

No. 50

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND VITAL STATISTICS

We print below a summary of Infectious Diseases and Vital Statistics in the British Isles during the week ended Dec. 11.

Figures of Principal Notifiable Diseases for the week and those for the corresponding week last year, for: (a) England and Wales (London included), (b) London (administrative county), (c) Scotland, (d) Eire, (e) Northern Ireland.

Figures of Births and Deaths, and of Deaths recorded under each infectious disease, are for: (a) The 126 great towns in England and Wales (including London), (b) London (administrative county), (c) The 16 principal towns in Scotland, (d) The 13 principal towns in Eire, (e) The 10 principal towns in Northern Ireland. A dash — denotes no cases; a blank space denotes disease not notifiable or no return available.

Disease	1948					1947 (Corresponding Week)				
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Cerebrospinal fever ..	39	4	19	—	—	64	6	18	1	—
Deaths		2	—	—	—		2	—	—	—
Diphtheria	144	12	45	7	9	233	19	67	14	10
Deaths		2	—	—	—		4	—	2	—
Dysentery	69	13	44	—	—	106	7	28	1	—
Deaths										
Encephalitis lethargica, acute	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Deaths										
Erysipelas	—	—	30	21	2	—	—	29	14	2
Deaths										
Infective enteritis or diarrhoea under 2 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths	29	—	7	36	2	62	7	19	22	2
Measles*	10,094	176	147	51	63	3,379	156	410	192	20
Deaths†										
Ophthalmia neonatorum	36	5	20	—	—	58	4	8	1	—
Deaths										
Paratyphoid fever	3	1	(B)	—	—	3	1	—	—	—
Deaths										
Pneumonia, influenzal	1,027	81	9	1	6	723	29	8	3	5
Deaths (from influenza)‡		24	4	3	—		23	2	5	2
Pneumonia, primary	321	71	397	28	18	—	53	319	22	14
Deaths				3				11		
Polio-encephalitis, acute	1	—	—	—	—	7	3	—	—	—
Deaths										
Poliomyelitis, acute	35	4	3	2	—	77	4	11	4	5
Deaths§		1	—	—	—		—	—	—	—
Puerperal fever	—	—	8	—	—	—	2	10	—	—
Deaths										
Puerperal pyrexia 	98	8	2	—	—	116	9	9	4	—
Deaths							1			
Relapsing fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths										
Scarlet fever	1,410	85	287	170	45	1,939	131	296	32	44
Deaths†							2	—	—	—
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths										
Typhoid fever	4	1	2	—	—	10	—	4	4	—
Deaths								1		
Typhus fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths										
Whooping-cough*	2,522	187	159	74	9	1,737	92	38	29	5
Deaths		13	1	3	—		4	—	—	—
Deaths (0-1 year)	360	54	60	13	7	389	41	79	19	25
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)										
Deaths (excluding stillbirths)	5,497	944	659	154	107	5,493	817	804	200	159
Annual death rate (per 1,000 persons living)			13.3	9.6	—			16.7	12.6	—
Live births	7,212	1,220	867	303	227	8,044	1,367	945	419	252
Annual rate per 1,000 persons living			17.5	19.0	—			19.0	26.4	—
Stillbirths	219	24	21	—	—	236	36	26	—	—
Rate per 1,000 total births (including stillborn)			24	—	—			27	—	—

* Measles and whooping-cough are not notifiable in Scotland, and the returns are therefore an approximation.
 † Deaths from measles and scarlet fever for England and Wales, London (administrative county), will no longer be published.
 ‡ Includes primary form for England and Wales, London (administrative county), and Northern Ireland.
 § The number of deaths from poliomyelitis and polio-encephalitis for England and Wales, London (administrative county), are combined.
 || Includes puerperal fever for England and Wales and Eire.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL NOTES

Influenza Epidemic in Italy

The current influenza epidemic in Italy, although widespread is said to be a relatively mild form of the disease. According to the World Health Organization's Division of Epidemiology, by mid-December the disease was continuing on an epidemic scale in Rome and was widespread both in the central and southern provinces of the mainland and also in Sardinia. More recent information indicates that the infection has since spread to the northern provinces.

