

Report of the Medical Officer of Health / Municipality of Colombo.

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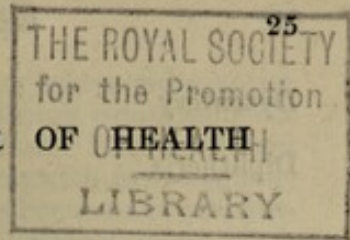


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MUNICIPALITY OF COLOMBO.



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REPORT OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER
FOR 1949.

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STATISTICAL SUMMARY, 1949.

Mean temperature	80.6°F.
Mean humidity	78 per cent.
Rainfall	...	...	96.26 inches
Area within Municipal Council limits (exclusive of lake)	...	...	8,317 acres
Population at Census of March, 1946	...	...	362,074
Estimated mean population, 1949	...	...	381,790
Average density per acre	...	...	45.9
Number of live births registered	...	...	22,782
Birth-rate (per 1,000 of estimated population)	...	...	59.7
Birth-rate corrected for non-residents	...	...	37.4
Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 births	...	...	7.2
Maternal mortality rate (corrected for non-residents)	...	...	4.2
Number of infantile deaths	...	...	2,434
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 births	...	...	107
Infant mortality rate (corrected for non-residents)	...	...	111
Percentage of infantile deaths to total mortality	...	...	28
Number of stillbirths	...	...	873
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 births, live and still	...	...	36.9
Number of deaths	...	...	8,695
Crude death-rate per 1,000 population	...	...	22.8
Death-rate corrected for non-residents	...	...	13.3
Pneumonia	{	Number of deaths	761*
	{	Death-rate per 1,000 population	2.00
Phthisis	{	Number of deaths	785*
	{	Death-rate per 1,000 population	2.06
Enteric fever	{	Number of deaths	200*
	{	Death-rate per 1,000 population	0.52
Diarrhoea and Enteritis...	{	Number of deaths	1,079*
	{	Death-rate per 1,000 population	2.83

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Dysentery	...	{ Number of deaths ...	96*
		{ Death-rate per 1,000 population	0.25
Diphtheria	...	{ Number of deaths ...	40*
		{ Death-rate per 1,000 population	0.10

*Includes deaths of non-residents.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Public Health Department for the year ended December 31, 1949.

Another year in the active and busy post-war life of the City has passed by—the continued battle against dirt, disease and insanitary habits has been waged.

Another year has passed without an epidemic of serious infectious disease. It is true to state that we have made steady progress in reducing the incidence of various diseases and in improving the sanitary conditions of the Town as may be seen reflected in the further decline in the mortality and morbidity rates especially that of infant mortality, which is regarded by most authorities as an index of the health of a city.

A noticeable feature of the vital statistics for the year is that there has been a further increase in the number of births registered. Yet the infant mortality showed a further decrease and so was the case with the maternal death-rate, both of which are the lowest recorded.

These facts, however, are no cause for rejoicing, but for sober reflection and should act as a spur for renewed effort to bring down still further these figures so that they will compare favourably with those of advanced countries.

On the other hand the incidence of tuberculosis still continues to be high. Ready explanations which suggest themselves for these high figures are the fantastic degree of overcrowding which exists and a wide-spread existence of a state of sub-nutrition of a good proportion of the City's population. These conditions, doubtless, lead to a good deal of preventable diseases and ill-health. Not until these disabilities are removed can we expect a substantial lowering of the incidence of this disease. Figures for minor infectious diseases such as chickenpox, mumps and measles show a rise. This too can be explained as due to overcrowding and delay in notifying so that by the time preventive action is initiated infection has spread far and wide.

The writer has had some opportunity during the past several years to study the effect of the various measures which can be used to protect and improve the sanitary conditions of the Town and has formed the impression that conventional methods so well established in advanced countries must be modified if they are to be locally effective. In a community where education and a sense of personal responsibility is already spread amongst the majority of its members a great deal can be done by appeals for co-operation. For various reasons this is not the case here. While it is essential to continue attempts at health education, which is being continuously done at every opportunity both by the higher as well as the subordinate staff, at present as things are, there appears to be no other effective method of protecting the public health in the vast majority of cases than by unceasing and vigorous warning and prosecution when advice and warnings have failed. A great deal of improvement of the sanitary conditions can be brought about if there is less interference from various quarters.

It will not be until every individual who is guilty of jeopardising the health and comfort of his neighbours by self-interestedness, carelessness and ingrained insanitary habits can be certain of retribution that proper discipline and improvement of existing sanitary defects can be brought about.

It is hoped that those responsible for laying down policy will realise the difficulties of the executive and give every encouragement and not hamper them in their attempts at improving the sanitary conditions of the Town.

Clean food continues to attract the newspapers as a topical subject and the executive is being blamed for the delay in implementing the Act. The Food and Drugs Act came into force from October 1, 1949, and in accordance with the requirements of the Act steps were taken to appoint an Analyst for the City and at the same time to draw up regulations laying down standards, &c. This has been

done. Also a census of all food-producing establishments was taken and a notice published in the press calling on all proprietors of food-producing establishments to register their names and places of business as required by law. This work may well prove to be the most important carried out in connection with food-hygiene, for although there is little to show at the moment, the year has been one of preparation. It has been largely a year of reconnaissance and the building up of forces and equipment. The task is so vast that it is impossible to deal with all aspects of food preparation and handling at the same time—at least with the determination which one would like.

The staff has been increased by the addition of two more Food Inspectors making a total of four, and that after a deal of agitation, and with all the facts before us a full-scale offensive will be started. But this too will have to be carried out gradually and in stages because action initiated to implement regulations without due regard to local conditions will result in depriving thousands of their only mode of earning a living and scores of others of their source of customary types of their food.

I have been repeatedly recommending that an over-all scheme embracing the whole of the City's slums to be dealt with as a long-term policy should be drawn up and gradually implemented. I still make this recommendation. This should be independent of any housing schemes that the Council proposes to undertake by utilizing vacant land with a view to reducing congestion. Because of the scarcity of houses few families among the artisan and middle classes and some even amongst the well-to-do are able to afford the number of rooms they would like, while many families cannot afford the bare minimum requirements they require for health's sake.

In the City of Colombo thousands of houses are to be found let out in rooms, often a whole family occupying half a room, one room or at best two. The minimum requirements for a family of two should be at least two rooms and a family of four a minimum of three rooms with the necessary amenities attached. This is the minimum for decency and comfort. Yet, there are in this Town of ours, thousands of families that occupy one room or even part of a room or even a verandah and in most cases breathing in each others *naso-pharyngeal flora* during times when the family is all huddled together with doors and windows closed for reasons of security and privacy.

Such overcrowding must affect the physique of the people in a score of ways and make them prone to various diseases.

