[Report 1926] / Medical Officer of Health, Perth City.

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Health Report

FOR

The City of Perth

For 1926

BY THE

Medical Officer of Health

PERTH:
PRINTED BY D. LESLIE, 20 ST. JOHN STREET

1927

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To the Honourable the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Members of the Town Council of the City and Royal Burgh of Perth.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Twenty-eighth Annual Report upon the Health of the City for the year 1926.

As has been my usual custom I have incorporated several Charts and Tables with the object of making the Report more readily understood, if not also more interesting.

It is pleasing to report that the mortality for the year is 13 per 1000; a figure much below the average of previous year, in fact only ·3 per 1000 above the record of 1923.

Two most gratifying features in the year's mortality have to be recorded, viz.:—that nearly every second death occurred in a person of 65 years and over—to be exact, 44 per cent. of the total deaths were in persons of advanced age; and the small number of deaths of infants—36.

This year's infantile death rate—54 per 1000 births—constitutes a record in the annals of the City.

One more satisfactory record has to be reported, viz.:—a consumptive death rate of ·329 per 1000 persons living. This is the lowest return of which I have knowledge. On the other hand cancer continues to show an increase, reaching the highest yet recorded, viz.:—1·6 per 1000—in other words over 4 deaths to one of consumption. Formerly the position was the reverse.

C. PARKER STEWART,
M.O.H.

Rockville, Barnhill,
Perth, March, 1927.

Health Report for 1926.

AREA AND POPULATION.

The registration area, as given by the Registrar-General, is 3,134 acres, while I estimate the population at 33,425. This represents 10·6 persons to an acre. The additional acreage, due to the extension of the Burgh boundary in 1909, was 1,017 acres.

BIRTHS.

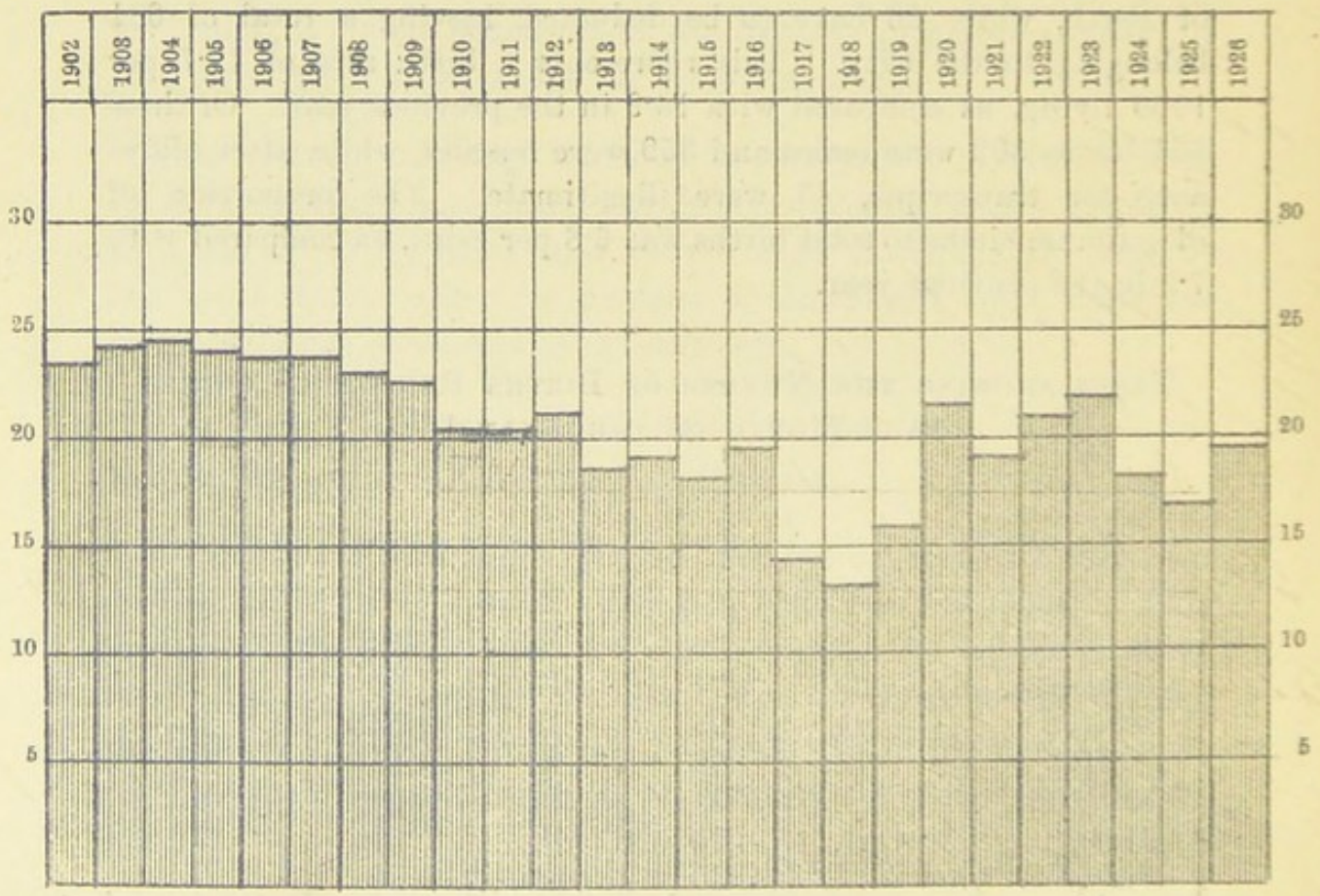
The Births registered in the Burgh during 1926 were 667. To this number has to be added 20 transcripts of children born outside of Perth, while 26 have to be deducted, leaving a total of 661 belonging to the City. This represents a birth rate of 19·7 per 1000 living, as compared with 16·9 in the previous year. Of these 661 births 302 were males and 359 were females, while, after allowance for transcripts, 45 were illegitimate. The proportion of illegitimate births to total births was 6·8 per cent., as compared with 7·3 in the previous year.

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF BIRTHS REGISTERED DURING EACH MONTH OF THE YEAR 1926.

MONTH.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Illegitimate.
January, ...	30	19	49	1
February, ...	24	27	51	2
March, ...	26	33	59	9
April, ...	22	25	47	1
May, ...	31	34	65	6
June, ...	26	44	70	3
July, ...	36	34	70	7
August, ...	21	26	47	0
September, ...	19	28	47	5
October, ...	25	30	55	6
November,... ...	13	23	36	1
December, ...	29	36	65	4
Total, ...	302	359	661	45 or 6·8 %

An examination of the following Chart will show the steady decline which has taken place until the last few years. This declining birth-rate is a feature of all civilized races, and I stated in a previous Annual Report that I feared the upward tendency of the last year or two was not one which may be expected to continue. This has shown itself to be the case this year.

CHART SHOWING THE BIRTH RATE PER 1000 IN THE CITY DURING THE PAST 25 YEARS.



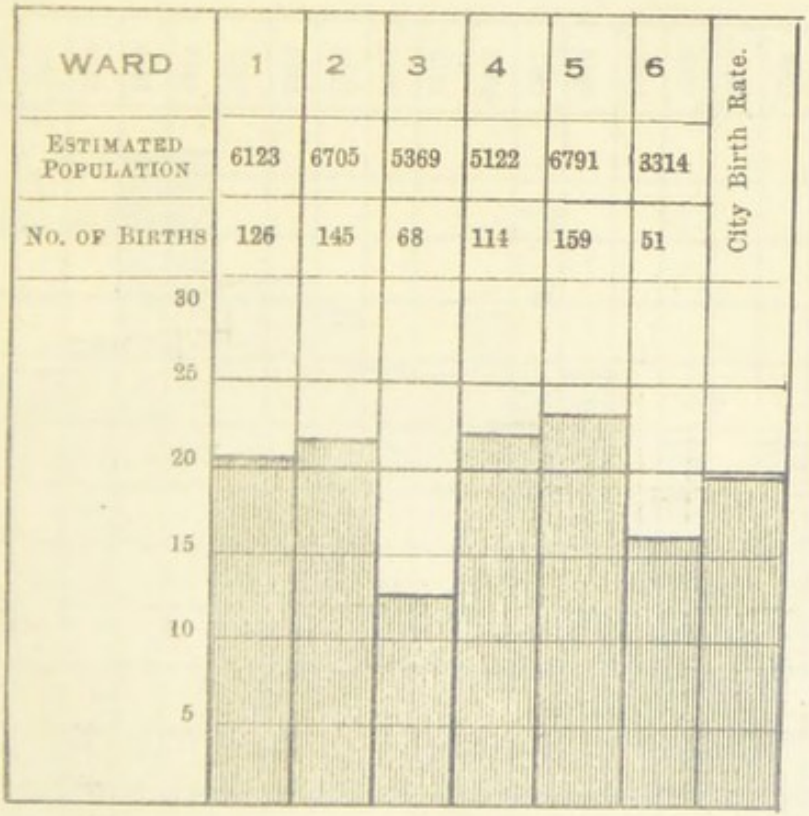
It will be noted from the foregoing chart how steadily the birth rate declined until 1918—in fact in 1899 the birth-rate was 28·1 per 1000 as compared with 12·8 per 1000 in 1918, a decline during a period of 20 years of 50 per cent.

While the birth-rate for the whole of the City is 19·7 per 1000, it may be noted that in four Wards—viz., Wards 1, 2, 4, and 5—this birth-rate is exceeded, while in Wards 3, and 6 the birth-rate is below that of the City generally. This was also the case in 1925, but it is to be noted that in every Ward the birth-rate was higher than in the previous year.

Ward 1 has a birth-rate of 20·5 per 1000; Ward 2 has a birth rate of 21·6 per 1000; Ward 3 has the lowest birth rate of 12·6; Ward 4 has a birth-rate of 22·2; Ward 5 has the highest birth-rate of 23·4, and Ward 6 has a birth-rate of 15·3 per 1000.

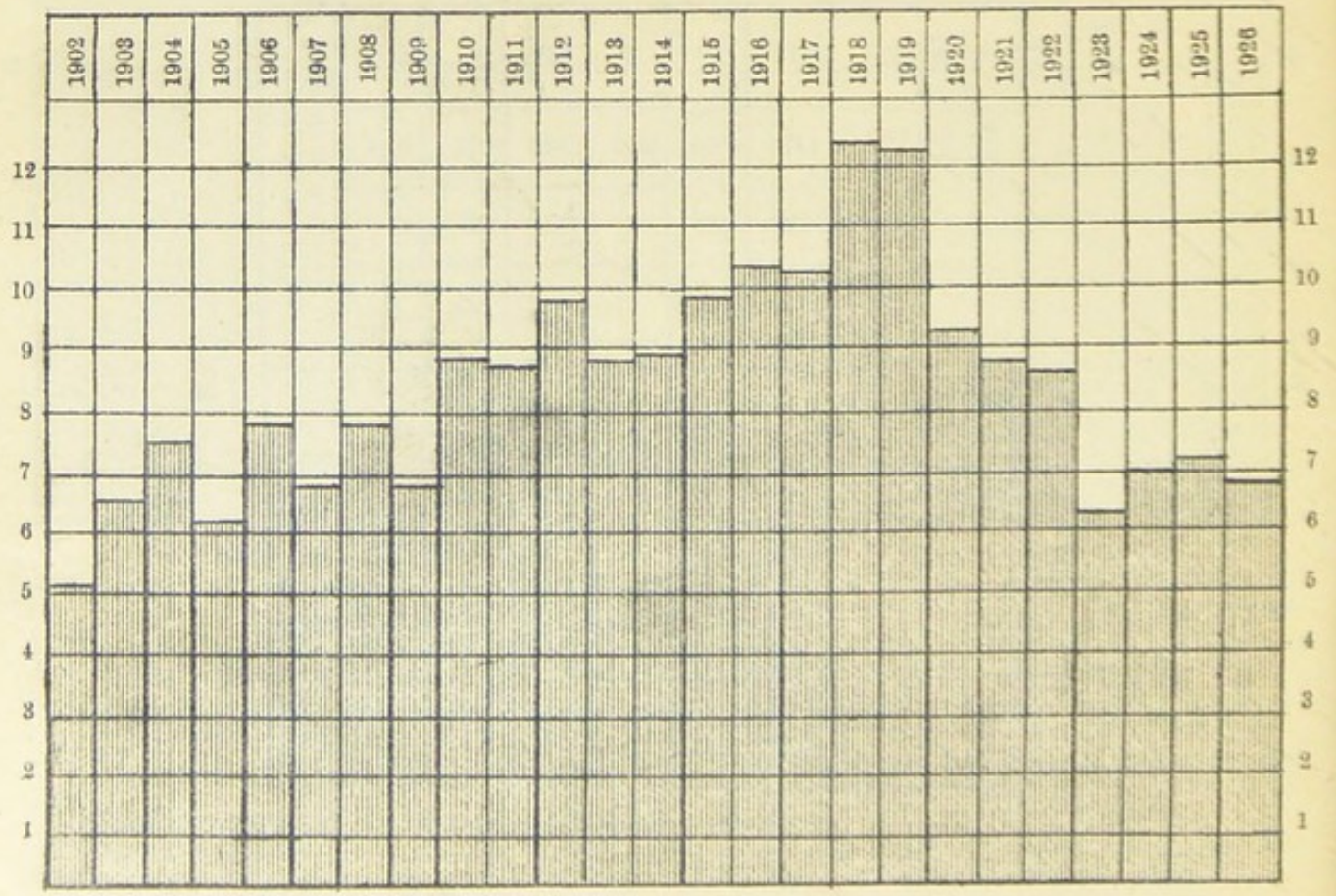
In 1925, Ward 2 had the highest birth-rate while again Ward 3 has the lowest.

CHART SHOWING THE WARD BIRTH RATE PER 1000 OF POPULATION.



Connected with the birth-rate is the question of illegitimacy and in looking back past years it may be noted that from 1899 to 1902 a gradual decline from 6·8 per cent. to 5 per cent. took place. From the accompanying chart it will be seen that from the latter year there tended to be a steady increase until it reached a record of slightly over 12 per cent. in 1918. In the year following the rate was very slightly lower, but in the succeeding years there was a considerable decline, and this year stands at 6·8 per cent., a figure considerably higher than one desires, but a great improvement over previous years. It is at the same time only right to state that this unsatisfactory phase in relation to births is more than a local circumstance. Associated with illegitimacy, unfortunately, is an increased infantile mortality. This is especially so during the first month of life, and is largely due to the fact that, in addition to the causes of death common to all infants, the mother of the illegitimate child is often under circumstances where she cannot do justice to her child and, it may be, even indifferent to its welfare.

CHART SHOWING PERCENTAGE OF ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS DURING THE PAST 25 YEARS.



DEATHS.

The deaths registered in the Burgh during the year numbered 574, of which 154 were classed by our Registrar as rural, *i.e.*, persons dying within, but not belonging to the Burgh. There were also three landward deaths.

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CITY MALE AND FEMALE DEATHS DURING EACH MONTH OF THE YEAR.

(Not including deaths of citizens without the Burgh.)

