

Infant Mortality.—The infant-mortality rate for 1922 was 41·9 per 1,000 births. This rate is the lowest on record, the previous best being the figure for 1919 (45·3 per 1,000 births).

The next table enables an estimate to be formed of the progress in infant-welfare work in New Zealand, and shows the relative obstinacy of the first-month mortality to react to the administrative measures which have proved so successful at later ages.

Infant Mortality in New Zealand, 1900–22.—Proportion of Deaths of Infants under Twelve Months to every 1,000 Births in Individual Years.

Year.	Under One Month.	One Month and under Twelve Months.	Total under Twelve Months.	Year.	Under One Month.	One Month and under Twelve Months.	Total under Twelve Months.
1900 ..	31·1	44·1	75·2	1912 ..	30·1	21·1	51·2
1901 ..	29·8	41·6	71·4	1913 ..	29·7	29·5	59·2
1902 ..	32·2	50·7	82·9	1914 ..	28·9	22·5	51·4
1903 ..	31·7	49·4	81·1	1915 ..	29·2	20·8	50·0
1904 ..	29·4	41·6	71·0	1916 ..	27·0	23·7	50·7
1905 ..	30·1	37·4	67·5	1917 ..	27·9	20·3	48·2
1906 ..	29·6	32·5	62·1	1918 ..	26·7	21·7	48·4
1907 ..	30·4	58·4	88·8	1919 ..	28·4	16·9	45·3
1908 ..	31·2	36·7	67·9	1920 ..	30·8	19·7	50·5
1909 ..	29·9	31·7	61·6	1921 ..	30·7	17·1	47·8
1910 ..	30·2	37·5	67·7	1922 ..	27·2	14·7	41·9
1911 ..	28·5	27·8	56·3				

SECTION 2.—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

The year under review was characterized by the relative immunity of the Dominion from grave outbreaks of disease. The most serious incident was a water-borne epidemic of enteric fever in Mount Albert, Auckland, due to a breakdown of the chlorinating process. A decline in the incidence of scarlet fever, diphtheria, poliomyelitis, influenza, pneumonia, whooping-cough, and measles makes the period, from the point of view of public health, a highly satisfactory one.

SCARLET FEVER.

The course of scarlet fever in New Zealand during the last five years is briefly shown in the tables below. The notifications for 1922 reveal a satisfactory decline as compared with the previous year, while the death-rate also shows a striking decrease.

Scarlet Fever in New Zealand, 1918–22.

Year.	Notifications.		Deaths.	
	Number.	Rate per 10,000 of Mean Population.	Number.	Rate per 10,000 of Mean Population.
1918	1,654	14·99	30	0·27
1919	1,521	13·31	23	0·20
1920	1,248	10·46	15	0·13
1921	1,845	15·07	24	0·19
1922	1,449	11·58	10	0·08

DIPHTHERIA.

As the next table shows, there has been a most substantial decline in diphtheria since 1918. It must be admitted, however, that the disease still remains all too prevalent in the Dominion. A more vigorous application of the method of active immunization with toxin-antitoxin mixtures of those found by the Schick test to be susceptible to diphtheria may be expected to cause a more rapid decline in the disease. This method was adopted in 1922 in two of the Hamilton schools, from which an undue number of cases of the disease had been notified. It was found to be simple in practice, caused very little inconvenience to those inoculated, and scarcely any interference with school-work.