When cooking, eating, sleeping and even confinement are all carried out in a small space and in a foetid atmosphere the fight against disease and dirt becomes doubly difficult.

The principal source of tubercular infection, for example, is the sputum of consumptive patients and the overcrowded dwellings are the worst breeding places of the disease.

The two most urgent requirements that the Council should concentrate on are the improvement of housing conditions and the extension of modern sanitation to every area where such is not available.

A filariasis survey of the City was carried out in June, 1949, by this department in collaboration with the World Health Organization expert, Dr. M. O. T. Iyengar. The survey showed that the human infection rate was negligibly low and the mosquito infection rate was also comparatively low.

Chemotherapy for prevention of this disease being still in the experimental stage in most affected countries and available results so far not too encouraging and as the cost of such experiments—which meant the maintenance of a special staff for night and day work for collection of blood specimens of the entire population and their examination every three months for a period of at least three years for any definite conclusion to be arrived at—would be prohibitive and the task so enormous that it was considered unjustifiable to undertake that type of work in view of the very low rate of infection. In the circumstances it was decided that the department should continue to act as it had done in the past in dealing with the preventive aspect by trying to eradicate the vector of the disease, namely

by treating with larvicide all breeding places of the carrier-mosquito which are mainly the catchpits in the unsewered areas and the road gullies in the City. This work is being continued as outlined by the World Health Organization expert with good results, and will be so continued till the whole of the City is sewerred and breeding places eradicated and the present road gullies replaced by the type of gully which is proof against mosquito breeding as envisaged by the expert. Plans of this type of road gully which has been found successful when installed in Bombay and Calcutta have been forwarded to the Municipal Engineer and for testing purposes a few have already been converted.

My recommendation that conveniences be installed for the use of the public in Galle Face and the Fort found no place in the finally sanctioned items of the budget. This recommendation was made on account of serious pollution of the beach and the surroundings thereabout and I cannot help but make the same recommendation again. It is hoped that the Council will take note of this and give effect to my recommendation.

Squatters still continue to ply their trade on public pavements and streets and I am afraid have come to stay and to all appearances will in future be a part of the landscape of the Town unless vigorous steps are taken to eject them. Associated with this type of trade is the accumulation of filth and rubbish and their concomitant evils—flies and the misuse of the roadside drains for calls of nature by these squatters.

The following resolutions were passed by Council on recommendations made by Councillors :—

- (a) Permitting the keeping of two head of cattle and two goats in private premises—member for Wellawatta South. The Council for good and valid reasons had decided to get rid of the dairies from the City and accordingly notified the dairy-owners. This was done with a view to eventually rid the Town of cattle and thereby reduce the fly and cattle nuisance. Recent action will nullify this.
- (b) Issue of licences for 1950 in respect of eating-houses, barber shops and old metal shops irrespective of these establishments conforming to the by-laws—member for Dematagoda. This is a retrograde step.
- (c) In addition to free inoculation for typhoid and cholera, which is already available to the entire population, free immunization against diphtheria of contacts of cases occurring in poor homes—member for Kuppiawatte.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the ever-ready co-operation of my colleagues and the unstinted assistance of the staff, both indoor and outdoor, who work with me. I have every confidence of their continued support in the tasks that lie ahead. I am also deeply grateful for the help, advice and co-operation of colleagues in the other departments.

The annual reports of the Medical Officer, Maternity and Child Welfare; the City Microbiologist; and the Public Analyst are attached.

F. N. JAYEWARDENE,
Chief Medical Officer of Health.

March 6, 1950.

Part I.—Statistics.

I.—METEOROLOGY.

Temperature.—The mean temperature during the year was 80·6° as against 80·9° for the previous year.

The monthly mean maximum temperature of 88·7° was recorded in the month of March and the minimum of 69·8° in February.

Rainfall.—The total rainfall for the year as recorded at the Colombo Observatory was 96·26 inches as against 74·85 inches during the previous year.

Humidity.—During the year under review the mean humidity by day was 78 per cent. as compared with 80 per cent. in 1948.

July had the maximum monthly mean day humidity of 84 per cent.

II.—POPULATION.

The estimated mean population of Colombo Town for 1949, as calculated on the revised Census population figure of 362,074, was 381,790 and the average density per acre 45.9.

The estimated population by Race and the density of population by wards is appended.

(1) *Population by Race.*

Race.	Population at Census of 1946.	Estimated mean population 1949.
All races	362,074	381,790
Sinhalese	168,989	178,190
Tamils { Ceylon	35,622	37,562
{ Indian	45,267	47,732
Moors { Ceylon	44,800	47,240
{ Indian	16,078	16,954
Burghers	17,412	18,360
Malays	10,802	11,390
Europeans	2,457	2,591
Others	20,647	21,771

(2) *Density of Population, 1949.*

Ward.	Area in acres.	Estimated mean population 1949.	Density per acre.
Modera	465	12,532	26.9
Mutwal	270	14,345	53.1
Madampitiya	574	14,643	25.5
Kotahena East	153	10,488	68.5
Kotahena West	204	15,513	76.0
Kochchikade	65	11,916	183.3
St. Paul's	71	18,412	259.3
Grandpass	104	13,503	129.8
New Bazaar	115	9,345	81.3
Aluthkade	88	14,393	163.6
San Sebastian	120	16,286	136.7
Pettah	145	9,315	64.2
Fort	242	2,316	9.6
Slave Island	250	10,602	42.4
Wekande	95	9,552	100.5
Hunupitiya	201	9,429	46.9
Maligawatte	305	7,666	25.1
Maradana	177	13,236	74.8
Suduwella	328	17,310	52.8
Maligakande	85	15,080	177.4
Dematagoda	180	9,933	55.1
Kuppiawatte	178	10,876	61.1
Borella	390	14,219	36.5
Cinnamon Gardens..	960	17,659	18.4
Timbirigasyaya	935	16,342	17.5
Kollupitiya	272	12,731	46.8
Bambalapitiya	400	10,929	27.3
Havelock Town	353	11,040	31.3
Wellawatta North	328	13,508	41.2
Wellawatta South	267	12,975	48.5

III.—BIRTHS.

22,782 live births were registered during the year, this being the highest number of births ever recorded in Colombo Town. There was an increase of 2,350 births over last year's figure which was 20,432.

The rate per 1,000 of the estimated mean population was 59.7, again the highest for Colombo Town, as against 55.6 for 1948.

The birth-rate corrected for non-residents was 37.4 as against 36.0 for the previous year.

The racial birth-rates and the ward birth-rates are given hereunder.