It appears that the influenza has run a mild clinical course in all affected regions. It is characterized by high fever which persists for two or three days but then diminishes progressively to normal. Attacks usually last four to five days in all. Fatal lung complications have been observed only among the aged. In this connexion it is noted that the number of deaths from bronchopneumonia does not exceed the seasonal average. Laboratory studies at Sassari, in Sardinia, have identified the strain as virus B.

Sickness and Diarrhoea at Chatham

An outbreak of vomiting affecting 58 children but no member of the staff occurred at a Chatham secondary school on Nov. 15, 1948; 20 of the affected children had diarrhoea and sickness. Most of the children were sick between 1.30 and 3.30 p.m., but 10 reported that sickness began at home after 4 p.m. All the affected children were able to go home at 4 p.m., and with one exception all returned to school the following day. About half the children had school milk (pasteurized) in the morning, and 53 of the 58 had the school dinner of cottage pie with greens, and macaroni pudding with jam sauce, served at 12.15 p.m. The 5 who did not have their dinner in school were in a classroom where about a dozen children were sick.

The central kitchen where the dinner was cooked is well equipped, and the hygiene of the premises, equipment, and staff is good. Two of the staff had colds. None had skin lesions. On the day in question 955 dinners were distributed in the cooking containers to six different schools. In the school where the trouble occurred 313 meals were consumed by pupils and staff. No other school was affected. The children do not sit in class groups for dinner. No particular class was attacked. It is not known if the affected children were served from the same containers or by the same person. The minced meat portion of the cottage pie had been precooked on the previous day and stored overnight in the refrigerator on large enamel trays. It was reheated with a covering of mashed potato in the oven the following morning. The remainder of the food was prepared and cooked just before being distributed.

Food containers and crockery were washed immediately after dinner, and no food was available for bacteriological examination. Swabs were taken from the throat, nose, and hands of the kitchen staff, and from 12 *Staphylococcus pyogenes* was recovered on culture, in two cases from all three sites. Two specimens of vomit were submitted for examination and *Staphylococcus pyogenes* isolated. None of the cultures isolated from the food handlers was identical with those obtained from the two vomits. The possibility of metallic poisoning from the food containers was excluded. A complete bacteriological investigation was not possible, and the limited inquiry does not support the preliminary assumption that the symptoms were due to the presence of a staphylococcal enterotoxin in a small proportion of the total food consumed.

Discussion of Table

In England and Wales an increase was recorded in the notifications of measles 1,532 and acute pneumonia 130; decreases were reported for scarlet fever 117, whooping-cough 40, and acute poliomyelitis 16.

Large increases in the incidence of measles occurred in Lancashire 514, Yorkshire West Riding 352, Essex 99, Lincolnshire 95, and Middlesex 85. There was a decline of 48 in the notifications of scarlet fever in Yorkshire West Riding.

There were decreases in the incidence of whooping-cough in Yorkshire West Riding 44 and Durham 32, with a rise of 46 in London. A small rise occurred in the incidence of acute pneumonia in every region except in the south-eastern counties where no change occurred.

An outbreak of dysentery affecting 8 persons was notified from Cheshire, Wirral R.D.; the only other large return was Lancashire 12. Notifications of acute poliomyelitis were the lowest since the middle of July; the largest returns during the week were London 4, Yorkshire West Riding 4, Middlesex 3, and Nottinghamshire 3.

In Scotland increases were recorded in the number of notifications of acute primary pneumonia 60 and whooping-cough 27.

Dr. M. C. F. ... 1966/bmi:145/5039

There was a decrease of 18 in the notifications of measles. Notifications of diphtheria fell from 21 to 10 in Glasgow, but this was compensated for by a rise of 12 in the remainder of the western area.

In *Eire* a fall was reported in the notifications of measles 39 and scarlet fever 24, while a rise of 16 was recorded for whooping-cough.

In *Northern Ireland* a decrease of 9 in the notifications of scarlet fever and an increase of 5 for diphtheria were the chief changes in the trends of infectious diseases.