MONTH.	Male.	Female.	Total.
January, ...	15	32	47
February, ...	21	17	38
March, ...	16	17	33
April, ...	21	23	44
May, ...	18	18	36
June, ...	10	13	23
July, ...	16	12	28
August, ...	14	20	34
September, ...	21	8	29
October, ...	9	15	24
November, ...	20	13	33
December, ...	22	29	51
Total of City, ...	203	217	420
Rural, ...	80	74	154
Total, ...	283	291	574

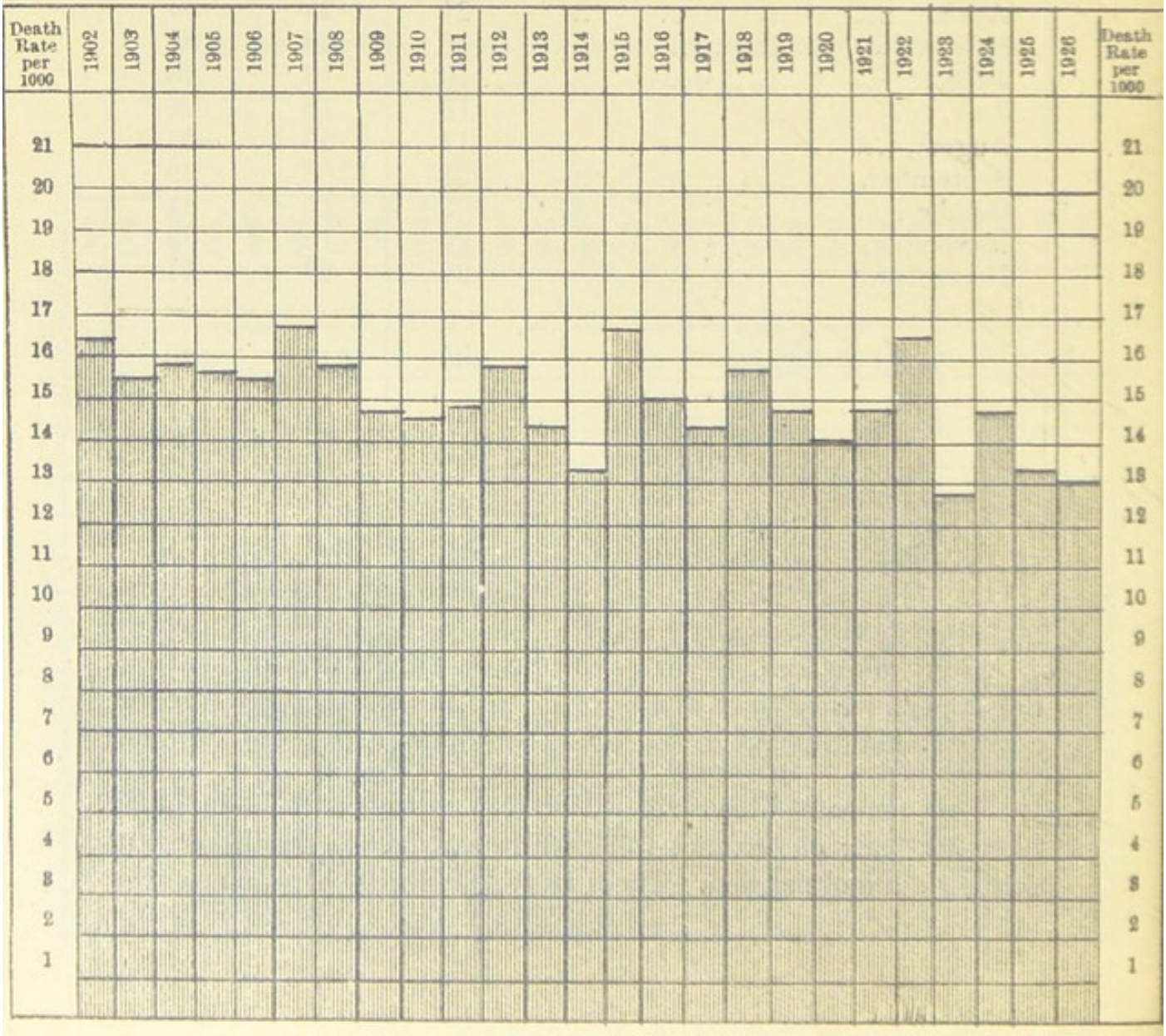
After taking into account the deaths of citizens outside the Burgh boundaries, 15 in number, the annual mortality rate for the year is 13 per 1000, as compared with 13·3 in 1925.

If we compare this year's death-rate with the death-rates of only 20 years back one cannot fail to find satisfaction in the present existing state of matters. Then, 18 to 20 per 1000 and even over

was the rule rather than the exception. In the preface to my annual reports of 1903 and 1906 I stated that these reports were not only the most satisfactory which it had been my province to submit, but, to the best of my knowledge, the most satisfactory which had ever been presented to the Local Authority—the annual mortality for the City being at the exceedingly low rate of 15·5 per 1000.

Again, in 1914, I was able to record that the death rate was only between 13 and 14 per 1000; while in 1923 the mortality rate was the lowest ever recorded in the annals of the City, viz., 12·7 per 1000. This year's rate is 13 per 1000, not a record, but a rate considerably lower than the average of the last 20 years, and shows that Perth has kept abreast of the times in all things pertaining to the welfare of its inhabitants.

CHART SHOWING THE DEATH RATE FOR THE PAST 25 YEARS.



One pleasing feature, which will be referred to again in more detail, is the fact that a large number of deaths occurred in old people, and it is gratifying to record that no less than 47 per cent. of the total deaths occurred in persons over 65 years of age, being 3 per cent. more than in the previous year.

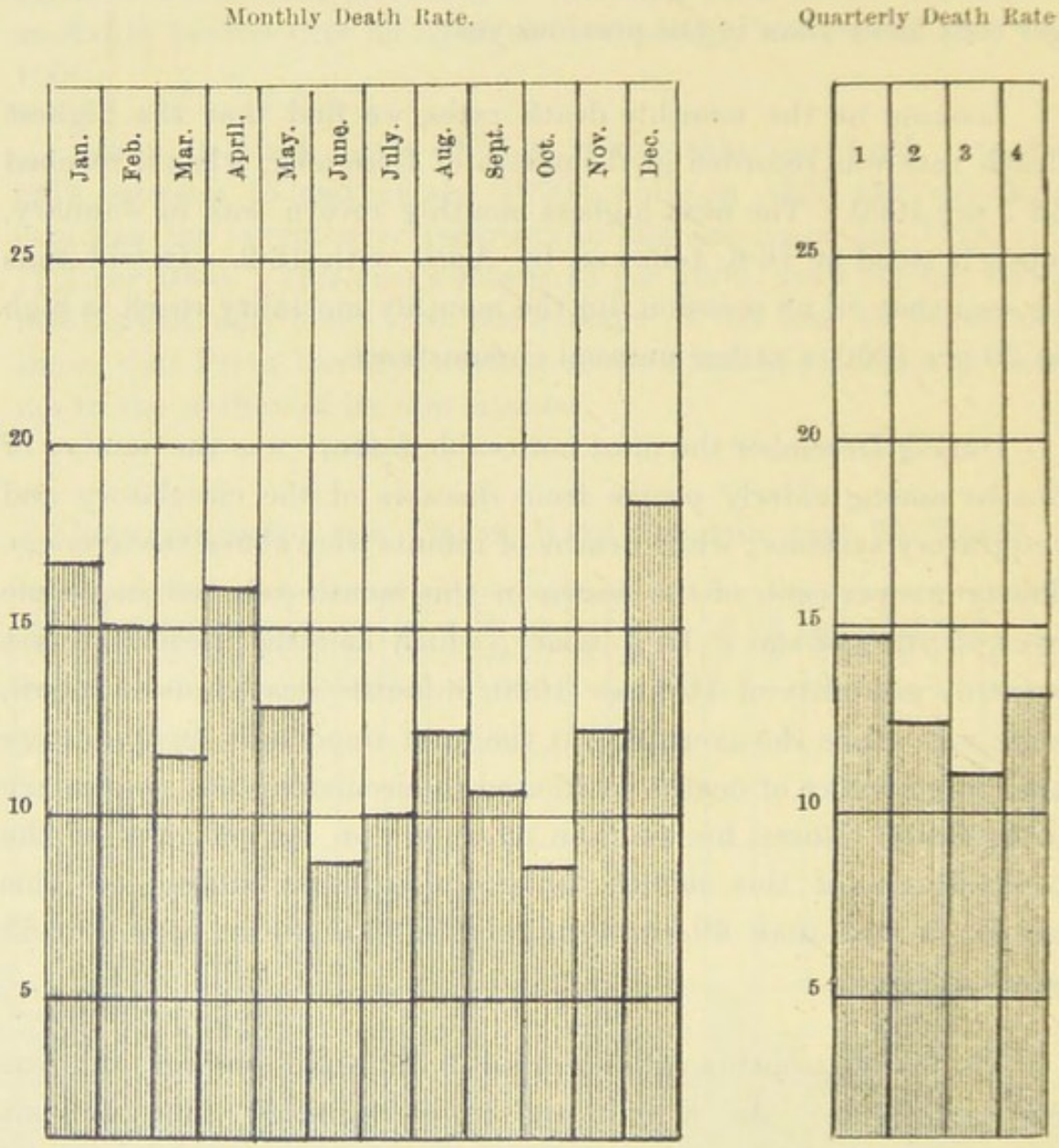
Looking at the monthly death rates, we find that the highest death rate was recorded in the month of December, when it reached 18·2 per 1000. The next highest monthly return was in January, when it stood at 16·8, followed by April with 16·2. It will thus be seen that on no occasion did the monthly mortality reach as high as 20 per 1000, a rather unusual circumstance.

During December the most noticeable feature was the number of deaths among elderly people from diseases of the circulatory and respiratory systems ; while deaths of infants were above the average. Thirty-one per cent. of the deaths in this month occurred in people over 65 years of age. In January, which had the second highest monthly mortality of 16·8 per 1000, infantile deaths, as in April, were well above the average ; but the most important features were the large number of deaths attributed to circulatory and respiratory diseases and Cancer, no less than 23 or just on 50 per cent. of the total deaths of this month being due to these causes. In this month no less than 60 per cent. of the total deaths were over 65 years of age.

The lowest monthly rate occurred in June and October, and was 8·5 per 1000. As a rule the lowest monthly mortality has taken place in either July or September. During the month of October two deaths were registered from violence, while only one death, a number less than to be expected at this season of the year, was due to disease of the lungs. The next two months with the lowest mortality were July and September, with 10 per 1000 and 10·7 per 1000 respectively.

In the following months the death rate was above the annual rate, viz. :—January, February, April and December, while in the remaining 8 months it was below.

Chart showing the Monthly and Quarterly Death Rates per 1000 of Population for the Year 1926.



Annual Mortality Rate = 13 per 1000.

Looking at the quarterly death returns, which were, 1st quarter 14 8 per 1000, 2nd quarter 12·6, 3rd quarter 11·2 and 4th quarter 13·1, it may be noted that the second and third quarters were below the annual average. Compared with the previous year the quarterly death return is higher in the first, second and third quarters but lower in the fourth quarter.

WARD DEATHS.

TABLE SHOWING THE WARD DISTRIBUTION OF DEATHS, INCLUDING DEATHS OF CITIZENS OUTWITH THE CITY, DURING 1926.

DISTRICT.	Males.	Females.	Total
Ward 1, ...	44	47	91
Ward 2, ...	31	39	70
Ward 3, ...	32	36	68
Ward 4, ...	21	29	50
Ward 5, ...	61	52	113
Ward 6, ...	25	18	43
Total, ...	214	221	435

The figures given exhibit, however, no true relative mortality between the different Wards, because the population is different in each.

However, after careful consideration of the Census populations of 1911 and 1921 and the excess of births over deaths since the latter year, I have arrived at an estimate of the Ward population, which I believe will give a fairly true index.

	Est. Pop.	Death Rate.	1925.
Ward 1,	6123	14·8 per 1000.	14·6 per 1000.
Ward 2,	6705	10·4 ,,	13·3 ,,
Ward 3,	5369	12·6 ,,	12·3 ,,
Ward 4,	5122	9·7 ,,	12·1 ,,
Ward 5,	6791	16·6 ,,	14·5 ,,
Ward 6,	3314	12·9 ,,	9·1 ,,

As compared with 1925 it will be noted that there has been an increased mortality in all the Wards, excepting Wards 2 and 4, more particularly noticeable in Wards 5 and 6. The respective increases are as follows:—Ward 1, ·2 per 1000; Ward 3, ·3 per 1000; Ward 5, 2·1 per 1000; Ward 6, 3·8 per 1000; Wards 2 and 4 show a decrease of 2·9 per 1000 and 2·4 per 1000 respectively. It will be noted that Ward 4 has the lowest death rate of the year. Last year the best Ward mortality occurred in Ward 6 and in 1924 in Ward 1—a very exceptional occurrence.

TABLE SHOWING THE MORTALITY AT THE DIFFERENT AGE PERIODS IN THE VARIOUS WARDS FOR THE YEAR 1926

AGE.	Ward I.	Ward II.	Ward III.	Ward IV.	Ward V.	Ward VI.	Total.
Under 1 year, ...	6	12	3	1	12	2	36
1—5 years (Infant period), ...	5	7	2	1	6	1	22
5—15 years (School period), ...	2	3	3	1	—	2	11
15—25 years (Adolescent period), ..	4	1	2	2	4	1	14
25—45 years (Mature period), ...	13	5	2	5	11	2	38
45—65 years (Late-mature period), ...	21	22	12	15	30	12	112
65 and upwards (Post-mature period),...	40	20	44	25	50	23	202
Total, ...	91	70	68	50	113	43	435

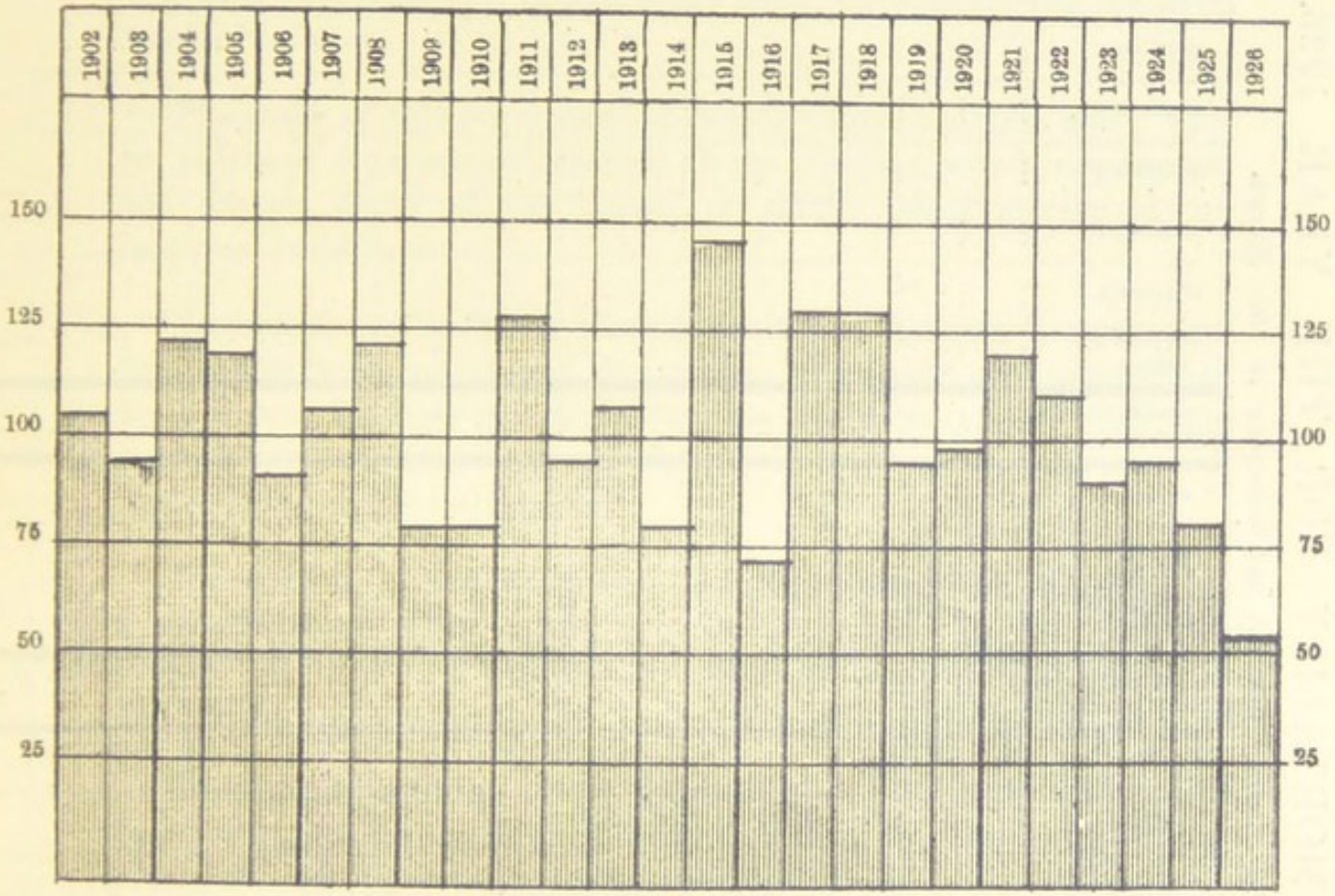
INFANTILE DEATHS.

