

Annual Reports

REPORT ON THE HEALTH OF THE CITY OF LIVERPOOL FOR THE YEAR 1948 by W. M. Frazer, Medical Officer of Health. Public Health Department, Liverpool. 1949.

The two cities of Liverpool and Manchester, although similar in size and in geographical position differ considerably in their health record which is seldom to the credit of Liverpool. The population exceeds that of Manchester amounting to 791,800. The general death-rate for the year was 11.4. The birth-rate was 22.3. The percentage of illegitimate births fell from its war-time rise which reached 10.7 in 1945 to 5.7. Infant mortality was 54. The trend of death-rates from certain great causes of death is of interest; thus, if the rates per 100,000 population for 1871-80 are compared with those for 1948 we get:—digestive diseases 280 as against 60; cancer 40 as against 180; respiratory diseases 570 as against 150; and tuberculosis 360 as against 90. This last rate compares unfavourably with that for most great towns in England and Wales. During the last thirty-three years, since 1915, a great alteration has taken place in the age distribution of all deaths; from infancy until over age 50 the percentage of deaths has been less, while the number of persons reaching old-age has been increased, *v. graph*. Cancer claimed 749 males as against 680 females, and of these there were 212 male deaths from lung cancer and only 40 female*. The trend for tuberculosis to fall which was interfered with by the war has not, as happened after 1918, shown signs of resuming its course;

thus the figure for 1944 was 100; for 1945, 90; for 1946, 90; for 1947, 90; and for 1948, 90. Possibly the position has been thus adversely affected by the closing, for lack of nursing staff, of sanatorium beds, so leaving a waiting list of infectious cases to transmit their disease to others. Surely it is better to prevent (which could be done) than to try to cure (about which we know little).

*We note that in Uganda native Africans who do not smoke do not seem to experience cancer of the lungs, although experiencing cancer of other organs. (*B.M.J.*, September 24, 1949. P. 678.)

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL. Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health (C. M. Smith) for the Year 1948. Northampton, August 4, 1949.

The population here concerned is estimated at 247,820 with a general death-rate of 11.0. The birth-rate fell sharply to 17.46 from 20.42. The death-rate of legitimate infants was as low as 29.68 per 1,000 births but that of illegitimate infants, based on 216 births, was 69.44. Special care is devoted to illegitimate children, so this high mortality may be lowered; certainly it is important to the health of the rising generation that from 5 to 6 per cent should not experience such dishealth in the first year of life. We can only expect an adult people, resistant to disease, to develop from healthy children. Further infant lives could certainly be saved as New Zealand in 1948 had an infant mortality rate of 22, Sweden of 25 and Holland of 29.

The death-rate from tuberculosis, based on 105 deaths compared with 87 in 1947, was 42

