

ought to be, as can be seen from the preceding table. The highest rates will be found in places with a large French population ; but it must also be remembered that among these French Canadians there is a correspondingly high birth rate.* Out of a total number of deaths recorded of 18,232, 9,695, or 53·17 per cent., were of children under five years of age, and 6,307, or 34·59, per cent., of those under one year. This latter proportion was larger than in 1887, when it was 33·06 per cent. The four most fatal diseases to children under one year were, as before : atrophy and debility, 1,746 ; diarrhœal affections, 1,423 ; diseases of the respiratory organs, 627 ; and premature birth, 366 ; making an aggregate of 4,162 deaths, or 65·99 per cent. of the total number. The proportion last year was 67·04 per cent.

127. The number of deaths of illegitimate children returned was 984 ; but, as has been pointed out before, returns of this nature are practically at present of no value, and the natural desire for concealment on the part of the parents will always render it extremely difficult to obtain anything like correct figures. The fact that out of the whole number, 845, or 86 per cent., were returned from Montreal, Ottawa and Quebec, where there are special institutions for the reception of illegitimate children, leaving only 139 to be divided among 23 towns, one of which has a population of 170,000, shows at once what little real truth there is in the figures. Out of the total number 44·41 were under one month, and 88·72 per cent. under one year. Though both in 1887 and 1888 the rate of infant mortality was highest in Hull, yet in neither year were there any returns of illegitimate births from that city.

Deaths of illegitimate children.

128. The number of cases of children stillborn returned was 905.

Children stillborn.

* As an instance of their fecundity it may be mentioned that the Government of Quebec recently provided that every father of a family having 12 or more children living should be entitled, under certain conditions of settlement, to 100 acres of land, and since the day set for receiving claims, there have, up to the time of writing, been no less than 547 duly proven applications, and fresh claims are coming in, which it is expected will raise the total to between seven and eight hundred.