The number of infants who died under one year was 36, so that the infantile death rate, or proportion of deaths of infants under one year to the registered births, is 54 per 1000 births, and is equal to 8 per cent. of the total deaths, as compared with 10 per cent. in 1925. Last year the number of infantile deaths was 46, equivalent to 81 per 1000 births.

In reviewing the deaths of infants for the past 25 years, as can best perhaps be done by examining the following chart, it will be

noted that on thirteen occasions the infantile death rate per 1000 births has been under the 100, the lowest recorded being 54 this year; on eight occasions between 100 and 125, and on four occasions between 125 and 150.

CHART SHOWING THE INFANTILE DEATH RATE PER 1000 BIRTHS DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.



As has been done now for several years, a printed card with instruction on "The Care, Feeding, and Clothing for Infants" is given by the Registrar to the person registering the birth of a child where no medical man has been in attendance. This card, which is supplied with a hook, so as to be easily hung on the wall, is willingly given to anyone interested in the welfare of infants.

Having always considered this portion of the death returns as very important, I have in previous years given a detailed account of these infantile deaths, and the following table exhibits in a concise manner the causes and periods of infantile deaths belonging to the City.

INFANTILE MORTALITY FOR THE YEAR 1926.

Including deaths without, but belonging to, the Burgh.

CAUSES.	Under 1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	7 days	Total under a week	Under 2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks	Total under 1 month	Under 2 months	3 months	4 months	5 months	6 months	7 months	8 months	9 months	10 months	11 months	Under 12 months	Total.
Premature Birth	3	1	...	1	...	...	...	5	...	...	...	5	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Congenital Malformations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...
Debility, Malnutrition	...	1	...	1	...	...	1	3	3	1	1	8	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	11
Convulsions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Diarrhœa, Gastritis, Enteritis, &c.	.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Zymotic Diseases: Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	1	...	...	1	2
Zymotic Diseases: Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Zymotic Diseases: Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Zymotic Diseases: Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	1	...	1	1	...	2	...	7
Tubercular Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nervous Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Syphilis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	..	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	1
Overlain (Suffocation)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Burns or Scalds	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Causes	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	5
TOTAL	3	2	3	2	...	...	1	11	5	1	1	18	2	3	3	...	2	1	1	3	...	2	1	36

The total number of deaths on the *first* day was 3. This is 7 less than the number of last year. As a rule, of the deaths during the first week the majority occur on the first day, and this is borne out in the preceding table, although this year the number is equalled by that of the third day.

The number of deaths within the *first* week was 11, being 2 less than last year at this period. This means that, of all the children who died under one year of age, every third one died during the first week of infancy.

The cause of this percentage of deaths within the first week will be gathered from a consideration of the diseases which occasioned the deaths, many of the causes no doubt being attributed to maternal conditions.

During the *second* week there is a marked decline, in fact only five deaths being recorded at this period. As a rule, each succeeding week during the first month shows a decline as compared with the week before, whereas this year there was only one death recorded in the third and fourth weeks.

The number of deaths within the **first** month was 18, showing a decrease of 5 as compared with last year, and is equivalent to 50 per cent. of the total infantile deaths, the same percentage as in the previous year.

As a result largely of the great number of deaths during the first week, the deaths during the first month are greatly in excess of any succeeding month, being equal to six times the number of any succeeding month. In 1925 this was also the case.

The large percentage of infantile deaths is easily explained by glancing at the *causes* of death, where it will be seen that Premature Births accounted for 27 per cent. of all deaths at this early period. This is below the percentage of last year. If to these cases there be added the cases which died as the result of debility at birth, we find that of the infants dying during the *first* month no less than 72 per cent. were attributable to one or other of these two causes. Of the remaining deaths at this period, one was attributed to respiratory disease, and one to specific disease.

In the **second** month many of the weaklings who had survived a month succumb at this period. In this month, and succeeding

months, debility and malnutrition continue as a cause of death. No less than 5 deaths being attributed to Malnutrition and Debility, a total of 11 deaths. Of these, which one must believe in many cases might have been prevented, all occurred under the age of four months. These figures are deplorable, and one cannot but suspect, in fact be sure, that the majority of these deaths were directly the result of improper feeding.

There is no fact more clearly established regarding the health and life of infants among the poor than that they should be entirely breast-fed for at least six or seven months. Even in the poorest surroundings the breast-fed child stands a very good chance of living, for it escapes the pitfalls and dangers lurking behind food out of a bottle.

Breast feeding is out of fashion, and it is up to us to make it fashionable. Breast milk normally consists of a watery solution of proteins, sugar vitamines, and various salts, along with fat globules suspended in it in the form of an emulsion. These ingredients vary in different women and at different times, according to the diet, exercise and physical condition of the mother.

If the mother is poorly fed, the milk suffers, though not so much as might be expected, for the tissues of the mother are drawn upon in a remarkable manner in such an emergency, in order to enable the cells of the breast to secrete normal milk. Emotion (such as anger and fear), shock and hysteria have more effect on the milk, both as regards quantity and quality, than the physical condition of the mother. Neurotic and emotional women are not good nursing mothers. A placid happy disposition, fresh air and moderate exercise encourage lactation. Alcohol is to be avoided. Stout or porter is still considered by many as a medicine for the production of milk. Its nutritive value is little or nothing. It is far from economical, and a spoonful of scotch oatmeal in a pint of water would not only be much more beneficial, but considerably less costly. She may not have the knowledge, and may be unable to exercise the careful preparation and storing of the food, which in a hot dry summer is apt to become contaminated and infected by flies.

Every woman, rich or poor, married or unmarried, should nurse her child, unless she suffers from certain diseases, or unless there be disabling defects or immaturity in the child.

Moreover, breast feeding has an enormous educational influence on the child. The child looks to the mother for what it needs most, and having obtained it, quietly sleeps till another time of need arises. This close mutual attachment has an important influence in fashioning the early mental and moral development of the child. Obedience, reverence, patience, endurance and punctuality can be gradually inculcated by a wise and sympathetic nursing mother during a six months breast feeding, and the future character of a child may thus be unconsciously created.

Unless the mother or child is losing weight or vitality, breast feeding should be contined for at least six months. Weaning of baby may be the start of trouble.

Mothers, with few exceptions, are anxious to do all they can for their babies and it is, generally, not from wilful neglect but from ignorance and carelessness that they do not do all that is right. Or it may be that they follow the advice of one who thinks she is well qualified to advise since she was the "mother of ten" who, by the will of Providence, were taken from her.

Competent and good mothers are to be found living side by side in the same street with ignorant and careless ones. The same wages are coming in, yet in one the house is tidy, the atmosphere sweet, and the children tidy; in the other squalour abounds, atmosphere stuffy, and the children dirty and verminous. The essential difference will be the amount of intelligence and care bestowed upon infant life and the wise or unwise spending of wages.

While the deaths in the first month reached 18, in the succeeding months the average was less than 2. But what must be particularly observed was that respiratory diseases were responsible for 6 deaths of infants at this period—truly, if not an appalling number, at least an appalling average, for we find that just on 37 per cent. of the deaths of infants between one and twelve months were the result of chest troubles. One pictures in one's mind that many of those deaths were preventable.

On the other hand Whooping cough and Diarrhœa, as factors in infant mortality, was absent throughout the year, while it is pleasing to record that no infant deaths occurred from burns or scalds or from having been overlain.

As regards the houses in which these infantile deaths occurred, it may be mentioned that 3 took place in the South Street and Cross Street, 2 in New Row and Castle Gable, and the remainder in different parts of the City. The extraordinary thing was that during the year not an infantile death occured in the High Street.

As regards occupations of Parents, the most prominent was that of railway servants, followed by that of labourers and joiners and those engaged in the glass industry. It is pleasing to note that there was only one case of a domestic servant. In former reports one had to deal with a fair number of deaths of infants whose mothers were servants and whose infants had been farmed out.

Another point may be noted, viz., that the death rate among the illegitimate is, as might be expected, considerably higher than among the legitimate. The number of legitimate births during the year was 616. Of these, 30 died—a percentage of 5 per cent. The illegitimate births were 45, with a death roll of 6, being equivalent to 17 per cent. Such figures would indicate two things, either that the class of parents of illegitimate children is of a very low order from a health point of view, or what is much more likely—is that the illegitimate child does not receive the kindly consideration and care which a legitimate child gets.

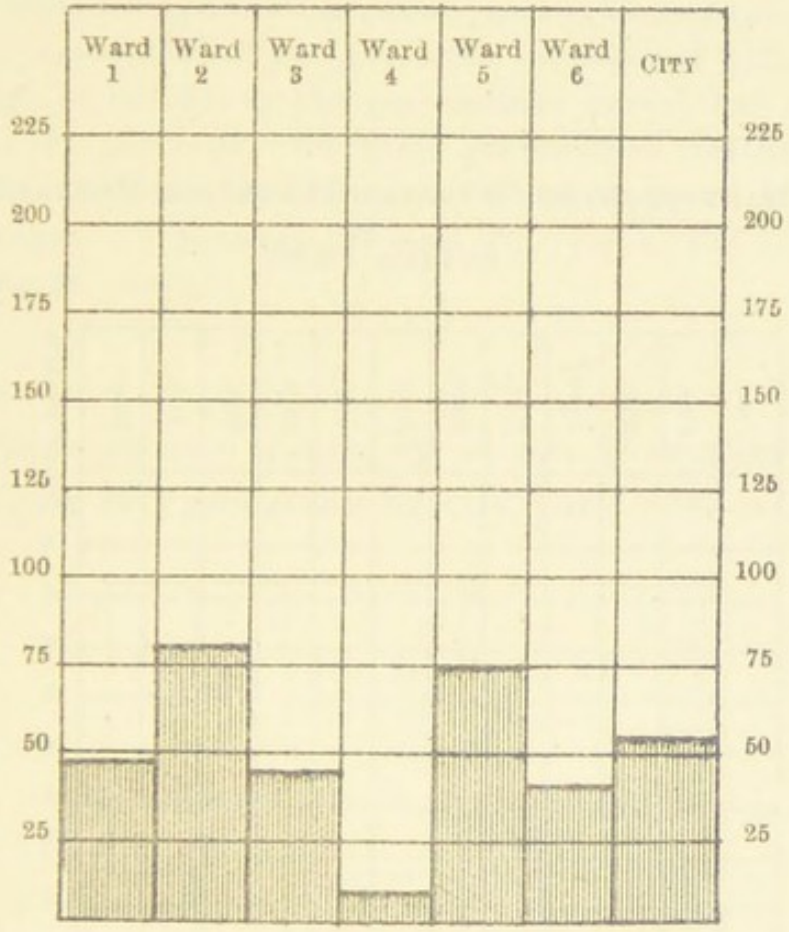
Parents have their duties to their children, so also has the State. It is not the duty of the State to take away a parent's responsibilities, but there are cases where, for the sake of the infant, the State must take action. We must be agreed as to the value of a child's life, not only from a State view, but from a natural and humanitarian point of view, and we must be determined to uphold it.

Considering these infantile deaths from a Ward point of view, and in relation to the births in each Ward, we find that

					1925.
Ward 1 has an infantile death rate of			47	per 1000 births	118
,,	2	,,	,,	82	,,	88
,,	3	,,	,,	41	,,	18
,,	4	,,	,,	8	,,	69
,,	5	,,	,,	75	,,	87
,,	6	,,	,,	39	,,	46

the infantile death rate for the whole City being 54 per 1000 births.

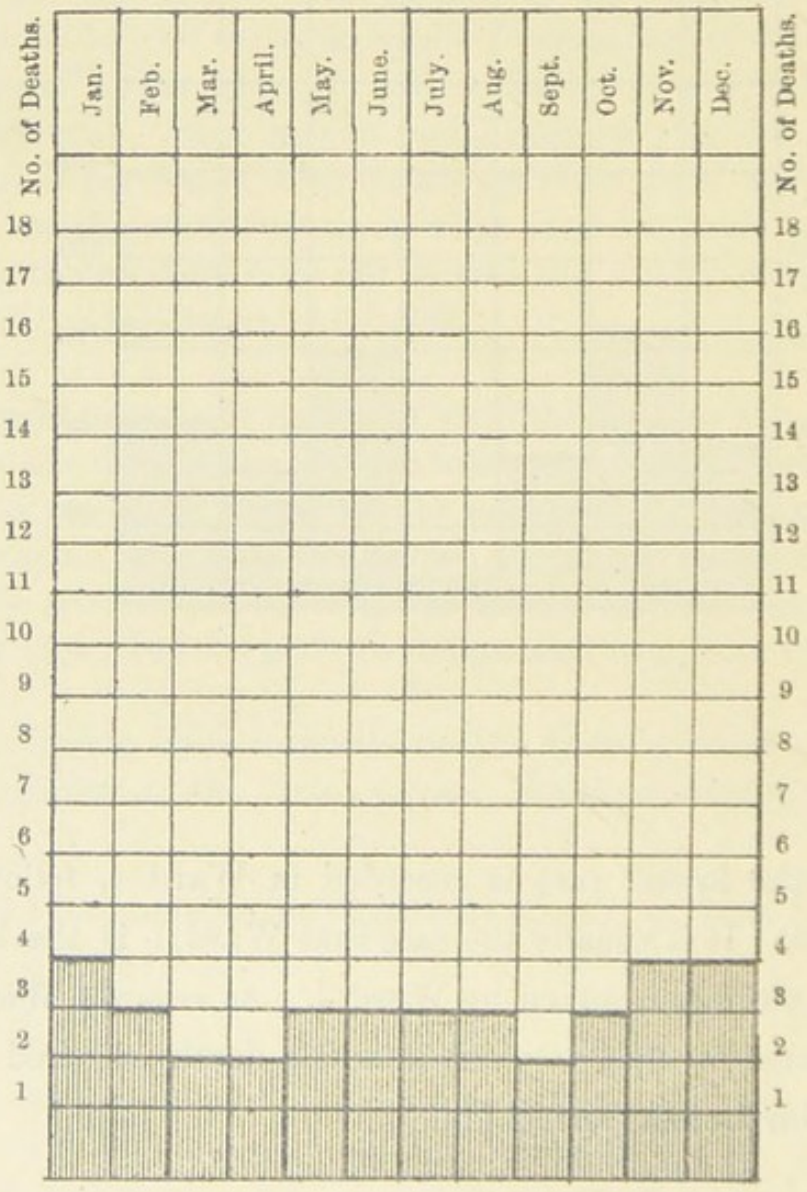
CHART SHOWING THE INFANTILE DEATH RATE PER 1000 BIRTHS IN THE VARIOUS WARDS AND CITY.



