

Infantile mortality.

142. The largest number of deaths is, of course, among children, and the infant mortality of Hull is still larger than in any other town, out of 384 deaths 262 having been of children under 5 years of age, being in the proportion of 682 per 1,000 deaths. Infant mortality is, however, very much larger in many places than it ought to be, the highest rates being generally found in places with a large French population; but it must also be remembered that among French speaking Canadians there is a correspondingly high birth rate. Out of a total number of deaths recorded of 19,461, 9,524, or 48.93 per cent, were of children under 5 years of age, and 6,296, or 33.35 per cent, of those under 1 year. This latter proportion was not so large as in either 1887, 1888 or 1889, in which years it was 33.06 per cent, 34.59 per cent, and 35.02 per cent, respectively. More than half, or 54 per cent, of the total number of deaths under 5 years, were from atrophy and debility, and diarrhœal affections, the numbers being for the first named cause 1,588, and for the second, 1,826. There were 451 deaths from premature birth, being an increase of 118.

Deaths of illegitimate children.

143. The number of deaths of illegitimate children returned was 873, being three more than in 1889; 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, 754, or 86 per cent, were returned from Montreal, Ottawa and Quebec, where there are special institutions for the reception of illegitimate children, leaving only 124 to be divided among 26 towns, one of which has a population of 181,000, shows at once what little real truth there is in the figures. Out of the total number, 39 per cent were under one month, and 89 per cent under one year. Though for the last four years the rate of infant mortality has been highest in Hull, yet in no year have there been any returns of illegitimate births from that city.

Children still-born.

144. The number of cases of children still-born returned was 964, as compared with 913 in 1889. The deaths from suicide reported amounted to 34, 29 being males and 5 females. The number returned in 1886 from 22 cities was 31; in 1887, from 26 cities, 30; in 1888, from 27 cities, 37, and in 1889, 37 from 28 cities.

Deaths from most fatal diseases.

145. The following table gives the number of deaths from the eight most fatal diseases in the 29 places making returns in 1890. As will be seen from the arrangements at the foot of the table, the order of fatality is different from that of the preceding year. Throat affections have dropped out of the table and their place been taken by enteritis and other affections of the bowels. The most fatal disease is placed first:—