

PART II.—MATERNAL MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY (EUROPEAN).

The graph showing maternal mortality rates from different puerperal causes, together with Tables IVA and IVB, giving the number of deaths and rates per 1,000 live births, divided into groups in accordance with the system of international classification is indicative of the medical and nursing professions' and the Health Department's successes and failures in attempts to increase the safety of child-bearing. It also shows the extreme danger of sepsis following attempts to avoid child-bearing by the termination of pregnancy by induced abortion.

In speaking of "maternal deaths" I do not include deaths from septic abortion in that term. This is dealt with separately. The true maternal death-rate is 3·25, if septic abortion is added an untrue "maternal death" rate of 4·21 is obtained, and the issues are hopelessly confused.

Table IVA.—Showing the Number of Puerperal Deaths and the Death Rate per 1,000 Live Births, 1927–1935.

				1927.	1928.	1929.	1930.	1931.	1932.	1933.	1934.	1935.
Puerperal sepsis following childbirth	..	No.	56	42	30	27	18	13	14	17	8	
		Rate	2·01	1·54	1·12	1·01	0·68	0·52	0·58	0·70	0·33	
Hæmorrhages, accidents of labour, thrombosis		No.	35	30	39	36	31	30	29	19	24	
phlegmasia, and following childbirth not		Rate	1·26	1·10	1·46	1·34	1·16	1·21	1·19	0·78	1·00	
otherwise defined												
Toxæmia, albuminuria, and eclampsia	..	No.	27	40	34	36	38	23	29	30	34	
		Rate	0·97	1·47	1·27	1·34	1·43	0·92	1·19	1·24	1·42	
Accidents of pregnancy, non-septic abortion,		No.	5	8	7	7	11	9	10	10	12	
and ectopic gestation		Rate	0·18	0·29	0·26	0·26	0·41	0·36	0·41	0·41	0·50	
Total maternal deaths (excluding septic		No.	123	120	110	106	98	75	82	76	78	
abortion)		Rate	4·41	4·42	4·11	3·96	3·68	3·02	3·37	3·12	3·25	
Septic abortion—												
Married women	..	..	..	14	19	26	26	24	16	29	17	
Single women	..	..	..			No.	4	3	2	10	13	6
Totals	..	..	..	14	14	19	30	29	26	26	42	23
Rate	..	..	..	0·50	0·51	0·71	1·12	1·09	1·04	1·07	1·73	0·96

Table IVB.—Puerperal Mortality, 1935, showing the Number of Deaths and their relation to Live Births.

						Number of Deaths.	Death Rate per 1,000 Live Births.
Puerperal sepsis following childbirth	..	..	..	..	..	8	0·33
Hæmorrhages, accidents of labour, thrombosis, phlegmasia, and other accidents of childbirth—							
(a) Placenta prævia	..	..	..	6	0·25		
(b) Other puerperal hæmorrhages	..	..	..	9	0·38		
(c) Puerperal embolism (non-septic)	..	..	..	3	0·12		
(d) Other accidents of childbirth—							
(1) Following Cæsarean section for obstructed labour or contracted pelvis	..	..	3	6	0·25		
(2) Ruptured uterus	..	..	1				
(3) Post-partum shock	..	..	1				
(4) Dystochia (hydrocephalic foetus) with anæmia of pregnancy	..	..	1				
Toxæmias of pregnancy—						24	1·00
(a) Puerperal albuminuria and eclampsia	..	..	21	0·88			
(b) Other toxæmias of pregnancy	..	..	13	0·54			
Accidents of pregnancy—						34	1·42
(a) Abortion (non-septic)	..	..	..	8	0·33		
(b) Ectopic gestation	..	..	..	4	0·17		
Total maternal deaths (excluding septic abortion).						12	0·50
						78	3·25
Septic abortion—							
(a) Married women	..	..	..	..	..	17	
(b) Single women	..	..	..	..	..	6	
						23	0·96