This year the lowest rate is recorded in Ward 4, followed by Wards 6 and 3. It is usually the case that Ward 1 is the highest. This year the position is taken by Ward 2. As regards Ward 4 it is worthy of mention that only one infantile death occurred during the year, the births numbering 114.

The following chart is interesting as showing how the infantile deaths vary throughout the year. In three months, viz., January, November and December, the number was above the monthly average; while in March, April and September it was below. The greatest monthly number was 4 and occurred in the months first mentioned, followed by the summer months with 3.

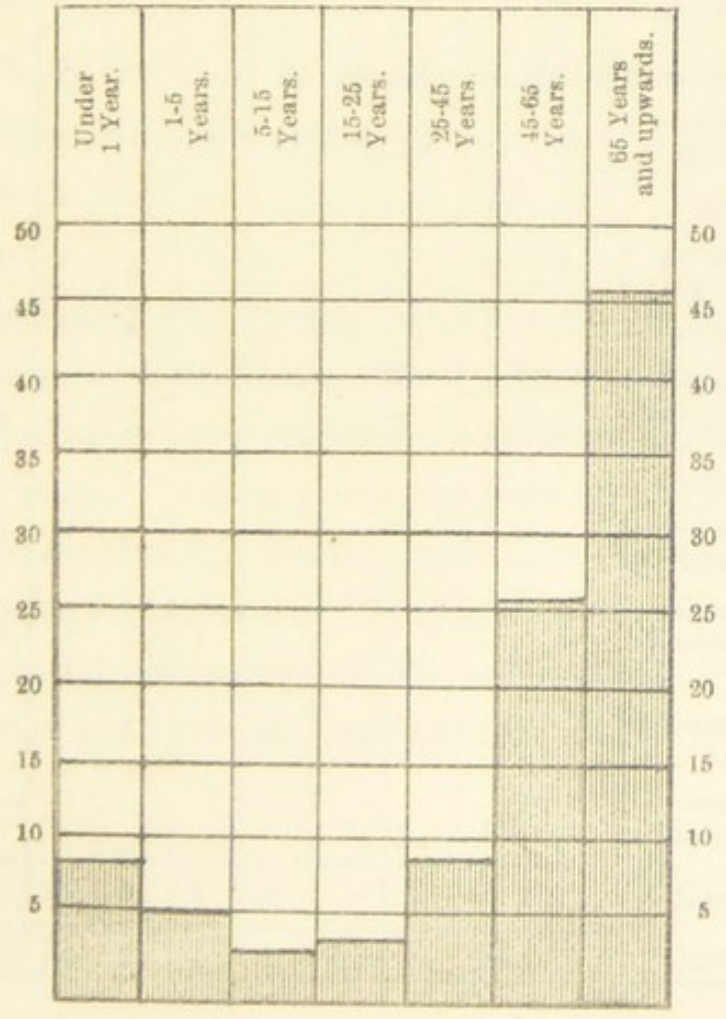
CHART SHOWING SEASONAL INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING 1926.



OTHER AGE PERIODS.

The deaths of children between 1 and 5 years were 22, being equivalent to 5 per cent. of the total deaths; between 5 and 15 years (school period) 11 or 2·5 per cent.; between 15 and 25 years (adolescent period) 14 or 3·2 per cent.; between 25 and 45 years (early mature period) 38 or 8·7 per cent.; between 45 and 65 years (late mature period) 112 or 25·7 per cent.; and at 65 years and upwards (post mature period) 202 or 46·4 per cent. Compared with last year the percentage of deaths at the post-mature period has increased, when it was 44 per cent. Of these post-mature deaths 42 were between 65 and 70 years, 102 between 70 and 80 years, 44 between 80 and 90 years, 10 between 90 and 100 years, the oldest age recorded being 99 years.

CHART SHOWING THE MORTALITY AT THE DIFFERENT AGE PERIODS AS PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL DEATHS.



CAUSES OF DEATH.

(1.) ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

The number of deaths ascribed to zymotic causes, including those from septic causes—Septicæmia, Pyæmia, Puerperal Fever, and Erysipelas—and those from Diarrhœa, Gastritis, and Gastro-Enteritis, as well as those from Venereal disease, was 27, which is equivalent to a death rate of ·804 per 1000 persons living.

TABLE SHOWING THE MORTALITY FROM PRINCIPAL ZYMOTIC DISEASES AT THE DIFFERENT AGE PERIODS.

DISEASE.	Under 1 Year.	1-5 Years.	5-15 Years.	15-25 Years.	25-45 Years.	45-65 Years.	65 and upwards.	Total.	Death Rate per 1000.	1925 Total.	1925 Death Rate per 1000.
Erysipelas -	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	·059	...	...
Diphtheria -	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	2	·059	2	·060
Scarlet Fever	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	2	·059	11	·331
Typhoid Fever	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	2	·060
Measles -	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	2	·059	8	·240
Whooping Cough	2	2	..	...	...	...	...	4	·118	1	·060
Influenza -	...	...	1	...	2	1	4	8	·236	3	·090
Diarrhœa, including Gastritis and Enteritis	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	·029	7	·210
Poliomyelitis Ant. Ac.	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	·029	...	...
Epidemic Encephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	·029	...	...
Puerperal Fever	..	...	...	..	1	...	1	2	·059	...	...
German Measles	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	·029	...	...
Total -	4	5	4	..	5	2	6	26	·777		
1925 -	7	12	8	2	2	1	2	34	1·024		

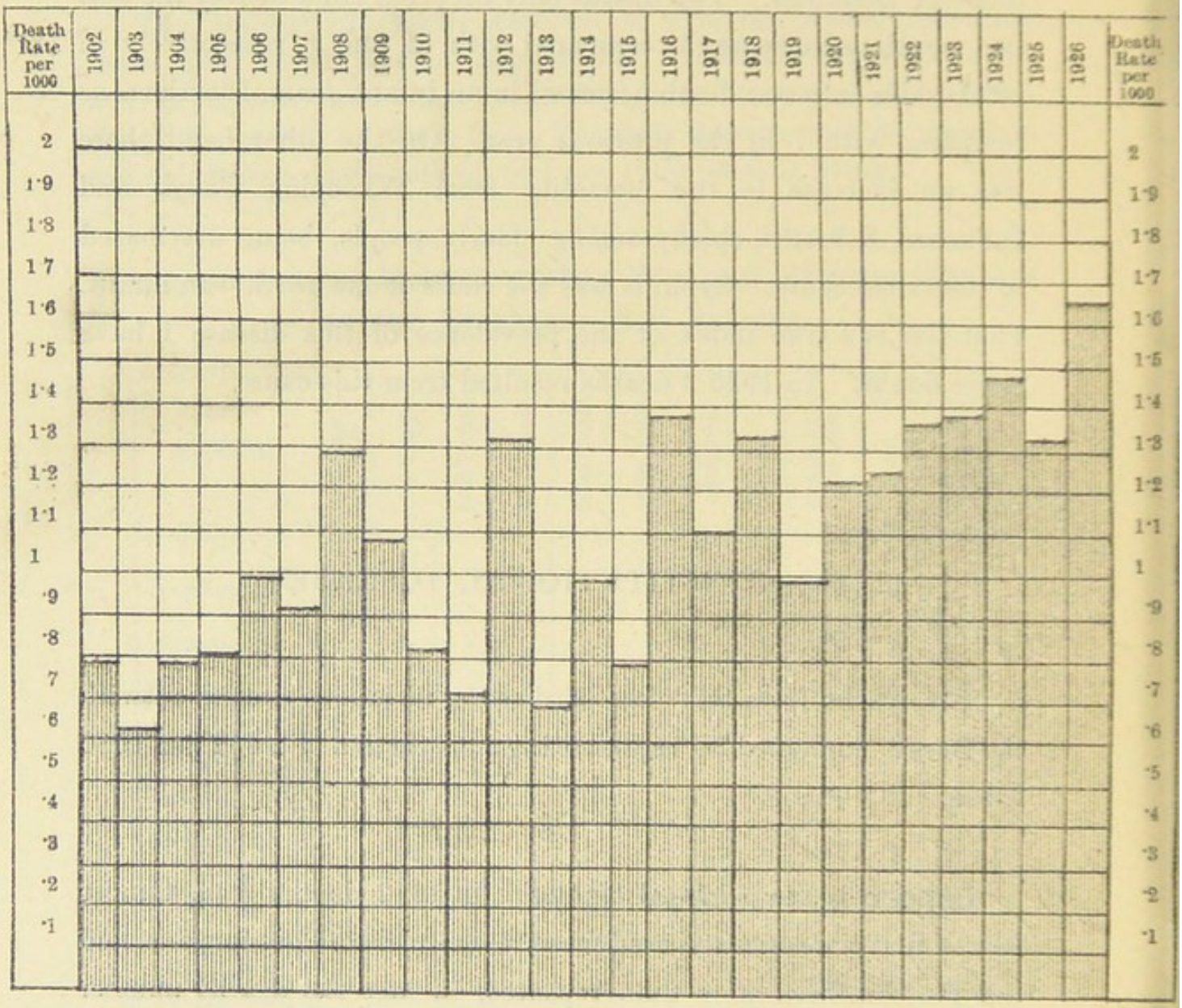
From the foregoing it will be seen that there has been a considerable fall in the zymotic death rate. This has been largely due to the decline in the mortality from Scarlet Fever, Measles and Summer Diarrhœa. Two deaths only occurred from each of the first two mentioned diseases as compared with 11 and 8 respectively in 1925 while only one death occurred in an infant from Diarrhœa as compared with 7 in the previous year. On the other hand there was an increase in the mortality from Whooping Cough and Influenza, 8 deaths, chiefly among elderly people, being attributed to the latter cause. Syphilis was the cause of one death—an infant. That this is a true index of the prevalence of this disease I have grave doubt. In 1925 4 deaths resulted from this cause.

(2.) CONSTITUTIONAL DISEASES.

The deaths from this class of disease, including deaths outwith the Burgh, numbered 88, representing a proportion of 2·632 per 1000 living.

Cancer is the principal disease. In 1912 deaths from Cancer for the first time outnumbered those resulting from Consumption, and this year has been more than repeated, in fact the deaths number more than four times. It appears evident from a study of mortality tables for past years that this disease tends to be on the increase, in fact, there has been an increase of 25 per cent. during the past year. The deaths from Cancer numbered 55, and were equivalent to a death rate of 1·645 per 1000, as compared with 1·325 per 1000 in 1925.

CHART SHOWING THE DEATH RATE FROM CANCER OR MALIGNANT DISEASE DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.



Phthisis, or tuberculosis of the lungs, which used to be classed as a constitutional disease, has been a notifiable disease since 1912. During the year 12 deaths, including one without the Burgh, occurred from this cause. Three occurred between 15 and 25 years, 5 between 25 and 45 years, and 4 between 45 and 65 years of age. This is 5 less than in the previous year, and based on the estimated population of 33,425, is equivalent to ·329 per 1000, as compared with ·515 in 1925.

The percentage of deaths to total deaths was 2·5, and the death rate as stated was equivalent to ·329 per 1000 persons living. Compared with the corresponding figures of 1900, viz., 9·2 percentage to total deaths and a death rate of 1·9 per 1000, it will be evident that the factors which made this disease to be classed as the "white scourge," are slowly but surely being got under control.

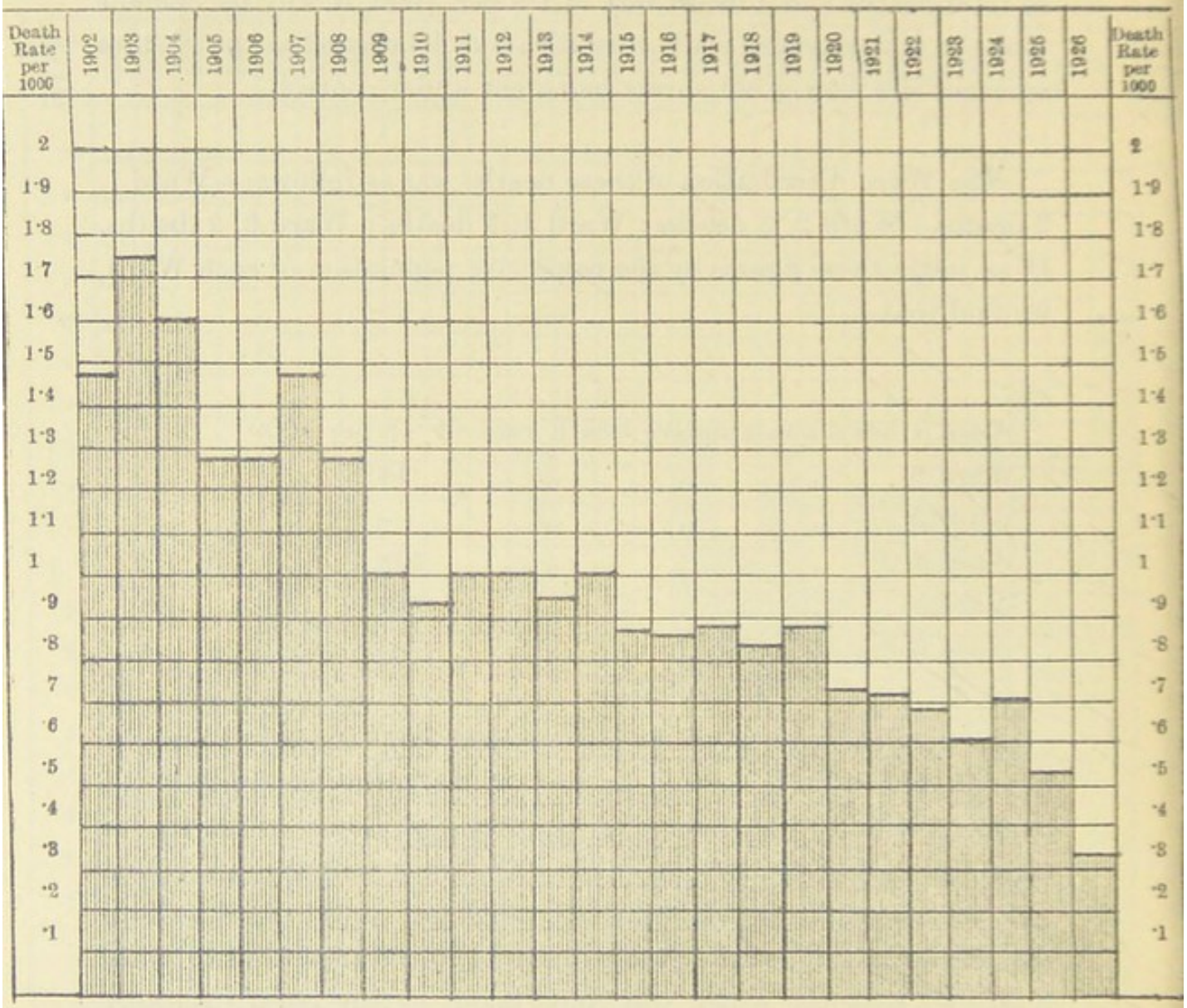
The Ward distribution of these deaths was as follows:—Ward 1, 3 deaths; Ward 2, 3 deaths; Ward 4, 3 deaths; Ward 5, 2 deaths. If we judge these figures by the respective population of each Ward, we find that—

						1925.
Ward 1 has a consumptive death rate of				·48	per 1000.	1·15
Ward 2	,,	,,	,,	·44	,,	·75
Ward 3	,,	,,	,,	—	,,	·18
Ward 4	,,	,,	,,	·58	,,	·19
Ward 5	,,	,,	,,	·29	,,	·29
Ward 6	,,	,,	,,	—	,,	·30

In previous reports I have given considerable space to a description of this malady, as well as to the preventive measures to be adopted, both by the individual and by the Local Authority, to stamp this disease out of the country, but it is well to again record that an important administrative change has occurred as regards the treatment of insured persons. In 1920 the treatment of these insurance patients, which was undertaken by the Local Insurance Committee, came within the scope of the Local Authority's duties, and now, not only has the Local Authority to provide institutional treatment or domiciliary treatment in the way of granting provisions where considered necessary, and the payment of medicine incurred under the treatment of the doctor, but they are also now responsible for the care of all forms of tuberculosis.