(3) *Racial Birth-rates, 1949.*

Race.	Number of births	Birth-rate per 1,000 population	Birth-rate per 1,000 population
	1949.	1949.	1948.
All races	22,782	59.7	55.6
Sinhalese	15,350	86.1	83.9
Tamils			
{ Ceylon	1,696	45.2	45.4
{ Indian	1,365	28.6	24.0
Moors			
{ Ceylon	2,124	44.9	46.3
{ Indian	309	18.2	12.4
Burghers & Eurasians	779	42.4	43.7
Malays	632	55.5	48.2
Europeans	146	5.6	5.2
Others	381	17.5	17.6

(4) *Birth-rate by Wards, 1949.*

Ward.	Number of births	Birth-rate per 1,000 population	Birth-rate per 1,000 population
	1949.	1949.	1948.
Colombo Town	22,782	59.7	55.6
Modera	509	40.6	39.6
Mutwal	250	17.4	16.2
Madampitiya	589	40.2	36.8
Kotahena East	126	12.0	9.7
Kotahena West	185	11.9	12.4
Kochchikade	549	46.1	46.9
St. Paul's	307	16.6	14.8
Grandpass	277	20.6	20.9
New Bazaar	548	58.6	49.7
Aluthkade	340	23.6	23.8
San Sebastian	330	20.3	18.5
Pettah	15	1.6	1.5
Fort	24	10.4	2.9
Slave Island	254	23.9	28.5
Wekande	241	25.2	25.7
Hunupitiya	191	20.3	18.6
Maligawatte	265	34.6	21.9
Maradana	347	26.2	24.7
Suduwella	253	14.6	16.9
Maligakande	345	22.9	23.6
Dematagoda	163	16.4	20.4
Kuppiawatte	116	10.7	10.3
Borella	102	7.2	12.6
Cinnamon Gardens	943	53.4	74.8
Timbirigasyaya	398	24.4	17.2
Kollupitiya	123	9.7	10.4
Bambalapitiya	198	18.1	18.2
Havelock Town	189	17.1	9.8
Wellawatta North	276	20.4	20.6
Wellawatta South	240	18.5	18.2
Hospitals	14,089	—	—

STILLBIRTHS.

The number of stillbirths registered during the year was 873 as against 819 for the previous year.

The rate per 1,000 births, live and still, was 36.9 as against 38.5 for the previous year.

IV.—DEATHS.

8,695 deaths from all causes were registered during the year as against 8,647 for the previous year.

The crude and corrected death-rates for the year were 22·8 and 13·3 as compared with 23·5 and 13·4 for the previous year.

(5) *Racial Death-rate, 1949.*

Race.	Crude death-rate 1948.	Number of deaths 1949.	Crude death-rate 1949.	Death-rate corrected for deaths of non-residents in Hospitals 1949.
All races ...	23·5	8,695	22·8	13·3
Sinhalese ...	34·6	5,747	32·3	14·0
Tamils { Ceylon	16·7	617	16·4	13·3
{ Indian	14·7	646	13·5	11·6
Moors { Ceylon	21·6	935	19·8	18·6
{ Indian	7·2	130	7·6	7·3
Burghers and Eurasians ...	16·3	243	13·2	10·1
Malays ...	19·6	184	16·2	15·8
Europeans ...	13·7	43	16·6	15·1
Others ...	4·5	150	6·9	5·8

(6) *Ward Death-rates, 1949.*

Ward.	Number of deaths 1949.	Crude death-rate 1949.
Colombo Town ...	8,695	22·8
Modera ...	128	10·2
Mutwal ...	144	10·0
Madampitiya ...	138	9·4
Kotahena East ...	61	5·8
Kotahena West ...	110	7·1
Kochchikade ...	99	8·3
St. Paul's ...	156	8·4
Grandpass ...	121	8·9
New Bazaar ...	187	20·0
Aluthkade ...	156	8·4
San Sebastian ...	149	9·1
Pettah ...	17	1·8
Fort ...	32	13·8
Slave Island ...	114	10·8
Wekande ...	104	10·9
Hunupitiya ...	85	9·0
Maligawatte ...	137	17·8
Maradana ...	130	9·8
Suduwella ...	124	7·2
Maligakande ...	138	9·2
Dematagoda ...	96	9·6
Kuppiawatte ...	58	5·3
Borella ...	74	5·2
Cinnamon Gardens ...	107	6·1
Timbirigasyaya ...	112	6·8
Kollupitiya ...	72	5·6
Bambalapitiya ...	71	6·5
Havelock Town ...	50	4·5
Wellawatta North ...	91	6·7
Wellawatta South ...	67	5·2
Hospitals ...	5,567	—

V.—PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATHS.

The following statement shows the number of deaths from the principal causes which occurred in Colombo during the year under review. As in previous years the bowel diseases, diarrhoea and enteritis and dysentery head the list with tuberculosis second.

(7) *Principal Causes of Deaths, 1949.*

Cause of death	No. of deaths	Cause of death	No. of deaths
Diarrhoea and enteritis	1,079	Pneumonia (including bronchopneumonia)	761
Dysentery	96	Influenza	240
Phthisis	785	Typhoid fever	200
Other tuberculosis	104	Malaria	39
	1,175		
	889		

(8) *Certain Minor Causes of Deaths, 1949.*

Cause of death	No. of deaths	Cause of death	No. of deaths
Cancer and other malignant tumours	325	Tetanus (under 1 year of age)	11
Ankylostomiasis	47	(1 year and over)	55
Other diseases due to helminths	209	Diphtheria	40
Ricketts	124	Acute anterior poliomyelitis	15
Diabetes mellitus	82	Rabies	15
		Whooping cough	6
		Cerebro-spinal meningitis	3

VI.—INFANT MORTALITY.

There was a decrease in the deaths of infants under one year of age during the year as compared with last year, the figures being 2,434 and 2,455. The number of births on the other hand increased and the infant mortality rate therefore shows a considerable decrease—107 per 1,000 births for 1949 as against 122 in 1948. This is the lowest rate ever recorded in Colombo.

Incidence by Race.—The Ceylon Moors again head the list with a mortality rate of 134. There is a wide gap between this rate and the second 109 for the Sinhalese.

Principal Causes of Infant Mortality.—Premature birth and congenital debility once again come first with 35.6 per cent. of all infant deaths with diarrhoeal diseases second with 26.9 per cent.

Over half the infant deaths or 54 per cent. occurred within the first four weeks of life as against 52 per cent. during the previous year.