Week Ending December 18

The notifications of infectious diseases in England and Wales during the week included: scarlet fever 1,426, whooping-cough 2,471, diphtheria 124, measles 9,800, acute pneumonia 1,082, cerebrospinal fever 35, acute poliomyelitis 28, dysentery 54, paratyphoid 1, and typhoid 7.

Medical News

Chadwick Medals

The Chadwick Trust recently awarded Chadwick Medals to the nominees of nine provincial universities where sanitary science is taught, or where the Diploma of Public Health is given. The inscription on each medal was as follows: "Chadwick Medal for excellence in the study of Hygiene and of the Sanitary Idea." The names of the nine recipients are as follows, with the universities indicated in parentheses: C. R. Lowe, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Birmingham); William Nicol, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Bristol); G. W. Knight, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Leeds); H. O. M. Bryant, M.B., Ch.B. (Liverpool); D. G. Crawshaw, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Manchester); William Watt, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Aberdeen); Gerald O. Mayne, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Edinburgh); Angus N. MacPhail, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Glasgow); Sheena M. Allardice, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (St. Andrews).

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

The Langley Memorial Prize, which is open to competition among officers, past and present, of the Colonial Medical Service who are serving, or who have served, in West Africa, has been awarded to Dr. D. G. Fitzgerald Moore for his paper entitled "Nutritional Eye Disease and Effects of Nutritional Retrobulbar Neuritis."

University Grants Committee

The following medical men are among the members of the University Grants Committee, which has been reconstituted: Professor E. D. Adrian, O.M., F.R.S., Professor G. W. Pickering, and Professor J. C. Spence.

Dr. S. L. Simpson

Dr. S. Leonard Simpson has been elected an Honorary Corresponding Member of the French Society of Endocrinology.

"Agene" Process Prohibited in U.S.A.

The use of nitrogen trichloride to improve and bleach flour (the "agene" process) is to cease in the U.S.A. from Aug. 1 as the result of an inquiry set up under the Food and Drug Administration. Sir Edward Mellanby, F.R.S., first showed that agenzized flour causes hysteria in dogs; his paper appeared in 1946 in this *Journal* (Dec. 14, p. 885). Chlorine dioxide is to be allowed instead of nitrogen trichloride.

Wills

Colonel Sir Harry Edwin Bruce Bruce-Porter, K.B.E., C.M.G., left £42,618. Mr. Cyril Alban Raison, of Birmingham, left £29,557 and bequeathed £2,000 to the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Birmingham to endow "The Cyril Raison Prize" in surgical diseases in children. Dr. Thomas Gwynne Maitland, late medical superintendent, Cunard White Star Line, left £3,611.

COMING EVENTS

Legislation and the Family

A conference on "The New Social Legislation and the Family" will be held at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1, on Jan. 20 and 21, 1949, by the British Social Hygiene Council and the Town and Country Planning Association. It is intended mainly for representatives of local authorities, but social workers and others may be interested. Information may be obtained from the British Social Hygiene Council, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1.

Society of Anaesthetists of South Wales

A Society of Anaesthetists of South Wales is in the process of formation and a meeting with this end in view will be held at Cardiff Royal Infirmary on Wednesday, Jan. 12, 1949, at 8 p.m. All those whose main interest is in anaesthesia are invited to attend the meeting.

Lecture-demonstrations

A series of lecture-demonstrations on psychiatry and neurology will be held in the large lecture theatre of St. George's Hospital Medical School, Hyde Park Corner, London, S.W., on Thursdays at 4.30 p.m., from Jan. 6 to March 17. They are open, without fee, to all postgraduates and senior medical students.

SOCIETIES AND LECTURES

Tuesday

INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY, 5, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.—Jan. 4, 5 p.m. "Zoonoses (Parasitic Infections)," by Dr. M. Sydney Thomson.

INSTITUTE OF UROLOGY.—At St. Paul's Hospital, Endell Street, London, W.C., Jan. 4, 11 a.m. "Some Aspects of Leucorrhoea," by Dr. W. N. Mascall.