The death rate from this cause is a record for the City, and a glance at the following chart will show how satisfactory has been the decline during the past years.

CHART SHOWING THE DEATH RATE FROM PHTHISIS DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.



(3.) LOCAL DISEASES.

The number of deaths registered under this class was 227. These causes give a death rate of 6·7 per 1000, as compared with 7·1 in 1925. No death was attributed to diseases of the lymphatic system, or to a disease of an organ of special sense, *e.g.*, the ear, while deaths as the result of "confinement" numbered five, being two more than in the previous year.

As has been the case in previous years, deaths from nervous, respiratory and circulatory causes are the most prominent.

As regards respiratory troubles, Bronchitis is the commonest, followed by Broncho-pneumonia and Pneumonia. 8 deaths of infants, 8 deaths of children between 1 and 5 years of age, and 21 deaths of persons over 65 years of age occurred from pulmonary trouble. This is a number somewhat less than last year.

Attention has already been drawn to the number of infantile deaths from respiratory disease, and when we add to that number the number of those dying between the age of one and five years, we have a total of 16—a figure slightly less than last year, but a figure surely capable of reduction.

Nervous diseases account for 59 deaths. No less than 38 deaths took place from apoplexy, and of these the great majority occurred in people over 60 years of age; in fact, no less than 21 occurred in persons over 65. As regards diseases of the Circulatory System, 34 deaths were attributed to heart disease and 3 to syncope.

(4). VIOLENCE.

The number of deaths attributed to "violent" causes during the year was 15, being the same number as in 1925. Three were due to accidents from motor vehicles, while two were the result of falls, etc., three from drowning, and one from coal gas poisoning. I am glad to report, however, that during the year no infant death resulted from over-lying, burns or scalds. One death resulted from burns in an elderly person, a similar number to the previous year. Two deaths were suicidal as against six in 1925. Both were the result of drowning. One death of a young child, from drowning, was due to a "violent" act of its mother.

Summary of Deaths.

		1925
I. SPECIFIC FEBRILE OR ZYMOTIC DISEASES—		
1. Miasmatic Diseases	21	27
2. Diarrhœal (Enteritis, etc.)	1	7
3. Malarial	—	—
4. Zoogeneous	—	—
5. Venereal	1	4
6. Septic	4	3
II. PARASITIC DISEASES	—	—
III. DIETETIC DISEASES	2	—
IV. CONSTITUTIONAL DISEASES ..	88	80
V. DEVELOPMENTAL DISEASES ...	52	51
VI. LOCAL DISEASES—		
1. Diseases of Nervous System ...	59	47
2. Diseases of Organs of Special Sense ...	—	—
3. Diseases of Circulatory System ...	77	88
4. Diseases of Respiratory System ...	52	63
5. Diseases of Digestive System ...	16	11
6. Diseases of Lymphatic System and Ductless Glands	—	—
7. Diseases of Urinary System ...	19	20
8. Diseases of Organs of Generation ...	—	—
9. Diseases of Organs of Parturition ...	5	3
10. Diseases of Locomotary System ...	—	—
11. Diseases of Integumentary System ...	—	—
VII. VIOLENCE—		
1. Accident or Negligence	13	9
2. Suicide	2	6
VIII. ILL-DEFINED OR NON-SPECIFIED CAUSES	24	15
Total	435	434

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The total number of notifiable diseases recorded during the year 1926 was 290, as compared with an average of over 300 in the previous ten years.

TABLE SHOWING THE WARD DISTRIBUTION OF CASES NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1926, WITH NUMBER OF CASES TREATED IN HOSPITAL.

NATURE OF DISEASE.	WARD 1.		WARD 2.		WARD 3.		WARD 4.		WARD 5.		WARD 6.		Treated in Hospital	Treated in Home	Total
	Under 5 years	5 years & over	Under 5 years	5 years & over	Under 5 years	5 years & over	Under 5 years	5 years & over	Under 5 years	5 years & over	Under 5 years	5 years & over			
Smallpox, ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Typhoid Fever, ...	..	...	..	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	...	2
Ophthalmia Neonatorum,	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	2	2	4
Pneumonia, ...	1	4	...	3	...	4	...	2	...	3	...	4	4	17	21
Scarlet Fever, ...	5	21	15	32	7	13	7	28	12	15	2	12	130	42	172
Diphtheria, ...	...	...	1	4	1	1	1	7	1	...	1	...	16	1	17
Erysipelas, ..	1	4	...	3	...	4	...	1	...	6	...	5	3	21	24
Phthisis, ...	...	4	...	1	...	3	...	6	...	...	...	3	6	11	17
Tuberculosis other than Phthisis,	2	5	2	4	...	3	2	5	1	1	...	1	23	3	26
Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	..	...	3	3	...	3
Puerperal Fever, ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	3	...	...	2	2	4
	11	41	19	47	8	29	10	50	15	29	3	28	191	99	290
TOTAL, ...	52		66		37		60		44		31				

As compared with the previous year there has been a decrease of 384 cases.

I am glad to report that there has been no recurrence of Small-pox or Typhus Fever. It is over twenty-five years since there was a case of the latter disease in Perth, and then it was a case of a tramp from Glasgow. No case of Cerebro-Spinal Fever was reported, but three cases of Sleeping Sickness were reported from one Institution in the City.

The average monthly number of cases was 24, being exceeded on six occasions, these occurring at the beginning and end of the year. The largest number of cases was reported in October, November and February, when there was a large number of cases of Scarlet Fever, the notifiable cases for these months being 44, 32 and 29 respectively. The smallest number occurred in July, when only 13 cases of infectious disease were notified, followed by 14 and 17 in August and June. In fact nearly 35 per cent. of the cases were notified in the last quarter of the year.

As regards the age period, 56 were under 5 years of age, and 234 above that period. Last year the number affected at the infant period was 21 per cent. of the total. This year the percentage has decreased, having fallen to 19 per cent.—all the number of infant cases, excepting one of pneumonia and erysipelas, four opthalmia neonatorum, and five of diphtheria, being those of scarlet fever and tuberculosis.

The number of these notifiable cases, including one or two cases in the Infirmary, treated in Hospital or Sanatorium was 189, or 65 per cent. of the total cases, as compared with 72 per cent. in the previous year.

With reference to the Ward Distribution of these Infectious Diseases, if we consider (which is the proper way) the cases as so many per 1000 of the population of each Ward (or better still, were that possible, as so many per 1000 of the young people in each Ward) we find that Ward 3 with 6·8 per 1000 stands for the year as the Ward freest from infectious trouble, while Ward 4, followed by Ward 2, was the most affected.

The figures for the various Wards are:—

					1925
Ward 1	=	8·4 per 1000 of estimated population,			24·8
Ward 2	=	9·8	,,	,, ,,	18·7
Ward 3	=	6·8	,,	,, ,,	14·6
Ward 4	=	11·7	,,	,, ,,	29·8
Ward 5	=	6·4	,,	,, ,,	21·6
Ward 6	=	9·3	,,	,, ,,	9·7

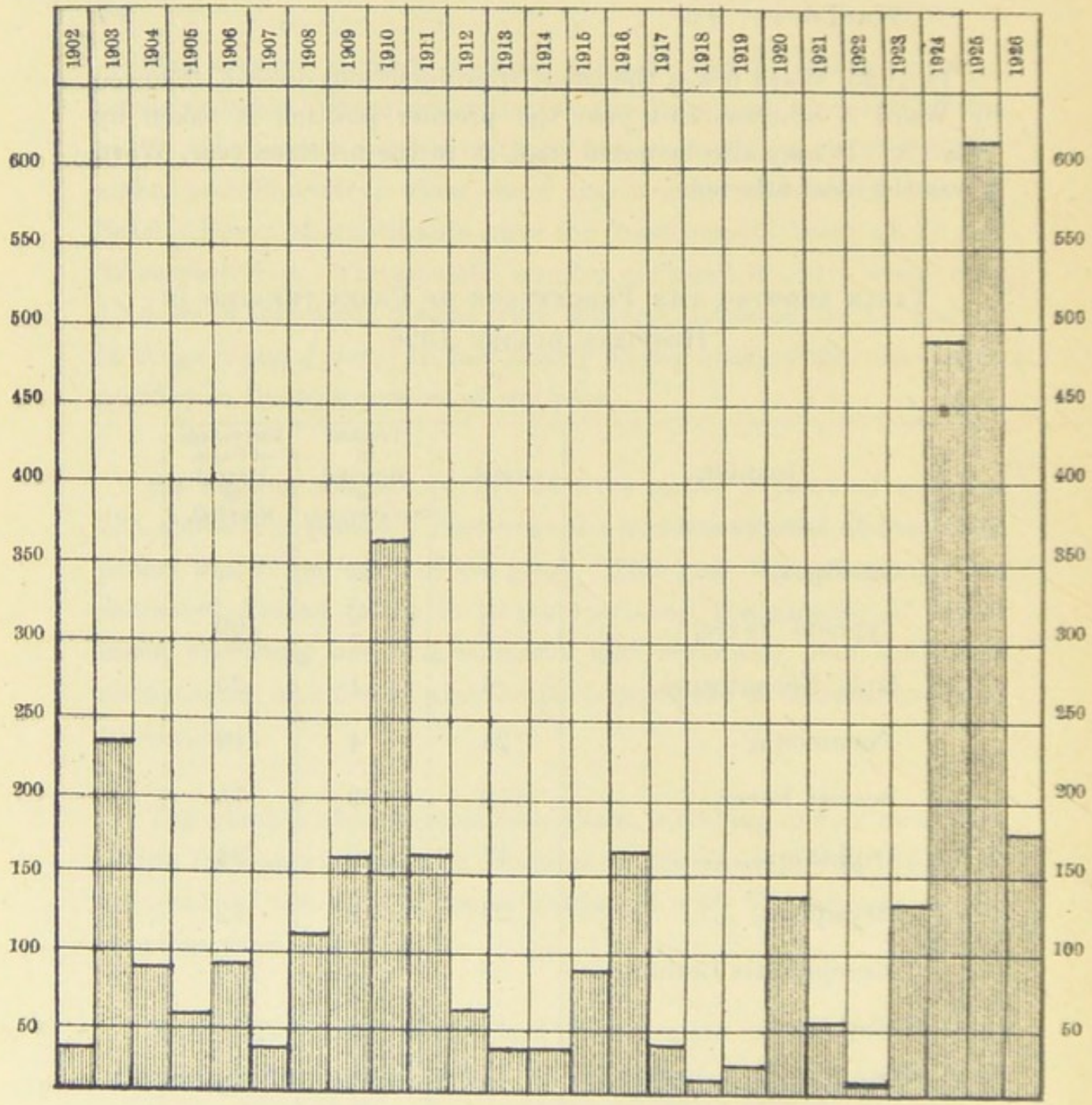
In 1925, Ward 6 was the freest from infectious disease, followed by Ward 3, whereas this year the premier position is taken by Ward 5. It may also be noted that, as in the previous year, Ward 4 was the most affected.

TABLE SHOWING THE PERCENTAGE OF CASES TREATED IN HOSPITAL DURING 1926.

DISEASE.	Total.	Treated in Hospital or Sanatorium.	Percentage of Cases treated in Hospital.
Smallpox, ...	...	...	...
Typhoid Fever, ...	2	2	100
Oph. Neonatorum, ...	4	1	25
Pneumonia, ...	21	4	19
Scarlet Fever, ...	172	129	75
Diphtheria, ...	17	16	94
Erysipelas, ...	24	3	12
Encephalitis Lethargica	3	3	100
Phthisis, ...	17	6	35
Tuberculosis (other than Phthisis),	26	23	88
Puerperal Fever, ...	4	2	50
Total, ...	290	189	65

SCARLET FEVER.

CHART SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CASES OF SCARLET FEVER NOTIFIED DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.

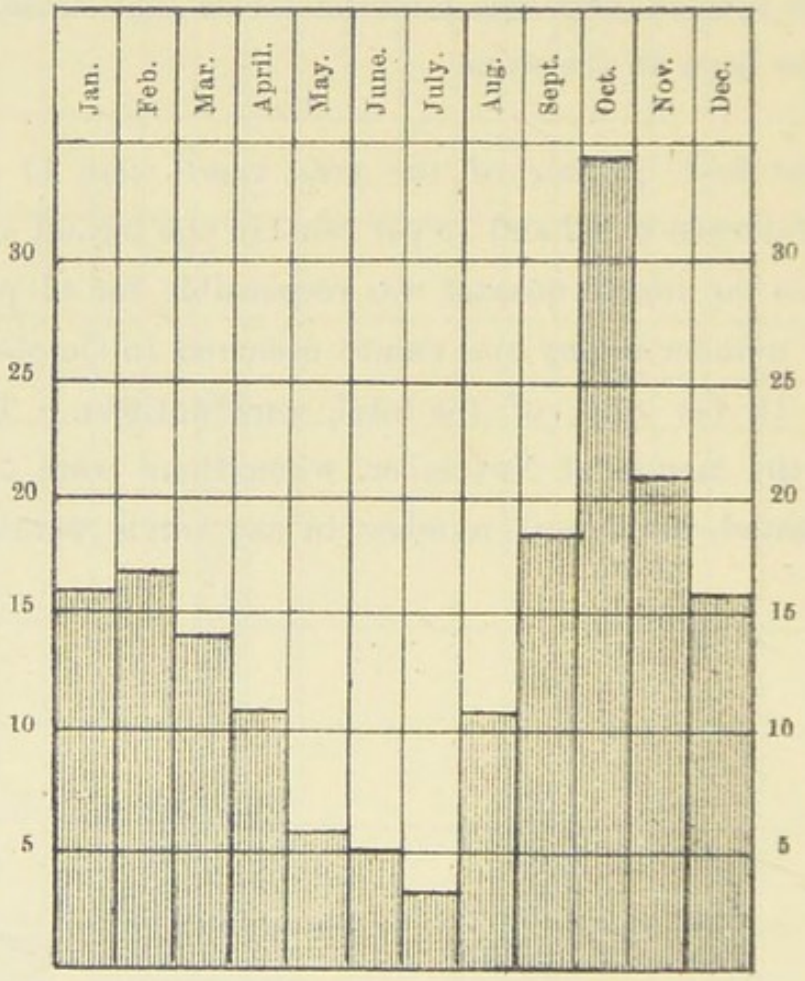


A glance at the chart recording the cases during the past twenty-five years will clearly show the tendency of this disease to lie more or less quiescent for some years and then manifest itself,

In 1922 only 19 cases were notified, followed in the following year with 138. In 1924 there was an increase of 357. In the following year there was a further increase, this figure being exceeded by 68, viz. :—563, and constituting a record in the annals of the City. This year there has been, as was to be expected, a marked decrease, the number having fallen to 172, or 391 less than in 1925. As will be noted from the monthly chart, the disease was most prevalent in the last quarter of the year. The lowest point reached was during the summer season, viz.:—July and June, the cases for these two months being 3 and 5 respectively. With the opening of the schools there was a recrudescence, but since October the disease has been on the wane.