(9) *Infant Mortality by Race, 1949.*

Race.	Number of infant deaths.	Rate 1949.	Rate 1948.
Sinhalese	1,667	109	121
Tamil	180	109	118
Indian	134	98	131
Moors	284	134	141
Indian	26	84	92
Burghers and Eurasians	43	55	82
Malays	54	85	111
Europeans	5	34	45
Others	41	107	82

(10) *Principal Causes of Infant Mortality expressed as a percentage of Total Infant Deaths, 1949.*

Cause.	No. of deaths.	1949.	1948.
Premature Birth and Congenital Debility	866	35.6	37.1
Diarrhoeal diseases	654	26.9	25.2
Diseases of the respiratory system	319	13.1	12.1
Convulsions	74	3.0	2.8
Other causes	521	21.4	22.8

(11) Infant Mortality—Deaths at different Age Periods and from Several Causes, 1949.

CAUSE OF DEATH	AGE										RACE										ALL RACES								
	AGE IN WEEKS					AGE IN MONTHS					Total	Sinhalese		Tamil		Moors		Malays		Burghers		Europeans		Others					
	-1		-2		-3		-4		Total			-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-9	-12	Ceylon	Indian		Ceylon	Indian	Malays	Burghers	Europeans	Malaya- lees	Other Indians	Rest
	-1	-2	-3	-4	Total	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6		-9	-12	Total	Ceylon	Indian	Malays	Burghers	Europeans	Malaya- lees		Other Indians	Rest	Malays	Burghers	Europeans	Malaya- lees	Other Indians	Rest
1. Congenital Malformations	32	2	—	—	34	5	1	2	—	—	—	1	2	11	35	2	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	45
2. Diseases peculiar to the 1st Year of Life	99	79	18	15	211	46	31	13	11	7	12	14	134	218	28	23	56	6	6	6	5	5	—	—	—	1	1	345	
(a) Congenital Debility	379	96	17	8	500	14	3	3	—	—	—	1	21	385	43	25	45	2	2	2	7	7	—	—	—	—	—	521	
(b) Premature Birth	31	18	2	—	51	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	41	2	3	1	—	—	—	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	51	
(c) Injury at Birth	91	4	—	1	96	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	78	4	6	4	—	—	—	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	99	
(d) Asphyxia (Atelectasis)	11	10	2	3	26	—	—	1	2	—	—	1	6	24	1	1	3	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	32	
(e) Others	1	—	—	—	1	7	3	2	2	—	—	7	4	12	2	2	6	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	26	
3. Diseases of the Respiratory System—	30	35	3	9	77	13	26	14	11	14	38	35	151	145	22	17	27	1	5	4	5	4	—	—	—	7	7	228	
(a) Bronchitis	11	12	1	2	26	3	5	3	3	4	10	11	39	41	4	3	8	—	1	3	3	3	—	—	—	1	1	65	
(b) Broncho-pneumonia	53	108	21	19	201	71	66	76	47	46	77	49	432	466	43	20	59	4	15	14	15	14	—	—	—	10	10	633	
(c) Others	4	3	—	1	8	3	2	3	1	1	2	1	13	17	1	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	
4. Diseases of Digestive System—	17	9	1	2	29	10	6	3	4	2	6	14	45	35	3	9	17	—	4	3	4	3	—	—	—	2	2	74	
(a) Diarrhoeal	4	5	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	8	8	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	
(b) Others	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
5. Diseases of Nervous System—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(a) Convulsions	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(b) Others	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
6. Tuberculous Diseases—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(a) Pulmonary Tuberculosis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(b) Tuberculous Meningitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(c) Other forms	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
7. Tetanus	4	3	1	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
8. Rickets	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	3	5	1	3	6	24	6	—	4	10	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25	
9. Infectious Diseases—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(a) Measles	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(b) Whooping Cough	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(c) Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(d) Cerebro-spinal fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(e) Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(f) Influenza	3	6	2	2	13	11	6	13	16	9	18	24	97	49	13	14	27	—	2	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	110	
(g) Typhoid & Paratyphoid Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
10. Malaria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
11. Anchylostomiasis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
12. Syphilis	2	1	—	1	4	3	1	3	1	1	2	10	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
13. All other causes	11	5	3	1	20	4	10	3	5	5	18	21	66	59	10	1	9	—	2	1	2	1	—	—	—	3	3	86	
TOTAL	784	396	71	65	1316	191	167	150	107	96	211	196	1118	1667	180	134	284	26	54	43	5	30	7	42434					

VII.—INFECTIOUS DISEASES, 1949.

No cases of smallpox, plague or cholera occurred in Colombo during the year under review. Colombo has been free from plague for over ten years now, the last case of human and rat plague having occurred in the year 1938. The last major epidemic of smallpox was in 1946 and Colombo has been free from cholera since 1935 when six cases were reported.

There was, however, an increase in the incidence of other minor infectious diseases reported in Colombo Town during the year. Chickenpox, measles and mumps showed an increase as compared with the previous year.

(12) *Incidence of Infectious Diseases in Colombo Town, 1949.*

Disease.	Number of cases	
	1949.	1948.
Chickenpox ...	1,350	1,238
Measles ...	516	441
Rubella (German measles) ...	2	3
Diphtheria ...	90	118
Acute Diarrhœa ...	4	1
Enteric fever ...	193	159
Continued fever ...	40	58
Dysentery ...	75	124
Whooping cough ...	130	134
Pneumonia ...	41	32
Mumps ...	625	209
Puerperal pyrexia ...	3	79
Cerebro-spinal fever ...	2	2
Typhus fever ...	7	2
Acute anterior poliomyelitis ...	19	27
Totals ...	3,097	2,627

Typhoid Fever.—More cases occurred during the year under review than in the previous year. The figure, however, is lower than the average for the last ten years. All cases have been sporadic and the majority are from the congested slum areas. Their sources of origin have not been able to be traced except in a few contact cases.

These year to year variations in incidence are unavoidable owing to various causes, one of the most common being surface faecal pollution, and the fly nuisance due to indiscriminate housing of cattle in various parts of the Town. The incidence of this disease will continue to remain high until such time as the populace develops a better sanitary-conscience and habits and sources of fly-breeding removed.

ENTERIC FEVER, 1949.

(a) Town cases ...	193
Port cases ...	1
Extra-urban cases ...	935
(b) Total number of deaths ...	200
Death-rate per 1,000 population ...	0.52
do previous year...	0.48
(c) Total number of deaths (exclusive of deaths of non-residents in Colombo Hospitals) ...	68
Corrected death-rate per 1,000 population ...	0.18
Corrected death-rate per 1,000 population previous year	0.17

(13) *Incidence of Enteric Fever, 1939—1949.*

Year.	Number of Town cases.	Case-rate per 1,000 population.
1939	575	1.8
1940	405	1.2
1941	414	1.6
1942	168	0.5
1943	265	0.8
1944	373	1.1
1945	472	1.4
1946	382	1.1
1947	243	0.7
1948	159	0.4
Ten year average 1939-1948	346	—
1949	193	0.5

Immunization.—1,005 anti-typhoid inoculations were given during the year; 420 by the Dispensary Medical Officers and 585 by the Medical Officer, Epidemiology and Vital Statistics.

