

dental service. Treatment of children in clinics cost substantially less than treatment carried out in private surgeries.

An improvement in the special priority service for children must be sought by expanding local authority clinic services, rather than, by transferring part of those services to private surgeons. Two clauses in the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill would make the provision of local authority clinics compulsory. The Minister of Health had invited the British Dental Association to supply the names of dental practitioners willing to work part-time for school dental clinics, but this request had been met with a cold silence. With regard to Mr. Blenkinsop's point about dentists' charging more than a normal set fee, she believed most dentists were maintaining the fees which had been laid down. So far as new entrants in the profession were concerned, it was not so much a question of applicants not coming forward as of some of them being unsuitable or unable to qualify and take the training. There was no substantial falling off in the number of persons entering the profession.

Infected Second-hand Clothing

Mr. M. K. MACMILLAN asked on November 25 whether the Secretary of State for Scotland was aware of the danger to health from the uncontrolled disposal and sale of second-hand clothing, and whether he intended to take action to control the disposal of personal clothing and bedding of patients dying in institutions and at their homes of tuberculosis and other infectious diseases. Commander T. D. GALBRAITH said that when infectious disease arose the normal practice was for hospitals and local authorities to advise or arrange for the destruction or disinfection of clothing and bedding so far as they considered necessary to avoid the spread of disease.

Food Prices

Mr. FREDERICK WILLEY, on November 26, moved that an address be presented to Her Majesty praying for the annulment of a Sugar Prices Order. He remarked that Lord Boyd-Orr had said the health and physique of the present generation were the most valuable capital asset the nation had. If the Government impaired this asset a very heavy payment would be made in the future.

After further discussion Dr. CHARLES HILL replied for the Government. He said that in the past two and a half years, while food prices went up by £250,000,000, compensation in the form of increased social benefits amounted to £61,000,000. Dealing with consumption, Dr. Hill said that the take-up of sugar was 100%, and that of bacon in the same period of July and August was 96%. The percentage of income expended on food in 1938 was slightly less than 30%. The percentage spent in the third quarter of this year was a fraction more than 32%. On alcohol and tobacco, 10.4% of income was spent before the war and 15.6% to-day. The greatest danger to maintenance of proper nutritional standards for the last few years, and still in a measure to-day, was in the field of the large family. The Government policy was one of allowing people to spend their money in their own way but of making certain that no one was prevented by lack of money from obtaining the food which, on grounds of strength, they needed. There was no evidence of any decline in nutritional standards.

The motion for the annulment of the Sugar Prices Order was defeated by 234 to 208. Mr. WILLEY then moved addresses for annulment of Orders relating to butter and meat.

Butter and Meat

Mr. BAKER WHITE said the fall in the imports of butter was progressive and had started under the Labour Government. It was due to drought, to losses through foot-and-mouth disease, to the rising world population, and to rising consumption in other countries.

Replying, Dr. HILL said that, in this country this year, nearly 15% more red meat had been consumed than in

the corresponding period of last year, and there was rather more than a 15% increase in bacon. Liquid milk consumption in this country, per head of the population, was 60% up compared with before the war. The prospect of increased butter production did not seem to be particularly good. The milk-drinking campaign had played a big part in bringing that about.

The motions for addresses were then withdrawn.

Clean Food.—Major Lloyd George hopes, as soon as Parliamentary business permits, to introduce legislation to supplement the Food and Drugs Act for the purpose of establishing a standard of hygiene in catering establishments.

Milk.—About 53% of milk sold in Great Britain comes from cows that have passed an official tuberculin test, compared with about 46% a year ago and 38% two years ago.

Mental Hospitals.—Mr. Iain Macleod stated on November 20 that all but 12 of the 107 mental hospitals in England and Wales are overcrowded. Of the 294 mental hospitals and mental deficiency institutions in the National Health Service 235 reported shortages of nursing staff at September 30. These were 162 short of male staff and 220 short of female staff.

Hearing-aids.—The average cost of "medresco" hearing-aids supplied through the National Health Service up to June last was £3 11s. 6d. This does not include the costs of batteries or of distribution and other overheads.

Vital Statistics

Week Ending November 22

The notifications of infectious diseases in England and Wales during the week included: scarlet fever 2,226, whooping-cough 1,854, diphtheria 41, measles 12,130, acute poliomyelitis 83, dysentery 158, paratyphoid fever 8, and typhoid fever 3.

Infectious Diseases

The largest fluctuations in the number of notifications of infectious diseases in England and Wales during the week ending November 15 were a rise of 771 for measles, from 11,264 to 12,035, a rise of 331 for whooping-cough, from 1,449 to 1,780, and a rise of 89 for scarlet fever, from 1,976 to 2,065.

