



Perinatal Mortality.—'Perinatal' mortality—the combined total of stillbirths and deaths of live-born infants occurring 'around' the natal period—is a relatively new vital statistics concept. Since such deaths frequently have the same underlying causes, associated with pregnancy or delivery, regardless of whether they occur before or after delivery, perinatal deaths are generally considered as including the combined total of stillbirths occurring after at least 28 weeks pregnancy and deaths of live-born infants who fail to survive the first week of life.

In 1962 there were 13,598 such 'deaths', of which 5,882 were stillborn and 7,716 live-born but failed to survive one week, with a national rate of 28.6 such deaths for every 1,000 total deliveries. This perinatal rate has declined very slowly, but steadily, from 65.2 in 1921 to 28.1 in 1961 but rose for the first time to 28.6 in 1962. Despite what might appear to be an encouraging reduction over the past forty years, there has been very little change during the past four years.

Subsection 3.—Maternal Mortality

As indicated in Table 1, pp. 226-227, the number of mothers who die in pregnancy and childbirth has been greatly reduced during the past two decades. Although the number of births has been much greater in recent years, the number of maternal deaths declined almost steadily from 1940 (when there were 978 deaths and a rate of 40 deaths for every