Dysentery.—There were 75 town cases of dysentery notified to this Department during the year as against 124 for the previous year.

The number of deaths, corrected for deaths of non-residents in Colombo Hospitals, was 54 as against 62 for the previous year.

The crude and corrected death-rates were 0.25 and 0.14 respectively.

The number of town cases and deaths as classified by type was as follows:—

Type.	Number of cases.	Number of deaths
Bacillary	11	9
Amoebic	37	36
Other and unspecified forms	27	9
Totals	75	54

Diarrhoea and Enteritis.—Diarrhoea and enteritis showed an increase in the number of deaths during the year under review, 1,079 dying from this cause as against 994 for the previous year.

Exclusive of deaths of non-residents there were 629 deaths, the same as for the previous year.

The crude and corrected death-rates were 2.83 and 1.65 as against 2.70 and 1.70 for the previous year.

Malaria.—There was an increase in the number of patients seeking treatment for malaria at the Municipal Free Dispensaries during 1949, the number being 4,321 as against 3,813 in 1948.

There were 16 deaths from malaria of Colombo residents registered during the year. It is very unlikely that the source of infection in respect of these was in Colombo.

Bronchitis.—The total number of deaths registered from this cause was 80 as against 89 for the previous year. Exclusive of non-residents, the total was 74 as against 81 for the previous year.

Classification of the total deaths by type is given hereunder.

Type.	Number of deaths 1948.	Number of deaths 1949.
Acute bronchitis ...	30	36
Chronic bronchitis ...	45	27
Bronchiectasis ...	11	7
Unspecified ...	3	10
Total ...	89	80

Influenza.—A larger number of persons suffering from this ailment came for treatment to the Municipal Free Dispensaries during 1949 than in the previous year, the number of cases treated being 20,280 in 1949 as against 18,450 in 1948.

240 deaths from influenza were registered in Colombo Town during the year as against 269 for the previous year.

The following statement shows the number of cases of influenza treated at the various Municipal Free Dispensaries during the years 1948 and 1949:—

(14) *Cases of Influenza treated at the Municipal Free Dispensaries.*

Dispensary.	Number of cases treated in 1949.	Number of cases treated in 1948.
Slave Island ...	2,538	2,204
St. Paul's ...	2,181	1,615
Maradana South ...	1,707	1,134
Mutwal South ...	337	5*
Mutwal North ...	1,526	3,075
Wellawatta ...	3,855	2,496
San Sebastian ...	4,015	4,047
Timbirigasyaya ...	783	838
Kollupitiya ...	92†	308
Maradana North ...	1,875	1,192
New Bazaar ...	1,871	1,536
Totals ...	20,280	18,450

* Opened on December 11, 1948.

† Closed on August 26, 1948. Re-opened on October 3, 1949.

VIII.—MATERNAL MORTALITY.

There was yet another decrease in the maternal death-rate during the year, bringing it down to the lowest ever recorded rate of 7·2 per 1,000 births.

The rate corrected for non-residents was also the lowest recorded—4·2 per 1,000 births.

The crude and corrected maternal mortality rates for the previous year were 10·6 and 7·5.

The death-rate from puerperal septicæmia fell from 1·81 in 1948 to 0·79 in 1949.

(15) *Maternal Mortality, 1949.*

	Rate per 1,000 births 1948.	Rate per 1,000 births 1949.
All causes ...	10.6	7.2
All causes (corrected for non-residents) ...	7.5	4.2
Puerperal septicaemia ...	1.81	0.79
Puerperal septicaemia (corrected for non-residents) ...	1.66	0.63

Part—II. Administration.**IX.—MUNICIPAL COUNCIL FREE DISPENSARIES.**

The dispensary at Kollupititya, which was closed on August 26, 1948, was re-opened on October 3, 1949, the Council having put up its own building for the purpose.

There are now in all eleven Municipal Council Free Dispensaries opened to the public and there is another under construction to serve Kotahena Ward.

The statement of work done at the Municipal Free Dispensaries is appended.

(16) *Work done at the Municipal Free Dispensaries, 1949.*

Dispensary.	No. of patients treated.	No. of visits of patients.	Daily average attendance	No. of houses visited by Medical Officers.	No. of persons inoculated against Typhoid.
Slave Island ...	17,710	45,898	151	8	87
St. Paul's ...	20,358	39,246	130	3	18
Maradana South ...	20,315	40,651	134	95	17
Mutwal South ...	16,600	39,105	129	6	20
Mutwal North ...	15,139	39,781	131	23	20
Wellawatta ...	25,041	49,805	164	35	83
San Sebastian ...	16,268	36,684	121	53	73
Timbirigasyaya ...	14,946	27,825	91	10	—
Kollupitiya* ...	1,861	4,625	51	7	2
Maradana North ...	19,129	44,078	145	48	16
New Bazaar ...	23,810	42,260	139	72	84
Total ...	191,177	409,958	1,386	360	420
Total for previous year ...	165,635	353,878	1,214	313	2,533

* Closed on August 26, 1948. Re-opened on October 3, 1949.

X.—MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

The report for 1949 of the Medical Officer, Maternity and Child Welfare, is appended as annexure A.

On an average 215 children were given free milk during the year as against 166 in the previous year.

The attendances at the Ante-natal baby clinics is increasing year by year—2,645 attending in 1947, 3,355 in 1948, and 4,110 in 1949.

The attendances at the Ante-natal clinics (primary and re-visits) also increased from 14,706 in 1948 to 16,551 in 1949.

XI.—GENERAL SANITATION.

The annexed statements show the number of prosecutions entered and the convictions obtained by the Sanitary Staff during the year 1949 and also the work done.

