

TABLE A.—DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES: AVERAGE YEARLY NUMBER OF DEATHS PER 10,000 OF POPULATION BY SEX AND IN EACH AGE-GROUP.

Age.	Males.								Females.							
	1899-1903.	1904-1908.	1909-1913.	1914-1918.	1919-1923.	1924-1928.	1929-1933.	1934-1938.	1899-1903.	1904-1908.	1909-1913.	1914-1918.	1919-1923.	1924-1928.	1929-1933.	1934-1938.
0-1	879	792	660	557	514	437	374	399	739	635	518	436	402	340	279	312
1-5	76	57	51	55	48	37	31	30	71	54	48	49	43	37	27	24
5-10	25	21	19	23	20	16	15	13	20	17	17	20	17	14	12	11
10-15	18	17	15	16	15	13	11	11	18	16	13	14	12	10	8	8
15-20	29	26	24	32	21	19	20	19	27	29	22	24	20	16	14	12
20-25	41	36	30	67	31	27	24	23	37	35	31	38	29	26	21	19
25-30	45	39	35	71	35	29	26	24	47	44	38	52	37	29	26	22
30-35	47	47	44	77	43	35	27	25	50	47	44	54	41	33	30	26
35-40	66	55	58	83	51	43	40	36	64	54	55	57	48	38	36	30
40-45	74	69	67	89	62	54	50	50	70	63	58	62	52	44	41	41
45-50	99	98	93	100	84	76	71	67	84	81	72	75	69	64	60	56
50-55	142	126	125	131	116	110	102	102	121	100	99	105	96	92	80	78
55-60	194	177	179	182	163	157	145	152	157	147	148	148	137	124	120	116
60-65	258	259	255	250	254	247	233	239	228	217	212	211	203	189	186	183
65-70	415	392	407	402	384	394	366	370	358	326	330	322	316	305	296	299
70-75	684	655	615	665	630	585	577	593	554	549	539	546	530	509	473	494
75-80	1,067	1,027	1,000	979	1,005	952	967	945	903	914	910	855	922	851	852	818
80 and over ..	1,806	1,883	1,881	1,859	1,924	1,871	1,867	1,860	1,728	1,718	1,651	1,691	1,698	1,664	1,711	1,680

New Zealand has for many years prided itself on having the lowest death-rate in the world. As pointed out by the Government Statistician in the "Report on the Vital Statistics of the Dominion of New Zealand" for 1937, this position was challenged by the Netherlands in 1937, with a provisional death-rate of 8·7 per 1,000, as compared with 9·1 for New Zealand. Comparable standardized death-rates would, however, require to be calculated to obtain a reliable comparison of the mortality-rates of the two countries. The Government Statistician goes on to say—

"This superiority of New Zealand as regards the total death-rate tends to induce an unwarranted complacency in this country. When the death-rates of various countries are analysed by sex and age-groups it is discovered that some countries have a better record than New Zealand at certain ages, including in some cases the ages of greatest economic value."

In the case of the Netherlands the figures for 1930-32, compared with those for New Zealand for 1935-36, indicated a superiority of the former in the age-groups from forty years to sixty-five years in the case of males, and the Government Statistician stated that it was unfortunate that figures later than 1930-32 were not available for the Netherlands, it being probable that more recent figures would disclose an even better position for that country. Preliminary figures for that country for 1937 indicate that the Netherlands has improved its position.

More detailed analysis of the figures, showing death-rates by age-groups and by cause of death, will be necessary before it is possible to ascertain where New Zealand is falling behind.

Still-births.

A still-born child is defined as one "which has issued from its mother after the expiration of the twenty-eighth week of pregnancy, and which was not alive at the time of issue." Still-births have been compulsorily registrable in New Zealand since March, 1913. In 1938 still-births numbering 743 were registered, a decrease of 18 from the figure for the previous year.

Still-births (Number and Rate) in New Zealand, 1934 to 1938.

Year.	Total Number of Still-births registered.	Rate of Still-births per 1,000 Live Births.	Rate of Still-births per 1,000 total Births.
1934	687	28·3	27·47
1935	738	30·8	29·87
1936	732	29·5	28·59
1937	761	29·3	28·42
1938	743	27·3	26·54

(NOTE.—Still-births are not included, either as births or as deaths, in the various numbers and rates given elsewhere in this report.)

There was a marked reduction in the still-birth rate, a reduction which more than balances the increase in the infant death-rate under two weeks. The infant-mortality rate, particularly mortality under one month, cannot logically be discussed except in association with the still-birth rate, and therefore in the discussion of the former later in this report still-births are again referred to.