

Deaths in Foster-homes and Exempted Institutions.

Of the 1,539 infants who were at one time on the books as being in foster-homes during 1927, nine died in foster-homes, of whom seven were under twelve months of age.

The following is a statement of the number of deaths during the last five years :—

TABLE 6.

Year.	Foster-homes.			Exempted Institutions.		
	Number of Deaths.	Number of Infants.	Percentage of Deaths.	Number of Deaths.	Number of Infants.	Percentage of Deaths.
1923	6	1,243	0·48	20	1,076	1·86
1924	5	1,213	0·41	21	1,175	1·78
1925	5	1,301	0·38	12	1,638	0·73
1926	1	1,423	0·07	18	3,196	0·56
1927	9	1,539	0·58	35	3,603	0·97

TABLE 7.—ADOPTIONS DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1927.

During the year 372 orders of adoption were made; 40 of the adoption orders provided for premiums, and 332 were without monetary consideration. The following table shows the ages of the adopted children :—

Age of Child.				With Premium.	Without Premium.	Totals.
Under 6 months	..	..	..	18	65	83
Between 6 months and 1 year	..	..	..	10	29	39
„ 1 year and 5 years	..	..	..	11	133	144
„ 5 „ 10 „	..	..	..	..	63	63
„ 10 „ 15 „	..	..	..	1	42	43
Totals	..	..	..	40	332	372

The adopting parents were—Husband and wife jointly, 354; widow, 9; widower, 4; spinster, 5: total, 372.

The amount of the premiums ranged from £10 to £175.

Five adoption orders were revoked: three of the current year adoptions, and two of previous year's adoptions.

Children born out of Wedlock.

The following table shows for the past five years the death-rate of illegitimate infants as compared with that of other infants :—

TABLE 8.—DEATHS.

Year.	Legitimate.			Illegitimate.		
	Births.	Deaths.	Death-rate per 1,000 Live Births.	Births.	Deaths.	Death-rate per 1,000 Live Births.
1923	26,707	1,143	42·80	1,260	82	65·08
1924	26,676	1,033	38·60	1,338	94	70·20
1925	26,821	1,056	39·33	1,332	69	51·80
1926	28,270	1,054	37·28	1,473	78	52·95
1927	26,494	1,011	38·159	1,387	77	55·51

The experience is that the illegitimate infants that come under the Department's supervision are more or less impaired in health, the result of neglect (not always wilful) and ignorance as to proper feeding and care. Notwithstanding this fact, the number of deaths among illegitimate infants supervised by the State is unusually low. Last year, for instance, of the 535 infants born during the year and supervised in licensed homes, there were seven deaths. The very high death-rate and the large number of children who ultimately come under the notice of our officers suffering from malnutrition and other results of want of proper care were some of the reasons that led to the provision in the Child Welfare Act for the supervision of illegitimate births by Child Welfare Officers.