During the first quarter of the year there were 47 cases or 27 per cent., followed by 12 and 18 per cent. in the second and third quarters, while the fourth quarter was responsible for 41 per cent. The greatest number in any one month occurred in October, when 34 cases, or 19 per cent. of the total, were notified. This was followed by the month of November, when there were 21 cases. As already stated, the lowest number in any single month was in July, viz., 3.

CHART SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CASES OF SCARLET FEVER DURING THE YEAR 1926.



As regards the sex, 88 cases occurred among females and 84 among males; while as regards the age period, 47 occurred among children under 5 years of age, or 27 per cent. This is a much higher percentage than the previous year, when it stood at 21 per cent. As regards the other age periods, 99 or 57 per cent. occurred between 5 and 15 years, 15 or 8 per cent. between 15 and 25 years, 10 or 5 per cent. between 25 and 45 years, while there was 1 case at 45 years of age.

As regards the Ward Distribution, Ward 3 is the lowest with 3·7 per 1000, followed by Ward 5 with 3·9 per 1000. Ward 2 followed by Ward 4, had the highest. The figures relating to the various Wards for 1926, with comparison for 1925, are as under:—

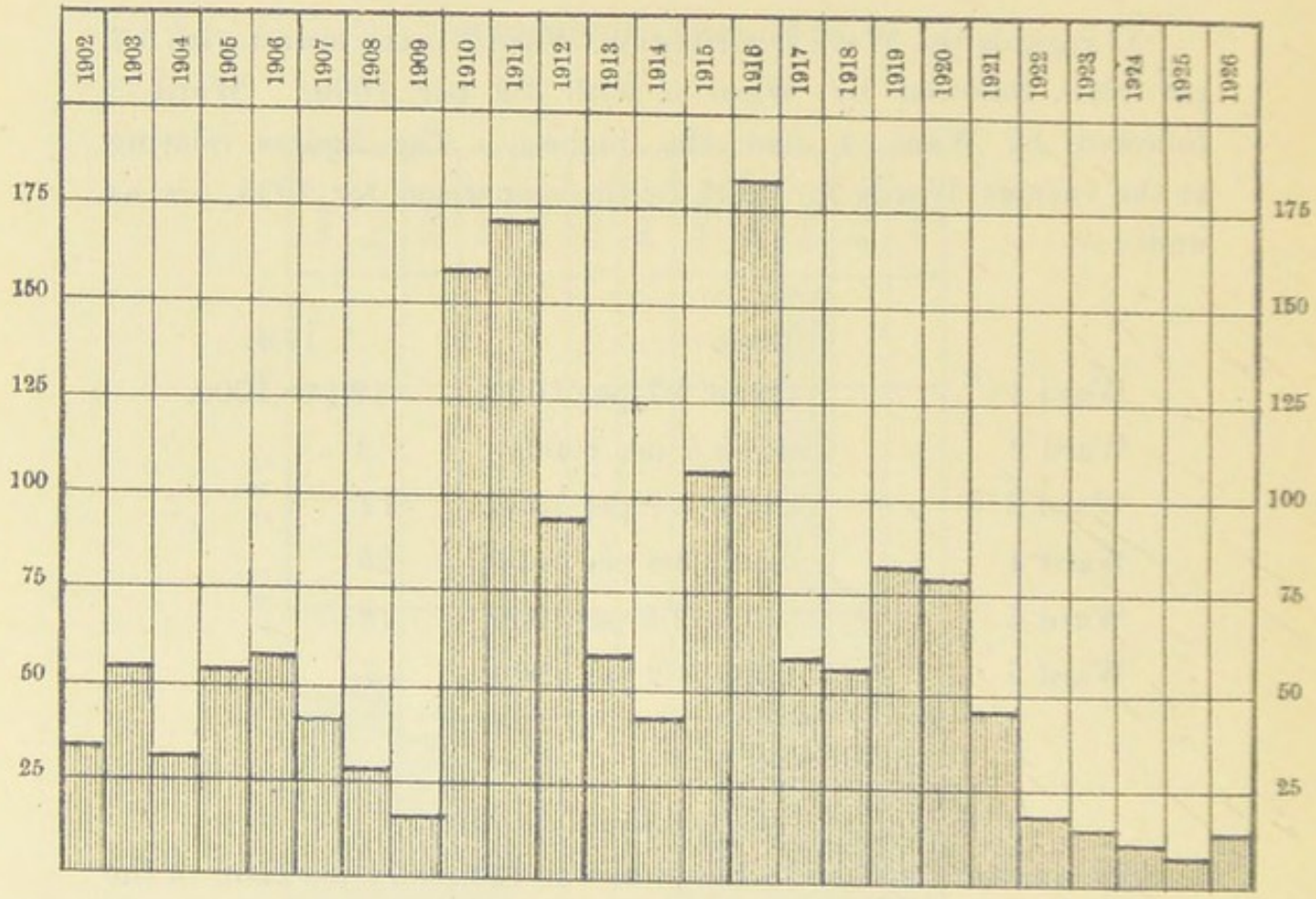
		Cases.	1925.
Ward 1	...	29 or 4·7 per 1000,	19 per 1000.
Ward 2	...	47 or 7 per 1000,	14 ,,
Ward 3	...	20 or 3·7 per 1000,	12 ,,
Ward 4	...	35 or 6·8 per 1000,	25 ,,
Ward 5	...	27 or 3·9 per 1000,	18 ,,
Ward 6	...	14 or 4·2 per 1000,	7 ,,
		172	

The number removed to Hospital was 129, or 75 per cent. of the whole. In the previous year the percentage was 77.

During the months of the last quarter of the year, when the disease was at its maximum, the type of fever was more virulent, with a corresponding degree of complications. Notwithstanding, the mortality rate was not high. There were 2 deaths, representing a death rate of ·059 per 1000, or a case mortality of only 1·1 per cent. as compared with 1·9 in the previous year.

DIPHTHERIA.

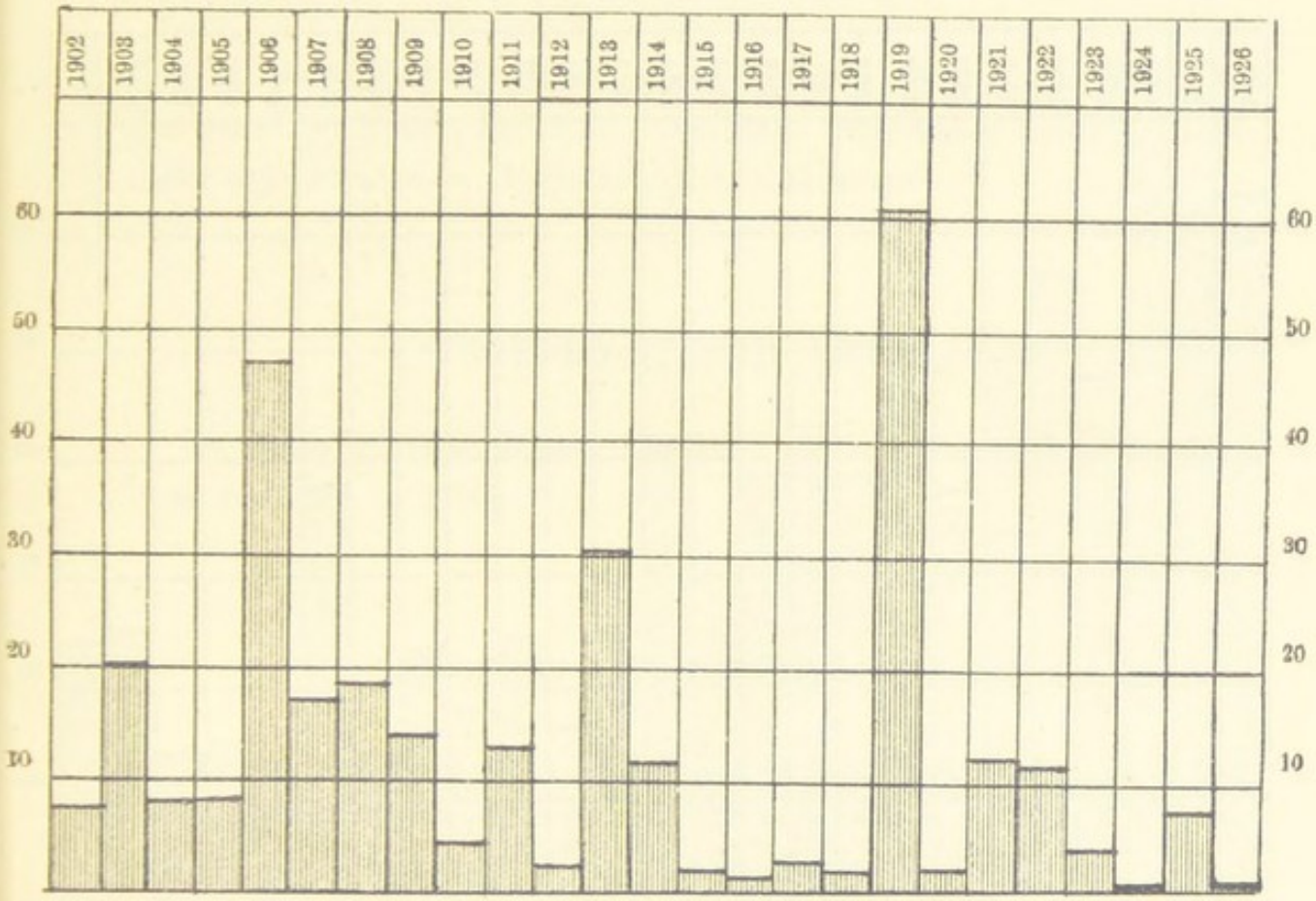
CHART SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CASES OF DIPHTHERIA DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.



Diphtheria, which, as evident from the foregoing chart, was epidemic in the City during 1910 and 1911, and again in 1916, reached a level much below the average of past years, in fact approximating to the record of last year when only 11 cases were reported. This year 17 cases were notified. Of these 17 cases 2 proved to be diseases other than Diphtheria. There were two deaths. Three of the cases were under 5 years of age, four between 5 and 15 years, four between 15 and 25 years, two between 25 and 45 years, and one at 56 years.

TYPHOID FEVER.

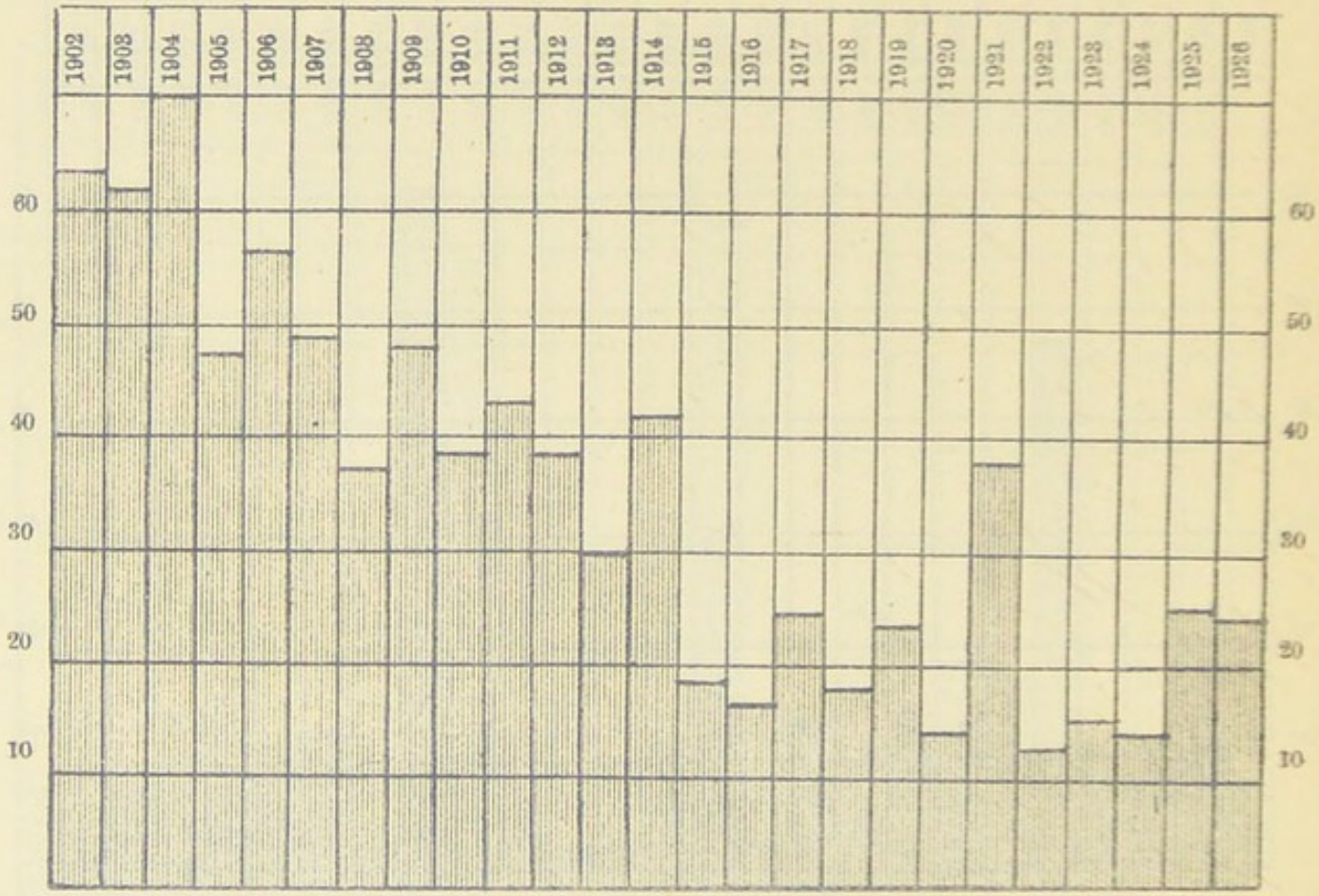
CHART SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CASES OF TYPHOID DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.



