Diseases of the genito-urinary system and adnexa	387	407	4.28	4.54	4.09	4.19
VII. Puerperal condition ..	119	135	1.32	1.51	1.26	1.39
VIII. Diseases of the skin and of the cellular tissue	37	50	0.41	0.56	0.39	0.51
IX. Diseases of the organs of locomotion ..	38	25	0.42	0.28	0.40	0.26
X. Malformations ..	47	64	0.52	0.71	0.50	0.66
XI. Infancy ..	716	676	7.92	7.55	7.58	6.96
XII. Old-age ..	586	556	6.48	6.21	6.20	5.72
XIII. Violence ..	673	778	7.44	8.68	7.12	8.00
XIV. Ill-defined causes ..	181	165	2.00	1.84	1.91	1.70
Totals	9,043	8,959	100.00	100.00	95.68	92.19