(17) *Statement of Prosecutions and Convictions during the Year 1949.*

Offence.	Number of Prosecutions entered.	Number of convictions obtained.
Filthy premises	396	274
Filthy dairy	7	3
Nuisance caused by cattle, swine, &c.	1	1
Unregistered dairyman	37	31
Sale of adulterated milk	241	190
Sale of milk below standard	272	148
Sale of milk without card	24	24
Unregistered laundry	17	13
Working in laundry without permit	2	—
Unlicensed eating-house	83	45
Filthy eating-house	12	8
Filthy bakery	4	2
Disorderly conduct in public market	25	18
Causing nuisance in public market	2	2
Keeping unauthorized articles in market stall	1	1
Obstruction of passages in public market	4	4
Keeping cattle in excess of number allowed	5	5
Stable cattle in unauthorized place	1	1
Unauthorized slaughter of goats	1	1
Food exposure	119	107
Exposing bread while transporting for sale	2	2
Unlicensed common lodginghouse	8	7
Failure to provide privy accommodation	119	26
Digging pits and wells without permission	2	—
Dangerous and offensive trades	120	94
Failure to close well	1	1
Unlicensed barbers' saloons	132	4
Total	1,638	1,012

(18) *Work done by the Sanitary Staff during the Year 1949.*

1. Number of Inspections	58,365
2. Number of premises where sanitary defects were found (a) non-structural	6,853
3. Number of premises where sanitary defects were found (b) structural	2,131
4. Number of premises where non-structural defects were rectified	5,164
5. Number of premises where minor structural defects were rectified	1,633
6. Number of buildings, other than dwellings, structurally improved	72
7. Number of dwellings limewashed	4,387
8. Number of wells filled up	5
9. Number of notices served under Section 2 (1) Chapter 180 of Legislative Enactments (filthy premises)	3,817
10. Number of notices served under Section 119 (1) of 29 of 1947 (privy accommodation)	776
11. Number of notices served under Section 134 of 29 of 1947 (filthy stagnant pools)	2
12. Number of notices served under Section 63 of Plague Regulations (filling up wells)	2
13. Number of samples of milk taken under Rule 5, Chapter XIV of M. C. By-laws	1,124

XII.—FOOD INSPECTION.

The Council recommended the creation of two additional posts of Food Inspectors during the year. These posts have not yet been filled.

The following is a statement of work done by the Food Inspectors :—

(19) *Report of work done by the Food Inspectors, 1949.*

Visits to Public markets	...	...	...	259
Visits to Private markets	...	...	...	11
Visits to Dairies	...	...	...	177
Visits to Bakeries	...	...	...	144
Visits to Eating-houses	...	...	...	2,433
Visits to Aerated water manufactories	...	...	...	49
Visits to Manufactories of confectionery	...	...	...	17
Visits to Taste boutiques	...	...	...	49
Visits to Muscat manufactories	...	...	...	25
Other visits	...	...	...	2,043
				<hr/>
			Total visits	5,217
				<hr/>

UNWHOLESOME FOOD SEIZED AND CONDEMNED.

Potatoes	...	...	...	50 tons
Bombay onions	...	...	...	6 tons
Tinned foods—				
Carrots	...	...	...	12 tins
Soya link	...	...	...	1 tin
Kidney pudding	...	...	...	9 tins
Asparagus soup	...	...	...	19 tins
Beet root	...	...	...	3 tins
Beef extract	...	...	...	19 tins
Mackerel	...	...	...	871 tins
Beef loaf	...	...	...	2 tins
				<hr/>
			Total	936 tins
				<hr/>

Samples sent to City Analyst—

Milk	...	...	...	327
Aerated waters	...	...	...	11
Tinned milk	...	...	...	1
Tinned foods	...	...	...	4
				<hr/>
			Total	343
				<hr/>

Samples sent to City Microbiologist—

Tinned foods	...	...	...	8
Other foods	...	...	...	4
Aerated waters	...	...	...	7
Empty bottles	...	...	...	5
				<hr/>
			Total	24
				<hr/>

PROSECUTIONS AND CONVICTIONS.

Offence.	Number of Prosecutions entered.	Number of convictions obtained.
Unregistered milk vendor ...	73	69
Adulterated milk ...	116	104
Deficiency in fat (milk) ...	109	83
Selling milk without card ...	12	12
Food exposure ...	42	37
Selling fish outside market ...	3	3
Filthy eating-house ...	8	7
Unlicensed bakery ...	1	—
Total...	364	315

XIII.—EATING-HOUSES.

Food Houses.—Food premises although subjected to constant supervision have not reached the standard desired, except perhaps in a few instances. Clean and suitable premises and proper equipment are essential factors in safe food production but a large proportion of these establishments lack vital requirements. This is most evident in those run by a certain class of individual in which the foreign element predominates.

The personnel are in most cases untutored in the hygienic requirements demanded in food producing and preparing trades. The slackness of personal hygiene is not confined to one section of the employees alone but it could be found in varying degrees among operatives in almost all premises in which food is handled. Much is being done in the direction of making those who handle food, hygiene-conscious, but it will take a long time before the desired standard will be reached.

In these days when communal cooking and eating are so widely practised the chances of infection through contaminated food are far greater and never before was personal hygiene so essential.

Enforcement of the eating-house by-laws has again been stayed by the Council and the executive was directed to license these concerns irrespective of the by-laws. As a result of this decision a large proportion of these feeding places even though not suitable for carrying on the trade will have to be permitted to continue. I pointed out that apart from such action being *ultra vires* it was a retrograde step but my advice was overruled.

Number of eating-houses at beginning of year	1,292
Number discontinued during the year ..	6
Number of new registrations	160
Number at end of 1949	1,446
Number of visits to eating-houses made by Sanitary and Food Inspectors	8,856
Convictions (including Food Inspectors')—	
Unlicensed eating-house	45
Filthy eating-house	15

XIV.—MARKETS.

In place of the three markets in the Pettah which are now out-moded and too small for the purposes of public markets with no room for improvement or expansion, a central market should be built.

Number of visits to public markets made by Sanitary and Food Inspectors	1,038
Convictions (including Food Inspectors')—	
Disorderly conduct in market	18
Causing nuisance in market	2
Keeping unauthorized articles in market stall	1
Obstruction to passages in public market	4
	25

XV.—DAIRIES.

The policy of the Council, as pointed out in my report for the previous year, was to move all dairies within Colombo Municipal limits to urban areas at the end of 1950, and all dairymen in the City were notified to this effect.

This was done with a view to eventually ridding the Town of cattle and thereby reducing the fly and cattle nuisance. Recent action by the Council to permit householders to house two cows and two goats will nullify this.

Number of dairies at the beginning of the year	...	47
Number discontinued during the year	...	1
Number of new registrations	...	—
Number at the end of 1949	...	46
Number of visits made to dairies by Sanitary and Food Inspectors	...	1,138
Convictions (including Food Inspectors')—		
Unlicensed milk vendor	...	100
Adulterated milk	...	294
Deficiency in fat (milk)	...	531
Selling milk without card	...	36
Filthy dairy	...	3
		964

XVI.—ANTI-PLAGUE WORK.

This work in connection with improvements to buildings under the Plague Regulations was continued in 1949 in the plague endemic area.

The following is a statement of work done by the Anti-plague staff during the year:—

Fumigation—		
Number of premises visited	...	10,754
Number of premises gassed	...	699
Number of premises disinfected	...	10,157
Number of rat holes gassed	...	4,046
Number of rats killed by gas	...	5,761
Number of rat nests found	...	904
Merchandise gassed—		
(a) Number of bags of grain	...	21,813
(b) Number of packages	...	5,445
(c) Number of other goods	...	17,829
Number of cartloads of rubbish removed	...	301

Rat-trapping.—During the year 338,946 rat traps were placed in the City and a total of 25,914 rats were trapped. This represents an increase of 4,388 rats trapped over last year's catch.

