

Analysis of Deaths of Infants under One Month of Age, 1927.

The following table gives the causes of these deaths during the year :—

Cause of Death.					Under One Day.	One Day and under One Week.	One Week and under Two Weeks.	Two Weeks and under Three Weeks.	Three Weeks and under One Month.	Total.
Influenza	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	1	4
Syphilis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Meningitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Convulsions	..	..	..	..	2	11	4	1	2	20
Bronchitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Broncho-pneumonia	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	3	3	9
Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	3
Diarrhoea and enteritis	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	3	2	7
Congenital malformations	..	..	..	..	10	54	19	10	9	102
Congenital debility	..	..	..	..	18	36	8	9	9	80
Injury at birth	..	..	..	..	18	33	4	..	1	56
Premature birth	..	..	..	..	148	118	24	12	5	307
Other diseases	..	..	..	..	23	45	14	4	2	88
Accidental mechanical suffocation	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Other causes	..	..	..	..	4	16	11	4	4	39
Total	..	..	..	..	224	316	91	48	41	720

It will be seen from this table that 540 of a total of 720 infant deaths in the first month of life occurred during the first week, and may be regarded as mainly due to pre-natal influences. It is also of interest to record that exactly half of the infant deaths (in the first twelve months of life) occurred in this first week—i.e., 540 in a total of 1,080.

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

The following table shows the number of deaths from puerperal causes, and the rate of such deaths per 1,000 births, for the five-yearly period 1923–27 :—

Deaths from all Puerperal Causes, 1923–27.

Year.	Number of Deaths from			Death-rate per 1,000 Live Births from		
	Puerperal Septicæmia.	Other Puerperal Causes.	All Puerperal Causes.	Puerperal Septicæmia.	Other Puerperal Causes.	All Puerperal Causes.
1923	52	91	143	1·86	3·25	5·11
1924	52	88	140	1·86	3·14	5·00
1925	42	89	131	1·49	3·16	4·65
1926	39	81	120	1·37	2·88	4·25
1927	70	67	137	2·51	2·40	4·91

There has been a marked increase in the death-rate from puerperal septicæmia in 1927, but a reduction in that from other puerperal causes, such as puerperal albuminurea and convulsions, puerperal hæmorrhage, accidents of labour, &c. This increase in the death-rate from puerperal septicæmia demands investigation. In last year's report I referred to the fact that the death-rate from all puerperal causes has shown remarkable periodic variations.

I am indebted to the Government Statistician for the preparation of the graph which I submit hereunder, showing from 1872 to 1927 (inclusive) the annual death-rates from "all puerperal causes" and from "puerperal septicæmia" and "other puerperal causes," which jointly make up the total rate for all puerperal causes.