Wednesday

INSTITUTE OF UROLOGY.—At St. Paul's Hospital, Endell Street, London, W.C., Jan. 5, 11 a.m. "Gonorrhoea in the Female," by Dr. W. N. Mascall.

LONDON COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY.—At Furnivall House, Cholmondeley Road, London, N., Jan. 5, 4.30 p.m. Annual general meeting. Address by the retiring president, Mr. J. R. M. Whigham.

SOCIETY OF CHEMICAL INDUSTRY: NUTRITION PANEL OF THE FOOD GROUP.—At Gas Industry House, 1, Grosvenor Place, London, S.W., Jan. 5, 6.30 p.m. "The Sausage as Food," discussion to be opened by Mr. H. P. Blunt, Mr. Osman Jones, Mr. M. G. Read, and Dr. Magnus Pyke, Ph.D.

Thursday

FACULTY OF HOMOEOPATHY.—At Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital, Great Ormond Street, London, W.C., Jan. 6, 5 p.m. "Head Hunters in Great Ormond Street," by Drs. W. Lees Templeton and Charles O. Kennedy.

INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY, 5, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.—Jan. 6, 5 p.m. "Cutaneous Tuberculosis," by Dr. G. B. Dowling.

INSTITUTE OF UROLOGY.—At St. Paul's Hospital, Endell Street, London, W.C., Jan. 6, 11 a.m. "Local Complications of Gonorrhoea in the Female," by Dr. W. N. Mascall.

ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL, Hyde Park Corner, London, S.W.—At Large Lecture Theatre, Jan. 6, 4.30 p.m. Lecture-demonstration: Psychiatry.

Friday

MAIDA VALE HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL, Maida Vale, London, W.—Jan. 7, 5 p.m. Case demonstration by Dr. D. McAlpine.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS

BIRTHS

Apley.—On Dec. 16, 1948, at Woking Maternity Home, to Janie, wife of A. G. Apley, F.R.C.S., West Lodge, West Byfleet, a son.

Barry.—On Dec. 15, 1948, at March, Wilmslow, to Monica (née Craig), wife of C. T. Barry, M.D., D.A., a third son.

Ffrench.—On Nov. 28, 1948, to Marjory and Geoffrey Ffrench, of Pleasant Street, Woodside, Halifax County, Nova Scotia, a daughter.

Parker.—On Dec. 15, 1948, to Kath'een (née Hewlett Johnson), wife of Geoffrey Parker, D.S.O., F.R.C.S., a son—Nicholas James.

Watson.—On Dec. 13, 1948, at the County Hospital, Bangor, to Megan (née Wynne Jones), wife of Claud C. M. Watson, M.B., Ch.B.Ed., a son—David.

DEATHS

Bennett.—On Dec. 21, 1948, at Mildenhall, William Fay Bennett, M.R.C.S., of Barrow, Suffolk.

Bennett-Jones.—On Dec. 14, 1948, at 5, Gambier Terrace, Liverpool, William James Bennett-Jones, M.D., M.R.C.S., F.F.A., aged 75.

Bhat.—Recently, at Karkala, India, Kasargod Somanath Bhat, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., aged 63.

Bunting.—On Dec. 15, 1948, William Hartley Bunting, M.D., F.R.C.S.Ed., of Middleton Cottage, Salwarpe, Droitwich, aged 80.

Colledge.—On Dec. 19, 1948, at 2, Upper Wimpole Street, London, W., Lionel Colledge, F.R.C.S.

Jamieson.—On Dec. 16, 1948, at Thorne Bank, Great Eccleston, Lancs, Alexander Brown Jamieson, M.B., Ch.B.Ed.

Logie.—On Dec. 20, 1948, at 15, Craigholm Crescent, Burntisland, Fife, John Moffat Logie, M.B., Ch.B.Ed.

Morrison.—On Dec. 17, 1948, at 19, Cromer Road, North Walsham, Norfolk, Henry Morrison, M.D., aged 54.

Sutton.—On Dec. 20, 1948, at Guildford, David Carlyle Sutton, M.D.Ed.

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