None of the rats sent to the City Microbiologist were found plague infected. A rat-flea survey is also carried out by the City Microbiologist.

XVII.—ANTI-PEST WORK.

The statement of work done by the Anti-pest Squad during the year 1949 is appended.

Mosquito work—		
Number of complaints	...	1,026
Number of premises inspected	...	7,580
Number of actual breeding places found	...	13,453
Fly work—		
Number of complaints	...	47
Number of inspections	...	442
Quantity of cartloads of manure removed	...	41½
Quarries—		
Number of quarries	...	22
Number of inspections	...	771
Number of D. D. T. sprayings	...	771

XVIII.—AMBULANCE STATION AND STEAM DISINFECTING STATIONS.

The statement of work done at the Ambulance and Steam Disinfecting Stations is given below:—

	1948.	1949.
Ambulance Station—		
Mileage done	32,538·9	44,245·8
Number of patients removed ...	2,973	2,954
Number of dead bodies removed ...	250	274
Number of non-chargeable trips to I. D. H., Angoda	2,780	2,319
Number of chargeable trips to I. D. H., Angoda (shipping) ...	19	12
Other miscellaneous trips ...	2,963	2,873
Steam Disinfecting Station—		
Number of articles steam disin- fected	7,835	8,284
Number of van loads steam disin- fected	561	521

Annexure A.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER, MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE, FOR THE YEAR 1949.

I have the honour to submit my report on the work carried out by the Maternity and Child Welfare Section for the year ending December 31, 1949.

As in the other years this service has made an important contribution to the cause of Public Health of the City. Statistics for the year disclose the progress we have made. There is a definite increase in the attendance at our clinics. The number of deliveries too, both in our Maternity Homes and in the district, shows a steady rise. 1,033 cases were delivered in the Homes during 1949 as compared with 950 cases in the previous year. District deliveries show an increase of 7 per cent.

The infant mortality rate of 107 per 1,000 births is the lowest so far recorded. A very high percentage of mothers now receive skilled attention during their confinement and the unqualified midwife commonly known as "Goda Winnambuwa" is fast disappearing from our midst. These factors have no doubt to some extent caused the reduction in the infant mortality rate, but it has to be remembered that we are still far from the goal we hope to reach.

As in other years premature birth and congenial debility has been the main cause of infant deaths, the percentage being as high as 35·6. This brings me to the consideration of the all important subject "The Expectant Mother".

In order to build a healthy nation the generation yet unborn should be healthy and this cannot be achieved unless the expectant mother is taken good care of during her pregnancy and immediately after. As I have mentioned before the care of the infant really starts from the date of its conception. Many of our mothers are under-nourished, debilitated and physically unfit for child bearing, and what is the heritage that such mothers can hand down to their offspring?

I have stressed the point before, that every expectant mother should be given at least one good meal and a pint of fresh milk daily. I am not unmindful of the fact that this is a colossal and complex problem beset with many difficulties. This is a matter for the Central Government. Such a scheme will involve very heavy expenditure, but a Government cannot be niggardly in the matter of expenditure on measures intended to improve the health of the expectant mother. The health of a nation and her prosperity will be judged by the health of the new born child and on this vital issue lies our future hope and glory.

Throughout this year we were handicapped with an inadequacy of staff. Vacancies in the Department remain unfilled due to a paucity of qualified personnel and this is a problem which we suffer in common with the rest of Ceylon. The situation thus created caused much inconvenience in the arrangement of work of those who were absent owing to illness and others who applied for their legitimate leave. We hope the situation will soon improve and the vacancies filled.

Finally, I regret to say, but it is my duty to say it, that there is a growing tendency on the part of several members of the staff to wear an independent temperament and carry out their duties with a certain amount of indifference and irresponsibility. Their motto appears to be "Maximum pay and minimum work". Some of them are not amenable to instructions. The situation was just the reverse up to very recent times, but what we have built and diligently worked for and gained with enormous effect appears to slip away unnoticed. If authority is to be respected and discipline maintained the virulence of this spreading disease has to be checked. This criticism is however not intended to obscure in any way the outstanding service that most of the members of my staff rendered to the poor citizens of Colombo.

J. E. D. MENDIS,

Medical Officer, Maternity and Child Welfare.

March 2, 1950.

Number of Cases conducted by the Municipal Midwives during the Year 1949.

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	TOTAL
Child Welfare Centre, St. Paul's	37	38	38	40	33	43	45	50	44	52	50	63	533*
Child Welfare Centre, New Bazaar ...	33	32	31	32	36	45	38	43	48	40	34	40	452*
Child Welfare Centre, Modera	29	15	12	14	16	13	19	21	19	17	9	22	206*
Child Welfare Centre, Maradana	78	58	57	43	51	52	72	46	60	56	53	72	698*
Child Welfare Centre, Slave Island ...	47	45	41	32	35	42	41	47	51	41	38	40	500*
Child Welfare Centre, Wellawatta ...	26	16	14	12	18	13	24	13	16	12	19	17	200*
Maternity Home, St. Paul's...	31	30	31	29	24	31	31	36	26	32	32	39	372†
Maternity Home, New Bazaar	27	27	26	25	26	29	39	30	31	34	24	21	339†
Maternity Home, Modera ...	22	20	24	29	31	23	22	37	34	34	22	24	322†
TOTAL ...	330	281	274	256	270	291	331	323	329	318	281	338	3,622

* District Cases.

† Maternity Home Cases.

Attendance at the Ante-natal, Baby and Post-natal Clinics for Year 1949.

Child Welfare Centre.	Ante-Natal Attendance. (Primary & Revisits.)	Post-Natal Attendance. (Primary & Revisits.)	Attendance at Baby Clinics. (Primary & Revisits.)
St. Paul's ...	4,067	232	678
New Bazaar ...	3,316	118	853
Modera ...	2,760	156	798
Maradana ...	2,869	62	659
Slave Island ...	2,029	50	494
Wellawatta ...	1,510	91	628
Total ...	16,551	709	4,110

Number of Children to whom Free Milk was issued during the Year 1949.

Centre	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	TOTAL
St. Paul's ...	29	24	25	27	28	28	23	24	36	31	31	37	343
New Bazaar ...	51	42	41	49	44	43	46	42	43	44	41	37	523
Modera ...	29	30	33	30	38	39	36	36	40	37	40	36	424
Maradana ...	45	45	54	52	52	46	45	43	48	55	49	48	582
Slave Island ...	32	33	32	30	31	32	33	31	28	35	31	30	378
Wellawatta ...	26	23	29	24	29	28	28	29	30	30	28	31	335
TOTAL ...	212	197	214	212	222	216	211	205	225	232	220	219	2,585

Annexure B.

