

A meeting of St. Marylebone practitioners, arranged by the St. Marylebone Medical Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Geoffrey Marshall, will be held at the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, 26, Portland Place, W., on Wednesday, May 16, at 8.30 p.m., to discuss important matters arising out of the Special Representative Meeting of the B.M.A. and to make recommendations.

Ninety-five English medical students have gone to Europe to help in the relief of starvation. Fifty Scottish students are standing by for the same purpose.

Major-Gen. Sir Ernest Cowell was last week admitted to the freedom of the borough of Croydon, being the first medical man among the nineteen upon whom this honour has been conferred.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL NOTES

Discussion of Table

In *England and Wales* measles notifications fell during the week by 22,574 cases, and those for scarlet fever by 128; whooping-cough was more prevalent by 191 cases, and dysentery by 157.

Lancashire had 36 fewer cases of scarlet fever than last week. The largest local variations in the returns of diphtheria were increases of 12 in Staffordshire and 10 in Warwickshire, and a fall of 14 in Cheshire. Two local outbreaks of diphtheria, one in the village of Abergynolwyn, Merionethshire, and the other in Northumberland, Amble U.D., persist, and the local authorities are taking measures in an attempt to control the outbreaks. A small rise in whooping-cough occurred in all regions except the south-western. The notifications of measles fell by over 100 in fifteen counties, notifications being lower than last week by the following numbers: Yorks West Riding 520, Leicestershire 318, Middlesex 206. A rise of 170 occurred in Monmouthshire, of 133 in Kent, and of 111 in Glamorganshire.

Notifications of dysentery were high. In Middlesex cases rose from 4 to 50, and in Kent from 3 to 36. The other large returns were Lancashire 64, London 32, Warwickshire 22, Gloucestershire 19, Staffordshire 18, Essex 18, Surrey 17, Yorks West Riding 16, Suffolk 15, Derbyshire 13, Devonshire 13, Cornwall 13, Hertfordshire 10, Oxfordshire 10, Northumberland 10.

In *Scotland* there were 177 more notifications of measles than last week, 127 more of whooping-cough, 20 more of scarlet fever, and 15 more of dysentery. The first three of these diseases were especially prevalent in Glasgow. The largest returns for dysentery were Glasgow 48, Edinburgh 39, Renfrew County 24, Aberdeen 14.

In *Eire* there were 26 more cases of measles than last week, and 7 more of diphtheria, but 23 fewer of whooping-cough. There was an outbreak of 24 cases of measles in Tipperary, Thurles U.D. An outbreak of diphtheria has occurred among the turf workers on the Lullymore Bog in Kildare.

In *Northern Ireland* the notifications of diphtheria were 8 higher than last week, and of scarlet fever 18 higher. The increase in scarlet fever was confined to Belfast C.B. The 22 cases of diphtheria involved fourteen registration areas.

Quarterly Returns for England and Wales

The birth rate during the December quarter of 1944 was 17.1 per thousand, the highest fourth-quarter rate since 1924; the average for this quarter for the five years 1938-42 was 13.9. Infant mortality was 44 per thousand live births—9 below the average of the ten preceding December quarters. The general death rate was 11.8 per thousand, compared with 14.6 for the fourth quarter of 1943, and the same as the average for the December quarters of 1938-42. The natural increase, excess of births over deaths, was 54,958.

The provisional returns for the whole year give the birth rate as 18.0 per thousand, which was 1.5 above that for 1943, and the highest recorded since 1925. Infant mortality was 46 per thousand live births—the lowest rate recorded—and was 3 below the rate of 1943, the previous lowest level. A further small increase in deaths from diarrhoea and enteritis under 2 years of age was recorded; the totals for 1940-4 are 2,891, 2,985, 3,415, 3,517, 3,600. The general death rate was 11.9 per thousand, being 0.2 below the rate for 1943, but 0.3 above that for 1942. The excess of live births over deaths was 253,040; the excess for 1943 was 181,801, and the average natural increase for the five preceding years was 102,620.

Week Ending April 21

The notifications of infectious diseases in *England and Wales* during the week included: scarlet fever 1,356, whooping-cough 1,212, diphtheria 565, measles 15,901, acute pneumonia 573, cerebrospinal fever 73, dysentery 523, paratyphoid 3, typhoid 5.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND VITAL STATISTICS

We print below a summary of Infectious Diseases and Vital Statistics in the British Isles during the week ended April 14.

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	1945					1944 (Corresponding Week)				
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Cerebrospinal fever ..	70	4	28	3	5	96	5	35	1	2
Deaths		2	3				1	2		
Diphtheria	438	14	111	100	22	616	27	201	100	26
Deaths	6	—	1	5	—	9	1	2	4	—
Dysentery	463	32	180	—	—	179	21	114	—	6
Deaths										
Encephalitis lethargica, acute	2	—	—	—	—	2	—	3	—	—
Deaths										
Erysipelas			44	13	3			49	12	6
Deaths		1								
Infective enteritis or diarrhoea under 2 years				7					8	
Deaths	49	7	3	9	4	63	12	21	13	2
Measles*	20,342	1651	394	86	35	2,578	273	239	382	3
Deaths	12	1	4	1	1	3	—	—	4	1
Ophthalmia neonatorum	63	5	15	1	—	67	3	25	—	—
Deaths										
Paratyphoid fever	2	—	—	1 (B)	—	2	—	1 (B)	—	—
Deaths										
Pneumonia, influenza†	664	46	4	2	5	983	62	10	2	4
Deaths (from influenza)	13	—	1	—	—	27	4	1	2	—
Pneumonia, primary			172	30				273	36	
Deaths		33		7	6		68		6	15
Polio-encephalitis, acute	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Deaths										
Poliomyelitis, acute	5	1	1	—	—	4	—	—	—	—
Deaths										
Puerperal fever		4	13	—	—		3	15	—	—
Deaths										
Puerperal pyrexia‡	131	9	11	—	—	163	5	12	3	1
Deaths							1			
Relapsing fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths										
Scarlet fever	1,215	57	207	20	62	1,870	89	236	24	75
Deaths	1									
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Deaths										
Typhoid fever	8	—	1	11	—	5	1	1	13	1
Deaths										
Typhus fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths										
Whooping-cough*	1,234	56	192	33	26	1,865	176	56	73	16
Deaths	3		3	1		13	3		3	2
Deaths (0-1 year)	367	45	52	42	27	392	53	87	33	25
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)										
Deaths (excluding stillbirths)	4,480	648	632	226	132	4,699	728	665	248	139
Annual death rate (per 1,000 persons living)			14.3	14.6	§		15.3	16.2	§	
Live births	6,643	740	830	441	269	7,353	861	975	470	287
Annual rate per 1,000 persons living			16.6	28.5	§		19.8	30.7	§	
Stillbirths	211	20	21	—	—	256	19	37	—	—
Rate per 1,000 total births (including stillborn)			25	—	—			37	—	—

* Measles and whooping-cough are not notifiable in Scotland, and the returns are therefore an approximation only.

† Includes primary form for England and Wales, London (administrative county), and Northern Ireland.

‡ Includes puerperal fever for England and Wales and Eire.

§ Owing to evacuation schemes and other movements of population, birth and death rates for Northern Ireland are no longer available.

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