

Liverpool, Manchester, and West Bromich. The death-rate from fever was considerably lower than in recent corresponding quarters, but as usual, showed an excess in the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire: in Nottinghamshire the deaths from fever had considerably declined from the high number returned in the last three months of last year, but they were again excessive; the fatality from fever was exceptionally high in the borough of Sunderland and in Strood (Kent), Whitechurch (Hants), Radford Yarm, and Llanelly sub-districts. A considerable reduction in the death-rate from fever has occurred in recent years, and has been especially conspicuous in London. There is little doubt but that this result is directly due to an increased efficiency in sanitary supervision. When the whole country shall have been brought under the organised control of sanitary authorities we may hope for a still more strongly marked decline in the fatality from zymotic diseases. So long, however, as the appointment of health officers even in large towns, is optional, and so long as rural districts are not formed into organised sanitary districts, it is almost futile to hope for a more rapid decrease of the waste of life from these causes which is continually occurring around us.

During the three months ending the 30th of March last, 6,193 deaths in England and Wales, or 4·5 per cent. of the total deaths, were registered upon the information of the coroners, being inquest cases, against 6,789 and 6,901 in the corresponding quarters of 1870 and 1871. The deaths referred to different forms of violence during last quarter were 3,885, and corresponding with the number in the first three months of 1871; the proportion to total deaths was 2·9 per cent.

In the large public institutions of England and Wales, including workhouses, hospitals, and public lunatic asylums, 12,058 deaths were recorded last quarter against 13,394 in the corresponding period of 1871; the proportion was 8·9 per cent. of the total deaths, while in the first quarter of 1871 it was 9·7 per cent.; this decrease principally occurred in the deaths in workhouses, and was due to the mild weather which favourably influenced the death-rate among elderly people.

#### EIGHTEEN LARGE ENGLISH TOWNS.

The information published from time to time in the Weekly Return bearing upon the death-rates and the prevalence of zymotic diseases in these 18 towns renders it unnecessary to refer to them here in much detail; it will be useful, however, briefly to glance at the summary of the figures for the past quarter. The annual rate of mortality was equal to 25·7 per 1000 which but slightly exceeded the rate in the entire urban population of England and Wales; exclusive of the rate from smallpox it would not have exceeded 24·1 per 1000. Among the 18 towns the death-rate from all causes was lowest, 21·2 in Portsmouth, 21·7 in Birmingham, and 23·4 in Leicester; while it was 30·5 in Manchester, 30·6 in Nottingham, 33·0 in Sunderland, 34·2 in Norwich, and 35·8 in Wolverhampton. The fatal epidemic of smallpox was the cause of the excessive rate in each of the last four towns. The annual death-rate from the seven principal diseases of the zymotic class averaged 5·1 per 1000 in the 18 towns, against 4·5 in the whole of England and Wales, and ranged from 3·4 per 1000 in both Birmingham and Portsmouth to 10·3 in Sheffield, 12·2 in Wolverhampton, and 14·8 in Norwich. The death-rate from zymotic diseases in Liverpool last quarter was but 4·0 per 1000, or 1·1 below the average rate in the 18 towns, and with the exception of Portsmouth, Birmingham, Leicester, and Bradford, was lower than in any of the 18 towns, including London. The death-rate from all causes also showed a remarkable decline from that which has prevailed in recent corresponding quarters. Infant mortality in the 18 towns, measured by the proportion of deaths of children under one to births registered, averaged 15·7 per cent. last quarter against 14·9 in the whole of England and Wales, and ranged from 12·8 per cent. in Portsmouth and 13·5 in Birmingham to 19·8 in both Oldham and Bradford, and 21·1 in Wolverhampton. The proportion of inquest cases registered in the quarter averaged 6·0 per cent.; it was so low as 3·0 per cent. in Bradford, while it was 7·1 in Liverpool and 9·7 in Birmingham. The per centage of deaths referred to different forms of violence was but 2·1 in Bradford, while it was 4·4 in Birmingham, 4·5 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and 5·3 in Liverpool. The proportion of deaths in institutions, which was 14·1 and 15·9 per cent. respectively in the first quarters of 1870 and 1871, was 14·6 per cent. last quarter, and ranged from 5·8 and 6·6 per cent. in Oldham and Bradford to 15·6, 17·7, and 19·5 per cent. respectively in Liverpool, London, and Nottingham; the high percentage in the last-named town was due to the deaths caused by smallpox.

FIFTY OTHER LARGE TOWNS.—In the registration sub-districts taken to represent 50 other large English towns, ranking in respect of population next in size to the 18 largest towns the annual death-rate last quarter averaged 26·1 per 1,000, or 0·4 per 1,000 higher than in the 18 towns. The rate from the seven principal zymotic diseases was 5·6 per 1,000, which shows an excess of 0·5 per 1,000 upon that in the 18 towns. The lowest death-rates from all causes among the fifty towns were:—Derby 19·2, Chatham 19·7, Lincoln 20·5, Reading 20·6, Southampton 21·1, Worcester 21·5, Colchester 21·7, and Macclesfield 21·8. The highest rates were:—Northampton 30·8, Newport (Monmouth) 31·9, South Shields 34·3, Bolton 35·4, and East Stonehouse 40·8; smallpox was severely epidemic in all these five towns, except in Bolton, where, in addition to the prevalence of smallpox, an excessive fatality was shown from both measles and scarlet fever.

LONDON.—The deaths registered among the three and a quarter millions of the population residing within the metropolitan registration division are each week classified according to disease and age, and it is therefore possible to consider the influence which the unusually mild weather of the first three months of the year exercised upon this important section of the nation. The death-rate from all causes was equal to 24·0 per 1000, against 25·4, 26·7, and 26·9 in the first quarters of the three years 1869-70-71. Exclusive of the deaths from the seven principal zymotic diseases, which are not influenced by temperature to the same extent as are other classes of diseases, the death-rate in London in the March quarters of the three past years has been successively 22·6, 21·2, and 19·5 per 1,000. In connection with these rates, it is necessary to bear in mind that the mean temperature in those quarters was 38·0 deg., 40·2 deg., and 43·6 deg., respectively. The death-rates from diseases of the respiratory organs, including phthisis, in the first quarters of 1871 and 1872 were respectively 8·6 and