The largest rises in the incidence of measles were 219 in London, from 989 to 1,208, 193 in Yorkshire West Riding, from 900 to 1,093, and 138 in Durham, from 412 to 550. The largest exception to the general rise in measles was a fall of 155 in Suffolk, from 363 to 208. The largest increases in the returns for whooping-cough were 34 in Lancashire, from 273 to 307, and 33 in London, from 80 to 113. A rise of 50 in the number of notifications of scarlet fever in Essex, from 182 to 232, was the largest variation in the local trends. 44 cases of diphtheria were notified, 17 more than in the preceding week, and the total was the largest for the past 35 weeks. The rise in diphtheria was mainly contributed by two cities—London, where the notifications increased from 1 to 7, and Birmingham, where the rise was from 2 to 9.

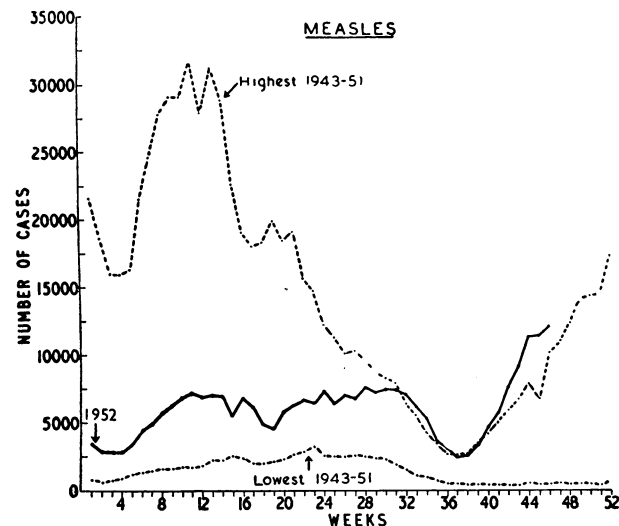
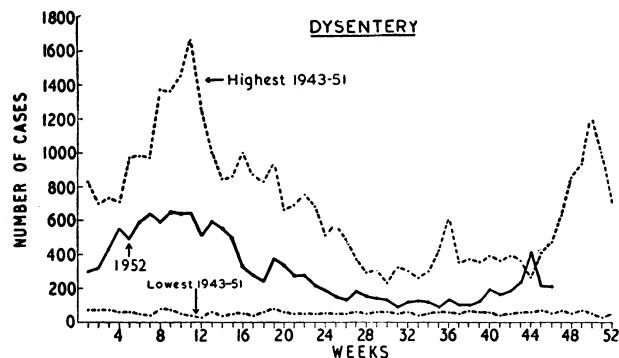
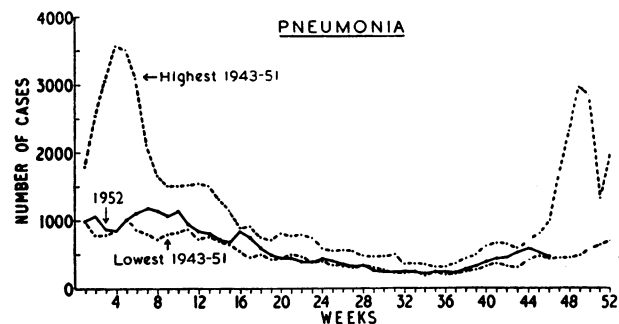
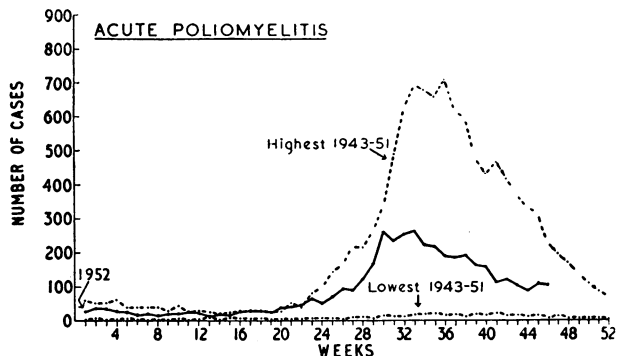
The notifications of acute poliomyelitis, 104, were 1 more for paralytic and 14 fewer for non-paralytic cases than in the preceding week. The largest returns during the week were London 12 (Lewisham 3, Woolwich 3); Essex 12 (Southend-on-Sea C.B. 3); Surrey 10 (Croydon C.B. 4).