During the year 2 cases of Typhoid Fever were notified, as compared with 8 in the previous year and 1 in 1924. Of these, one of the cases proved to be not Typhoid, so that there was during the year only one case of genuine Typhoid. It occurred in a young lad of 13 years in the month of October. He was treated in Hospital and made a good recovery.

ERYSIPELAS.

CHART SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CASES OF ERYSIPELAS DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.



This disease showed a slight decrease during the year, 24 cases, as compared with 25 in 1925, being notified. As is usual with the disease, the great majority of the cases were among people well up in years, 4 occurring in persons from 25 to 45 years of age, 13 from 45 to 65 years, and 4 over 65 years, the oldest age being 85 years.

It is only under exceptional circumstances that such cases are removed to Hospital—such, for instance, as residing in a caravan or

lodging-house, or where it is impossible for the affected person to get the attention necessary. No case is removed for fear of the disease affecting others. Three cases were treated in Hospital, representing 12 per cent. of the total cases.

PUERPERAL FEVER.

Four cases of this fever were reported during the year, as compared with two in 1925. One case terminated fatally. Two cases were treated in Hospital and two at home.

CEREBRO-SPINAL FEVER.

No case of this disease occurred during the year. The last case occurred in 1924.

ENCEPHALITIS LETHARGICA.

There were three cases of Sleeping Sickness reported during the year, as compared with none in 1925 and two in 1924. All three cases occurred within the same Institution.

INFECTIVE JAUNDICE.

No case of this disease was reported.

CITY HOSPITAL, EDINBURGH ROAD, PERTH.

RETURN OF PATIENTS FOR THE YEAR 1926.

DISEASE.	In Hospital at end of 1925.	Admitted	Discharged.	Died.	Remaining in Hospital.	Age of Patients Admitted.	
						Under 5 years.	Over 5 years.
Scarlet Fever ...	28	154	164	3	15	39	115
Diphtheria ...	...	14	13	1	...	3	11
Typhoid Fever	...	2	1	..	1	...	2
Erysipelas ...	...	2	2	...	...	...	2
Puerperal Fever	...	1	1	...	...	...	1
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles ...	1	2	3	...	...	...	2
Opth. Neon. ...	...	2	2	...	...	2	..
Total Zymotic Cases	29	177	186	4	16	44	133

The total number of admissions during the year 1926 was 177, as compared with 488 in the previous year; and the number admitted since the opening of the Hospital on 30th October, 1906, is 4085.

There have thus been 313 less cases admitted than in 1925, when the greatest number ever admitted in one year was recorded.

The average monthly number admitted was 15, but there was considerable variation in the numbers throughout the year. Thus the average monthly number admitted during the first quarter of the year was 21, second quarter 8, third quarter 11, and fourth quarter 20. The greatest number admitted in any one month was 30 in the month of October, and the least number was in July, viz., 4.

The number of Scarlet Fever cases, including 25 admitted from the Burgh of Crieff during the year, was 154, and is 305 ess than in 1925.

The average stay in Hospital of the Scarlet Fever cases has been less than in the previous year. This has been accounted for by the fewer number of cases of a severe type resulting in a lessened number of complications and also to the fact that at no time was there ever anything approaching crowding in the wards. I am strongly of opinion that the more crowded the ward, the more is the discharged patient likely to give rise to return cases. In fact, I feel that a patient with only a fortnight's detention in a half filled ward is less likely to be a source of infection than a patient of six weeks' detention in a fully filled ward.

In 1919 the average stay in Hospital was 35 days, previous to which it was 6 weeks. In 1920 = 32 days, 1921 = 28 days, 1922 = 24 days, 1923 = 23 days, 1924 = 32 days, 1925 = 37 days, while this year it was 34 days.

Of the 351 discharged cases—3 were in a period less than 3 weeks, 10 were in a period of 3–4 weeks; 73, 4–5 weeks; 25, 5–6 weeks; 11, 6–7 weeks; 4, 7–8 weeks; 4, 8–9 weeks; 5, 9–10 weeks; 2, 10–11 weeks, and 1 over 12 weeks.

From figures like these, it is evident that the period of stay in hospital is an unfixed quantity, and that the popular view of six weeks detention is both a minimum and maximum period necessary for isolation is an erroneous one. Every case must be judged by itself. By the procedure carried out at the hospital during the past 7 years, the public are gradually being educated to the fact that many cases cease to be infectious as early as four weeks or less. The shortest period was 6 days and the longest 88 days.

During the year the horse-drawn ambulance was replaced by a motor conveyance. This has proved a great boon, not only being a more expeditious method of removing cases, but necessitating a comparatively short period of absence of the attendant nurse. In my last year's Report I referred to certain proposed structural alterations.

ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK.

Additional accommodation for nurses has been obtained by heightening the walls of the kitchen and back offices of the Administration Block.

Four new bedrooms are provided, with bathroom, water-closet and box-room. Two of the bedrooms are large sized and sufficient to contain at least two beds in each All the rooms are provided with fireplaces. The new premises will be available for occupancy in a few days.

SCARLET FEVER BLOCK.

The central open fireplaces in the Wards of the Scarlet Fever Block have no vertical flues and the smoke is conducted in ducts under the floor to the side walls, where flues are formed and the smoke conducted to the chimney heads.

These fireplaces have given a great deal of trouble in the past. Owing to the situation of the building, at times there is a decided want of draught, and as a result, the Wards are often full of smoke. Various expedients have been tried to obviate this, but without success. It is proposed, therefore, to form a heating chamber under the concrete floor of the north-most Ward, where there has been a considerable amount of underbuilding, and from a sectional boiler placed there, pipes will be led under the floors to supply radiators placed at convenient points throughout the building.

The hot water for the baths and lavatories in this block is supplied by hot water from the fireplace in the duty room and into the hot water cylinder there, a steel pipe is led from the laundry to heat the water for baths. As the boiler in the laundry is only in use about one day a week, this auxiliary heating is not continuous and the fireplace in the duty room does not heat the water sufficiently for the baths when required. It is proposed, therefore, to put a small independent boiler in the proposed heating chamber, and connect it to the existing hot water cylinder. A continuous supply of hot water could thus be obtained.

The flue from the large heating boiler is led into the vent from the existing fireplace at the end of the north Ward. The small boiler will be led into one of the flues in the wall from the existing central fireplace in the same Ward. No chimneys, therefore, will require to be built for the boilers.

It was intended that this heating system should have been installed some months ago, but owing to the Fever Epidemic the work was not proceeded with. Now that the cases are few, it is proposed to go on with the work.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE CENTRE.

Committee.

President—Mrs. Howman.

Vice-President—Miss Maxtone Graham.

Hon. Secretary—Miss M'Nab.

Hon. Treasurer—Mrs. Vass.

Lady Georgina Home Drummond.
Mrs. Lindsay.
Mrs. J. Ritchie.
Mrs. Thomson.
Mrs. Falconer.
Mrs. M'Innes.
Miss Wilkinson.
Miss Murdoch.
Miss Duncan.
Mrs. Dempster.
Mrs. Mowat Wilson.
Mrs. Little.
Mrs. J. Wood.

Voluntary Workers.

Miss Buchan. | Mrs. Forbes. | Mrs. Ross.

This Institution has now been in existence for 9½ years, and continues to be not only a popular rendezvous, but a fruitful source of instruction. The work of organizing and managing it is, as it should be, done by ladies, for the work and interest belong mainly to the sphere of womanhood. Perth has been distinctly fortunate in its Ladies' Committee, which has willingly given a great deal of time and devoted much attention to the work, and it has had its reward in the knowledge that its work has been appreciated by the mothers attending the Centre.

It is therefore with pleasure that I have to record another year of progress in this Branch of Public Health, and while recognising that the duty of bringing up children belongs to the mother, and that we must not be too ready to relieve them of their responsibility, yet we must see that the rights of the children are not ignored, and that the mothers have the opportunity given them of learning how best to rear their children.

As will be gathered from the attendances, the Centre has proved itself a popular rendezvous, where the large majority of mothers are not only keenly anxious to learn anything relating to the welfare of their child, but gain information useful to the conduct of their domestic affairs.

The Centre is fortunate in its "Ladies Committee," of which Mrs. Howman is President and Miss M'Nab, Secretary, the members of which are thoroughly imbued with the importance of the work, and the amount of good work performed by this voluntary organisation in the tilling of the soil for the welfare of the children cannot be over estimated. The sympathy and kindness extended to the mothers has probably been the main factor in the Centre's success. All are made welcome and all are made "at home." On the other hand mothers are taking an increasing interest, and are finding it profitable in more ways than one. But the labours of the Committee have not been confined to conversations with the mothers, although the social element has never been lost sight of, nay, is made the most of, and a Sewing Class started in 1919 has been one of the most successful branches of the work.

The class meets on Wednesday afternoons throughout the winter months, and from the regularity of the attendance it is evident that the mothers appreciate it. Many new garments are made, but the re-making of old ones is the chief feature, and many a most unlikely article—cast off garments, legs of stocking, &c.—has been transformed into a useful article for baby.

The garments cut out during the year numbered 259, and many articles of the mother's workmanship were exhibited in the windows throughout the year.

The class started on the Wednesday evenings four winters ago for young women and those mothers who were unable to attend the afternoon session has been continued, and it is pleasing to record that the attendance of the younger members has been very gratifying, and that much good work is being done.

Another important feature which has continued to meet with success

is the Savings Bank. This branch is under the able superintendence of Mrs. Vass, Benview, Mrs. Ritchie and Miss Smart, Rockbank and Miss McNab, Fitzroy Terrace. Anything from a penny upwards is received, and the mother is free to take any or all whenever she desires. The number of depositors during the year was 167, being an increase of 4 over the previous year, and the sum deposited £14 3s. 2d. Money was withdrawn to the extent of £18 5s. 5d. and it is pleasing to record that in nearly, if not in all instances, the money was withdrawn in order to buy something for baby, the purchase generally being made from the Work Stall of the Centre, which is under the supervision of Mrs. Lindsay. It may be stated that these goods are the work of the Needlework Guild. This Guild consists of 50 members, of whom Mrs. Thomson, Magdalen Bank, is Convener. It has rendered most valuable work, and a work highly appreciated by the mothers. Every article is sold to the mother at the bare cost of material. Thanks are also due to many of the Church Work Parties who contributed many serviceable articles of clothing.

The number of depositors in the first year was 66, and the number on the roll at the end of 1926 was 167. The following is a record of the year's work :—

Balance at 31st December, 1925, ...	£25	7	11
303 Deposits lodged during 1926, ...	14	3	2
	£39	11	1
35 Withdrawals during 1926, ...	18	5	5
Balance at 31st December, 1926, ...	£21	5	8

Of this balance, there has been placed to the Savings Bank Central Fund (baby bank) the sum of £17 10s 11d, on which interest had accrued to the amount of £3 2s 8d. When baby's bank account reaches £1, this is placed into a personal Savings Bank Book. This book is kept at the Centre until the child reaches school age.

Four mothers have realised their ambition of having a personal savings bank book, and the amount, exclusive of interest, standing to their credit is £5 13s 9d.

Unemployment, largely the result of the strike during the year hit the bank very badly, but to the mother's credit, unless circumstances made it absolutely essential, baby's bank book remained untouched, and even then a shilling was left in order to keep the bank account open.

On January 26th, a most successful tea party to the mothers, toddlers and babies attending the Centre was arranged by the Ladies' Committee. The attendance was most gratifying (close on 400) and the function much enjoyed. Several members of the Ladies' Committee, along with friends, contributed in a large measure towards the success of the function, while mention must be made of Mrs. M'Currach, Miss Kyd, Miss Connell and Miss Stirling, who arranged the singing and dancing parts of the programme, and Mrs. Bruce, Murthly, Miss Murdoch, and Miss Duncan, who were responsible for the Christmas tree and other decorations.

On 28th July, Lady Georgina Drummond once more showed her kindness by inviting the mothers and babies to the grounds at Hamilton House. Nature was unfortunately not in a kindly mood and the function had to be held in the City Hall, where a happy afternoon was spent by a gathering of about 400.

The average attendance of mothers and babies at the Centre was 381 per month, as compared with 354 in 1925, and an average of 300 in the previous five years.

The number of medical consultations at the Centre during 1926 was 230, as compared with 187 in 1925.

STATISTICS RELATING TO MATERNITY SERVICE AND CHILD WELFARE.

Infant Mortality.

(*a*) No. of deaths ... 36 (*b*) Rate per 1000 births = 54.

(*c*) Age Groups—

Under 1 week	11
1 week and under 4 weeks, ...	7
4 weeks and under 3 months	5
3 months and under 6 months	5
6 months and under 12 months	8

(*d*) Causes of Death—

Measles ...	1	Bronchitis ...	7	Injury at Birth,	1
Whooping Cough,	2	Diarrohœa ...	1	Syphilis ...	1
Convulsions ..	1	Premature Birth,	7	Other Causes	4
Pneumonia ...	5	Atrophy Debility,	11		

Infantile Mortality is referred to in greater detail at page 12 of the Report.

Births.

(*a*) No. registered—Legitimate, 616 ; Illegitimate, 45.

(*b*) No. notified, 661. (1) Doctor, 591 ; (2) Midwife, 69 ; (3) Neither, 1.

(*c*) No. of Still Births, 25.

Maternal Mortality.

(*a*) No. of deaths from Miscarriage or Child Birth 5

(*b*) No. of deaths from Puerperal Sepsis 1

MIDWIVES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1915.

(1) *List of the Midwives* (with their Names in alphabetical order, Enrolment Numbers and Addresses) who have up to 31st January, 1927, given notice under Section 18 of their intention to practice in the District.

List of Midwives, January, 1927.

Reg. No.	Name.	Address.
2370	Isabella Anderson, - -	9 Commercial Street.
2228	Mary B. Barclay, - -	32 Caledonian Road.
5455	Christina M'Nab Cameron,	Garage House, Station Hotel.
804	Hannah B. Clark, - -	Balhousie Gardens.
5182	Margaret Dickson, - -	2 Robertson's Buildings.
4323	Margaret M'Gregor Doig, -	2 Florence Place.
2428	Margaret J. Forbes, - -	12 Tay Street.
1898	Elizabeth Laing, - -	20 Market Street.
578	Isabella H. Mackay, - -	Braehead, Jeanfield.
2583	Ann M. Malcolm, - -	19 Barossa Street.
4014	Lilias Moncrieff, - -	36 Jeanfield Road.
2289	Catherine R. M'Lean, -	8 Hospital Street.
1775	Annie M'Quhae, - -	11 Gowrie Street.
2456	Jessie A. Rattray, - -	36 George Street.
2479	Annie Robertson, - -	18 Watergate.
3014	Agnes Shilland, - - -	6 Hawarden Terrace.
3175	Margaret Williamson, -	30 South Street.
6148	Catherine Whytock, - -	58 Scott Street.

(2) Births in Area or District.

