

Table VI.—Puerperal Deaths and Death-rate per 1,000 Live Births.

			1927.	1928.	1929.	1930.	1931.	1932.	1933.	1934.	1935.	1936.	1937.	1938.	1939.
Puerperal sepsis following child-birth	No.		56	42	30	27	18	13	14	17	8	9	14	21	16
	Rate		2.01	1.54	1.12	1.01	0.68	0.52	0.58	0.70	0.33	0.36	0.51	0.77	0.55
Accidents of labour (hæmorrhages, shock, embolism, and accidents of childbirth not otherwise defined)	No.		35	30	39	36	31	30	29	19	21	25	12	29	42
	Rate		1.26	1.10	1.46	1.34	1.16	1.21	1.19	0.78	1.00	1.01	0.46	1.06	1.46
Toxæmia and eclampsia ..	No.		27	40	34	36	38	23	29	30	34	30	35	29	24
	Rate		0.97	1.47	1.27	1.34	1.43	0.92	1.19	1.24	1.42	1.20	1.35	1.06	0.83
Accidents of pregnancy (non-septic abortion and ectopic gestation)	No.		5	8	7	7	11	9	10	10	12	14	9	2	3
	Rate		0.18	0.29	0.26	0.26	0.41	0.36	0.41	0.41	0.50	0.57	0.34	0.07	0.11
Total maternal deaths (excluding septic abortion)	No.		123	120	110	106	98	75	82	76	78	78	72	81	85
	Rate		4.41	4.42	4.11	3.96	3.68	3.02	3.37	3.12	3.25	3.14	2.69	2.97	2.95
Septic abortion—															
Married women ..	No.	}	14	14	19	26	26	24	16	29	17	13	16	20	11
Single women ..	No.					4	3	2	10	13	6	1	7	10	9
Totals ..			14	14	19	30	29	26	26	42	23	14	23	30	20
Rate ..			0.50	0.51	0.71	1.12	1.09	1.04	1.07	1.73	0.96	0.56	0.92	1.10	0.69

Table VII.—Puerperal Mortality, 1939, Showing Number of Deaths and their relation to Live Births.

							Number of Deaths.	Death Rate per 1,000 Live Births.
Puerperal sepsis following childbirth	..	..	..	..	..	..	16	0.55
Accidents of labour—								
Placenta prævia	..	..	..	..	10	..		
Post-partum hæmorrhage	..	..	..	..	11	..		
Puerperal embolism	..	..	..	..	9	..		
Other accidents of childbirth—								
Shock or syncope following—								
Cæsarean Section	..	..	..	..	1	} 12	..	
Obstetric shock and heart-failure	..	..	..	..	10			
Ruptured uterus	..	..	..	..	1			
							42	1.46
Toxæmias of pregnancy—								
Eclampsia	..	..	..	..	12	} 24	..	
Puerperal toxæmia	..	..	..	..	9			
Hyperemesis gravidarum	..	..	..	..	2			
Acute yellow atrophy of liver	..	..	..	..	1			
							24	0.83
Accidents of pregnancy—								
(a) Abortion (non-septic)	..	..	..	..	2	..	3	0.11
(b) Ectopic gestation	..	..	..	..	1	..		
Total maternal deaths (excluding septic abortion)				..	..	..	85	2.95
Septic abortion—								
(a) Married women	..	..	..	..	..	..	11	..
(b) Single women	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	..
							20	0.69

PUERPERAL SEPSIS FOLLOWING CHILDBIRTH.

During the past year 147 cases of sepsis were notified, of which 131 were in Europeans and 16 in Maoris. Of these, 120 were the subject of inquiry by questionnaires, supplemented, where possible, by personal inquiry. Of the 120 cases 111 occurred in Europeans and 9 in Maoris. The returns show that only in 8 cases among the Europeans was faulty technique reported, and 4 out of the 9 investigated Maori cases were nursed under conditions in which asepsis was impossible. In my opinion, the number of cases returned as due to faulty technique is underestimated.

There are still a number of nurses whose training, if any, occurred before the teaching of asepsis and by whom the principles of asepsis are not fully appreciated. Medical practitioners might with advantage give more supervision in such cases.