REPORT OF THE CITY MICROBIOLOGIST FOR THE YEAR 1949.

I.—LABORATORY.

During the year 1949 the activities of the Laboratory were on a larger scale than during the preceding year, the increase of examinations from 20,803 to 23,084 being due to two factors, namely: a filaria survey undertaken during the first half of the year and the increased influx of specimens for tuberculosis during the second half of the year.

Filaria.—The filaria survey was started as a preliminary survey by this Laboratory in March and was continued till June when the World Health Organization expert arrived and inaugurated an intensified four day survey from 28th June to 1st July. All the specimens were examined at the Laboratory, and of a total of 1,664, 72 were found positive giving a percentage of 4.4. The preliminary survey (514 specimens) was done mostly in the northern areas of the town and showed an infestation rate of 3.5 per cent. The survey directed by Dr. Iyengar covered part of the south and centre and showed an infestation rate of 4.7 per cent.

Tuberculosis.—The increase in the number of sputa for tuberculosis submitted to this Laboratory illustrates the awakening of the population to the danger of tuberculosis. During 1949 a certain amount of propaganda made by the newly founded Ceylon National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis stirred up public opinion and made the population conscious of the dangers of an unchecked course of tuberculosis within the community. The discussion of the merits and demerits of B. C. G. vaccination contributed to the popularization of the problem, and although this Laboratory took no direct part in the actual introduction of the B. C. G. vaccination into Ceylon, I take some pride in the fact that for many years past I have been advocating this step (*vide* my report for 1946 and 1947).

Diphtheria.—The clinical specimens for diphtheria remained at about the same level, the percentage of positives also remaining almost identical. The general easing of the situation as regards diphtheria is evident by the drop in contact examination carried out by the department from 2,276 in 1948 to 1,567 in 1949 of which only 23 were found to be positive.

Plague.—There was no case of plague among the 14,188 rats dissected.

Water Supply.—The bacteriological control of the water supply of Colombo which represents one of the most important duties of this Laboratory showed the slight variations in purity to which we have become accustomed to for a long time and which are mostly due to sudden changes of weather in the Labugama catchment area. The work in the new catchment in Kalatuwawa has begun and seems to progress according to schedule, but it will take a considerable time before Colombo can enjoy the benefits of the new reservoir. Meanwhile, additional care has to be exercised to make the present supply from this area as safe as the one from the Labugama reservoir, which, unfortunately by itself, is not sufficient for the present needs of Colombo. Some alterations of the intake at Kalatuwawa as suggested by the Resident Engineer will no doubt facilitate the sanitary control of the water from this source.

Twice during the year 1949 the Kelani Ganga had to be used as an additional source of water supply from 12th February to 31st March and from 2nd to 11th May. Altogether 48 samples of the incoming river water at Elie House reservoir were examined of which 40 were found fully satisfactory. Presence of organisms of the B. Coli group was noticed in 8 specimens; three times the germ proved to be B. lactis aerogenes and five times B. Coli. In each case the number of organisms was very small, the maximum being five, and in every case these germs disappeared within 24 hours.

Close collaboration with the Waterworks department was maintained throughout this period.

As regards the Labugama supply, partly supplemented by the water of Kalatuwawa Ela, the water on the whole was found very satisfactory. Some disturbances occurred during the latter part of January and the beginning of February, during the first three weeks in April, at the end of August and the beginning of September and between the 20th and 22nd of October.

Food and Drugs Act.—The Food and Drugs Act which was passed during the year 1949 has not made itself felt as regards the working of the Laboratory. It is expected that, once the difficulties of the implementation of the Act in Colombo is successful, this Laboratory will have a certain part to play in this long overdue fight against the sale of potentially dangerous articles of food.

Vaccine.—About 4 litres of anti-typhoid vaccine were prepared and issued to the department and medical practitioners.

II.—ANALYSIS OF ROUTINE WORK.

(a) *General Distribution of Routine Specimens Examined during 1949.*

Clinical specimens	...	...	7,321
Town water	...	...	756
Rodents for Plague—			
Port Commission	...	...	231
Public Health Department	...	...	13,957
Public Health Department—			
Rats for flea index	227
Number of fleas	592
			<hr/>
			23,084
			<hr/>

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(b) *Distribution of Clinical Specimens—1949.*

		Number examined.	Number positive.	
Diagnostic service for practitioners	Enteric ...	508	159	
	Human Plague .	0	0	
	Tuberculosis ...	178	27	
	Dysentery ...	471	35	
	Diphtheria ...	585	64	
	Ova ...	153	45	
	Venereal Disease ...	15	2	
	Malaria { Parasites ...	6	0	
	{ Serological test ...	20	6	
	Filaria ...	7	0	
	Various ...	203	20	
	Public Health Department	Enteric ...	605	17
		Human Plague .	0	0
		Tuberculosis ...	977	107
		Dysentery ...	26	1
Diphtheria ...		1,567	23	
Ova ...		33	4	
Venereal Disease ...		1	0	
Malaria { Parasites ...		5	1	
{ Serological test ...		0	0	
Filaria ...		1,719	72	
Various ...	242	18		
	<u>7,321</u>	<u>601</u>		

February 2, 1950.

E. K. WOLFF,
City Microbiologist.

Annexure C.

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ANALYST FOR THE YEAR 1949.

The year ending December 31, 1949, was of historic importance as the long overdue Food and Drugs Act was placed on the Statute Book during this period. This resulted in the appointment of a Public Analyst in place of the City Analyst for the Municipality of Colombo.

During the period under survey a total of 1,617 samples of food were examined, and of these 1,022 or 63.2 per cent. were found to be up to standard.

In addition to the above, monthly gas tests on the City gas supply were performed. A table giving the details of the analytical work performed is appended below:—

Samples.	Total.	Passed.	Percentage.
Cow milk ...	1,384	806	57.9
Buffalo milk ...	29	16	55.1
Aerated water and fruit drinks ...	12	9	83.3
Town water and well water ...	189	188	99.4
Other Foods ...	3	2	66.6
	<u>1,617</u>	<u>1,021</u>	<u>63.2</u>

The gas and Town water supplies were found to be satisfactory but a sample of well water was found to be unfit for human consumption.

Three samples of Aerated Waters examined were found to contain metals deleterious to health and a sample of fish paste examined was found to be unfit for human consumption.

January 26, 1950.

S. M. CHANMUGAM,
Public Analyst.