Total Number of Births during 1926.	Total Number of Deaths of new-born children (within ten days) during 1926.	Actual Number of Births attended by Midwives during 1926.	Actual Number of Deaths of new-born children (within ten days) occurring in the practice of Midwives during 1926.	Actual Number of Cases not attended by a Doctor or Midwife during 1926.	
				Births.	Deaths.
661.	15.	69.	—	1.	—

(3) Cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

Total Number of Cases during 1926.	Actual Number of Cases occurring in the practice of Midwives during 1926.	Actual Number of Cases occurring where confinement not attended by a Doctor or Midwife during 1926.
4.	3.	1

(4) Cases of Puerperal Sepsis.

Total Number of Cases during 1926.	Total Number of Deaths during 1926.	Actual Number of Cases occurring in the practice of Midwives during 1926.	Actual Number of Deaths occurring in the practice of Midwives during 1926.	Actual Number of Cases occurring where confinement not attended by a Doctor or Midwife during 1926.	
				Cases.	Deaths.
4.	1.	—	—	—	—

(5) Cases of Still-birth (Dead Born).

Total Number of Cases during 1926.	Actual Number of Cases occurring in the practice of Midwives during 1926.
25.	2.

(6) **Cases of Emergency.**—The number of Cases of Emergency to which medical practitioners have been called in under Section 22 of the Act during 1926 was 1. This related to a case of prolonged labour.

(7) **General Remarks.**—The working of the Act has been carried out satisfactorily during the year and no action for breach of the Regulations has been necessary.

Home Visitation.

(*a*) No. of first visits	604
(*b*) No. of re-visits	4865
(*c*) No. of Infants at 6 months—	
(1) Breast Fed	270
(2) Partially Breast Fed	57
(3) Artificially Fed	115
(*d*) No. of visits to Children (1-5 years) ...	45
(*e*) No. of first visits to expectant Mothers ...	58
(*f*) No. of re-visits	154
(*g*) No. of consultations	9

Ante-Natal Consultations.

Clinics held twice weekly on Tuesday and Thursday, 3 to 4·30 p.m.

(*a*) No. of attendances	18
(*b*) No. of first attendances	8
(*c*) Conditions found—	
Anæmia	2
Phthisis	2
Sickness, Ascarides, Debility, Normal, of each	1

Post-Natal Consultations.

No. of attendances	9

Child Welfare Consultations.

(*a*) No. of attendances under 1 year	2174
,, ,, over 1 year	1385
(*b*) No. of first attendances under 1 year ...	211
,, ,, over 1 year ...	29

(*c*) Illnesses recorded—

Bronchitis ...	22	Skin Diseases ...	15
Injuries ...	13	Diarrhœa, Enteritis	12
Otorrhœa ...	10	Debility ...	6
Tuberculosis, Hernia, Worms	of each 5	Constipation, Boils,	of each 4

Rhinitis, Rickets, Club Foot, Stomatitis, Whooping Cough	of each	3	
Syphilis, Stye, Incontinence, Phymosis	of each	2	
Chorea, Tongue-tied, Chickenpox, Nævus, Conjunctivitis, Strabismus, Rheumatism, Tonsillitis, Cyst	of each	1	

Day Nursery.

No. of attendances			2423
Charges—8d. per day; if two, 7d. each.			
Income	£437	16	2
Expenditure	£425	17	11
Payments made by parents ...	£66	8	8

Food and Milk.

Gross cost £31 16 7 Sums recovered £4 3 11

No milk substitutes given.

Measles.

No. of deaths	2
No. treated in Hospital	2

Whooping Cough.

No. of deaths	4
No. treated in Hospital	0

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

No. of cases notified by Doctor	2
No. of cases notified by Midwife	2
No. treated in Hospital	2
Appreciable loss of vision	0

Educational.

Sewing meetings held weekly from October to March.

VENEREAL DISEASES REPORT.

THE FOLLOWING IS A RECORD OF THE WORK BY DR. TROTTER FOR THE YEAR ENDING 15TH MAY, 1926, AT THE PERTH ROYAL INFIRMARY.

	SYPHILIS.		GONORRHŒA.		SOFT CHANCRE		MIXED INFECTIONS.		CONDITIONS OTHER THAN VENEREAL.		TOTAL.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Number of New Cases, ...	17	9	25	4	1	—	—	—	8	4	51	17
Number of persons who ceased to attend the Centre *before* completing the course of treatment, ...	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Number of persons transferred to other Treatment Centres after treatment, ...	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Number of persons discharged from the Centre, ...	9	6	24	3	1	—	2	—	8	4	44	13
Number of persons who, at the end of the year, were under treatment or observation, ...	22	10	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	24	11
Total attendances of all persons, ...	294	148	353	48	3	—	included under syphilis.		17	10	667	206
Do. do. do. in 1925,	349	182	968	92	—	—			33	12	1349	408

Area in which patient resided :—	City Area.	County Area.	Other Scottish Areas.	Total.
Number of persons from each area dealt with during the year for the first time :—				
(*a*) Syphilis, ...	19	7	—	26
(*b*) Gonorrhœa, ...	22	4	3	29
(*c*) Soft Chancre, ...	—	1	—	1
(*d*) Mixed Infections, ...	—	—	—	—
(*e*) Conditions other than Venereal, ...	10	2	—	12
Total, ...	51	14	3	68
Total number of attendances at Out-patient Department, ...	697	160	15	872
Number of doses of Salvarsan substitutes,	219	86	—	305

Age of persons treated.	Syphilis		Gonorrhœa		Mixed Infections.		Total.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
(*a*) Under 1 year, ...	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
(*b*) 1 and under 5 years, ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(*c*) 5 ,, ,, 15 ,, ...	2	—	—	—	—	—	2	—
(*d*) 15 ,, ,, 25 ,, ...	1	3	15	2	—	—	16	5
(*e*) 25 years and upwards, ...	14	5	10	2	1	—	25	7
Totals, ...	17	9	25	4	1	—	43	13

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Many inspections were made during the year of the Factories and Workshops, including the Bakehouses, and some improvements effected. In six cases attention was directed to want of cleanliness, and these were remedied.

Speaking generally, it must be said that the management of the Factories and Workshops is conducted in a manner whereby the interests of the workers in matters relating to their general health are well looked after, and I feel sure that Perth will compare favourably with any city in the kingdom.

There are three underground bakehouses in the Burgh; and in accordance with the Factory and Workshops Act of 1901 these were granted Certificates by the Local Authority, the requirements of the Act being fulfilled in all respects.

As certifying Factory Surgeon, I examined for fitness for employment in factory or workshop, a total of 197 young persons, or 12 more than the previous year. Of these 60 were males, and 137 were females. This shows as compared with the previous year an increase of males employed, viz. 1, and of females 11. The figures for 1924 were 58 males and 209 females. All must have attained the age of 14 before being allowed to work.

This year I rejected 8 as unfit for work, being 3 less than in the previous year, and all with the exception of two being on account of uncleanliness. Extreme cases of head lousiness have been, in recent years, very much reduced, yet the number of people actually infected is large. Broadly speaking, the less educated people are, the more they tend to harbour head lice. Poverty, bad housing, bad sanitation, it can safely be said, render cleanliness a condition more difficult to obtain, yet they certainly are not a bar, and one comes across many cases of vermin infection where they do not exist.

In each instance it was the condition of the hair which was at fault, and all the cases occurred among girls. These cases are sad, in respect that the cause is easily removable and implies a want of care and disregard for the most elementary laws of health. All such cases are subject to re-examination before being allowed to work. Some parents think the penalty of their children not being allowed to work too severe for the crime, but a little reflection shows how unfair it would be to the other employees. Moreover the cure is easy.

1. Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspector.

Premises. (1)	Number of	
	Inspections. (2)	Written Notices. (3)
Factories (including Factory Laundries) -	8	—
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	160	10
Workplaces (other than Outworkers' premises)	2	—
Total - -	170	10

2. Defects found in Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Particulars (1)	Number of Defects.	
	Found. (2)	Remedied. (3)
Nuisances under the Public Health Acts—		
Want of Cleanliness - - - -	6	6
Sanitary Accommodation—		
Insufficient - - - - -	1	—
Unsuitable or Defective - - -	1	1
Not separate for Sexes - - -	1	—
Offences under the Factory & Workshops Acts—		
Other Offences—No Bye-Laws - -	1	1
Total - -	10	8

WATER SUPPLY.

Perth, in addition to supplying water to its own inhabitants, also provides water for the district of Scone.

The number of reservoirs is five, one at Wellshill (430,000 gallons), Viewlands (830,000), Muirhall (1,800,000), and two at Burghmuir (each 2,000,000). The total capacity of these reservoirs is 7,060,000 gallons, and this, with a daily supply (for trade and domestic purposes) of about 2,200,000 gallons, indicates a storage of little over three days' supply.

The total quantity of water pumped in 1926 was 792,489,300 gallons, being a decrease of 10,166,900 gallons, as compared with the previous year.

The water supply by meter was 186,275,000 gallons, as compared with 210,006,000 in 1925. This shows a decrease of 23,791,000 gallons. In addition, 36,000,000 gallons are supplied by agreement.

In other words a total of over 570,214,300 gallons of water have been used for domestic purposes. This implies a daily supply of over 1,562,000 gallons, and, based on a population of 36,000, gives a daily supply per head of 43 gallons.

During the year several analyses of the water were made and these are summarized in the following table:—

SUMMARY OF ANALYSES OF RIVER TAY WATER.

Date.		26/1/26.	31/5/26.		5/11/26.		27/11/26.		24/12/26.		11/2/27.		7/3/27.	
		1	2		3		4		5		6		7	
Before Chlorination	No. of Micro-organisms per 1 c.c.	112	Before Disturbance of Filter Bed. 30464	After Disturbance of Filter Bed. 11424										
	No. of Bacilli Coli per 1 c.c.	1·4	42	37										
After Chlorination	No. of Micro-organisms per 1 c.c.	22	—	4000	Water House. 14	Burghmuir Reservoir (Needless Rd.) 40	Water House. 5	Burghmuir Reservoir (Needless Rd.) 19	Water House. 12·5	Burghmuir Reservoir (North). 6·5	Water House. 1·8	Muirhall Reservoir. 12·3	Water House. 4	Muirhall Reservoir. 17
	No. of Bacilli Coli per 1 c.c.	·4	—	3	·57	7·1	·05	·40	·05	·40	Absent in 20 c.c.	1·2	Absent in 10 c.c.	·58

In number 1 and number 2, where samples were taken before chlorination was effected, there is to be noted a great difference in the number of micro-organisms; thus in number 1 it was 112 per c.c. with 1·4 Bac. Coli, whereas in number 2 it was as high as 30464 and 11424 with 42 and 37 respectively of Bac. Coli. The difference between the samples can only be accounted for by the difference of the season in which they were taken—one in January and one in May. One thing was specially to be noted in number 2 and that was that, before the disturbance of the filter bed the number of micro-organisms was nearly three-fold what it was after the disturbance. One would have feared an increase and I can only account for the decrease by the fact that there was an interval of 9 days between the taking of the samples, and that during this period a new film or scum had been formed—this scum, as is well known, being the chief factor in the purification of water. In numbers 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 the samples dealt with only chlorinated water, in each case water being taken before and after storage. In one respect the result was surprising, as in each sample—the period of examination extending from November, 1926 to March, 1927—the result was better in water which had not been under storage, *i.e.*, newly chlorinated.

Chlorination is, up to a certain point, the more effective the longer the chlorine has been in contact and one would have expected the bacterial number to have been considerably less where chlorination and storage were combined than where only chlorination had been effected. Can these results be attributable to the reservoirs themselves? But over and above all is the broad fact that chlorination, as proved by these analyses has had a wonderful, nay marvellous effect on the purification of the river water. Whereas the total of micro-organisms in the unchlorinated water was numbered by thousands per 1 c.c., in the chlorinated it has come down to 2 and the Bacilli Coli—the index of human pollution—has decreased from 42 per 1 c.c. to its absence in 20 c.c. of water.

Such results provide food for reflection.

In previous reports I have expressed my views on the water question, and last year I gave in detail many reports bearing on the proposal to obtain the City's water supply from the gravel and sand bank opposite the Woody Island.

Parliamentary Powers have now been obtained for this scheme, and the engineers have been instructed to take in estimates to carry out the work.

The process of chlorination as carried out at the Water House may be briefly stated, as follows :—

The apparatus consists of 2 mixing tanks of 75 gallons capacity, four storage tanks of 250 gallons capacity, and two small balancing tanks. Three and a half pounds of Chloride of Lime (35 per cent. or thereby of available chlorine) is weighed out, pounded, mixed with water, and then sieved into each mixing tank, where it is well stirred. After settling half an hour it is run off to the storage tank. Each mixed tank is charged 4 times with the lime, *i.e.*, 28 lbs. are used daily for the chlorination of a day's water supply or about 13 lbs. per million gallons of water. At time of going to press 32 lbs. of lime are being used daily.

VACCINATION (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1907.

Return of Statutory Declarations of Conscientious Objection delivered to the Registrar.

It will be noted from the table given below how, for a period of years, advantage was taken of the Conscientious Objection to vaccination, reaching a maximum in 1917 with a percentage of 34·8 unvaccinated. From that date the percentage gradually declined until 1920 to 21·2, but from that time to 1924 has steadily increased. The last two years show an improvement, but I would like to see this percentage reduced to the figure of 1907, as I fear the greater the accumulation of unvaccinated children, the greater will be the epidemic should Smallpox get a foothold in the city.

Year.	No. of Births.	No. of Unvaccinated.	Percentage of Unvaccinated.
1907	802	3	·3
1908	794	57	7·1
1909	805	92	11·4
1910	786	148	18·8
1911	760	163	21·4
1912	791	184	23·2
1913	711	209	29·3
1914	727	194	26·6
1915	644	213	33·0
1916	685	229	33·4
1917	516	180	34·8
1918	477	119	25·0
1919	614	144	23·4
1920	844	180	21·2
1921	646	145	22·4
1922	691	164	23·7
1923	704	174	24·7
1924	597	155	25·9
1925	562	124	22·1
1926	661	153	23·1
Total	13817	3030	21·9

SLAUGHTER-HOUSE.

The Slaughter House was visited by me on one or two occasions during the year in order to ascertain the general sanitary conditions, and it can be reported that the premises were kept in satisfactory order. The gut-house, to which I have in previous Reports drawn attention, is in my opinion far from ideal, and an improvement in space, lighting and ventilation, would be beneficial to the workers concerned.

The number of animals slaughtered in 1926 was—

Cattle,	3694,	of which	62	were wholly unfit and 14 partially.
Sheep,	21,776,	,,	43	,,
Pigs,	1737,	,,	4	,,
Calves,	100,	,,	2	,,

The weight of the condemned material was—Beef, 27,305 lbs.; Mutton, 1,724 lbs.; Pork, 583 lbs.; Veal, 224 lbs.

During the year Mr. Brown, V.S., who was appointed for the purposes of Section 43 of the Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1897, was called by the Superintendent on several occasions. The following table gives a summary of the diseases and number of animals, either partially or wholly unfit for food.

	Ox.	Cow.	Sheep.	Pig.	Calf.
Tuberculosis ...	8	26	—	2	—
Septic Conditions ...	5	7	7	1	—
Decomposition ...	5	3	12	—	—
Emaciation ...	—	5	13	1	—
Bruising	3	9	9	—	1
Uræmia	2	—	1	—	—
Anthrax	1	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia ...	—	—	1	—	—
Pleurisy	—	—	—	—	1
Other Conditions ...	1	1	—	—	—
Total ...	25	51	43	4	2