Dysentery notifications decreased by 2, from 213 to 211. The chief centres of infection during the week were London 46 (St. Pancras 18, Wandsworth 9); Lancashire 45 (Blackburn R.D. 17, Blackpool C.B. 14); Lincoln 22 (Grimsby C.B. 17); Surrey 17 (Coulsdon and Purley U.D. 9); Middlesex 15 (Edmonton M.B. 8); Warwickshire 12 (Coventry C.B. 9).

The largest outbreak of food-poisoning involved 85 persons in Suffolk, Thingoe R.D.

Graphs of Infectious Diseases

The graphs below show the uncorrected numbers of cases of certain diseases notified weekly in England and Wales. Highest and lowest figures reported in each week during the nine years 1943-51 are shown thus -----, the figures for 1952 thus ————. Except for the curves showing notifications in 1952, the graphs were prepared at the Department of Medical Statistics and Epidemiology, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.



INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND VITAL STATISTICS

Summary for British Isles for week ending November 15 (No. 46) and corresponding week 1951.

Figures of cases are for the countries shown and London administrative county. Figures of deaths and births are for the 160 great towns in England and Wales (London included), London administrative county, the 17 principal towns in Scotland, the 10 principal towns in Northern Ireland, and the 14 principal towns in Eire.

A blank space denotes disease not notifiable or no return available. The table is based on information supplied by the Registrars-General of England and Wales, Scotland, N. Ireland, and Eire, the Ministry of Health and Local Government of N. Ireland, and the Department of Health of Eire.

CASES in Countries and London	1952					1951				
	Eng. & Wales	London	Scot.	N. Ire.	Eire	Eng. & Wales	London	Scot.	N. Ire.	Eire
Diphtheria ..	44	7	13	0	2	38	1	10	1	2
Dysentery ..	211	46	106	1	3	240	44	77	2	1
Encephalitis, acute ..	2	0	0	0		6	1	1	0	
Enteric fever: Typhoid ..	3	1	0	1	1	4	0	0	1	2
Paratyphoid ..	5	0	0	0		14	0	0	0	
Food-poisoning ..	151	10		0		84	18		0	
Infective enteritis or diarrhoea under 2 years ..				7	8				17	31
Measles* ..	12,035	1208	207	16	130	2,084	47	118	191	92
Meningococcal infection ..	29	4	13	0	2	42	3	16	2	1
Ophthalmia neonatorum ..	29	0	8	0		45	4	6	1	1
Pneumonia† ..	452	36	290	5		467	31	204	7	
Poliomyelitis, acute: Paralytic ..	82	11		6	1	45	3		14	0
Non-paralytic ..	22	1			4	20	2			5
Puerperal fever§ ..	226	20	12	1		238	43	10	2	
Scarlet fever ..	2,065	180	331	18	135	1,473	139	308	31	51
Tuberculosis: Respiratory ..			138	27				140	33	
Non-respiratory ..			24	5				22	5	
Whooping-cough ..	1,780	113	80	42	64	1,833	62	320	62	105

DEATHS in Great Towns	1952					1951				
	Eng. & Wales	London	Scot.	N. Ire.	Eire	Eng. & Wales	London	Scot.	N. Ire.	Eire
Diphtheria ..	0	0			0	0	0	0	0	0
Dysentery ..	1	0				0	0		0	
Encephalitis, acute ..		0			0		0		0	
Enteric fever ..	0	0				1	0	0	0	
Infective enteritis or diarrhoea under 2 years ..	4	1	2		0	7		1	0	0
Influenza ..	8	0	1		1	11	1	1	0	0
Measles ..		0			0		0	0	0	0
Meningococcal infection ..		0	2				0	1		
Pneumonia ..	176	29			3	179	28		9	6
Poliomyelitis, acute ..	4	0			0	3	0			1
Scarlet fever ..		0			0		0	0	0	0
Tuberculosis: Respiratory ..	108	{ 20 1	10 1		4 1	145	{ 18 1	26 4	1 1	13 0
Non-respiratory ..										
Whooping-cough ..	0	0			0	1	0	1	1	0
Deaths 0-1 year ..	218	32	38		6	189	31	32	8	20
Deaths (excluding stillbirths) ..	4,975	747	513		137	4,674	753	581	118	191
LIVE BIRTHS ..	6,827	1060	766		346	6,167	1040	710	200	362
STILLBIRTHS ..	183	23	20			187	23	23		

* Measles not notifiable in Scotland, whence returns are approximate.

† Includes primary and influenza pneumonia.

§ Includes puerperal pyrexia.