

There was a fall in the still-birth rate per 1,000 of total births, from 28.42 in 1937 to 26.54 in 1938. There was at the same time a rise in neo-natal deaths—i.e., deaths in the first fourteen days after birth—from 20.24 per 1,000 total births to 21.44. When these two are considered together the rates for still-births and neo-natal deaths were 47.98 per 1,000 total births in 1938, and 48.66 in 1937, a decrease of 0.68. The decrease in the still-birth rate therefore slightly more than balances the increase in neo-natal deaths.

If the period taken be extended to one month after birth the rates for the two years 1937 and 1938 are almost identical, being 50.01 and 50.05 respectively per 1,000 total births.

As will be seen in the table given above, the death-rate per 1,000 live births for infants from one month to one year of age rose from 8.99 in 1937 to 11.48 in 1938.

The following table shows for the past five years the death-rate per 1,000 total births for still-births and for live births at various ages up to one month.

Rates per 1,000 Total Births.

Year.	Still Births.	Under One Day.	One Day and under Two Days.	Two Days and under One Week.	One Week and under Two Weeks.	Two Weeks and under One Month
1934	27.47	8.84	3.28	6.12	2.56	1.44
1935	29.87	7.93	2.91	6.52	2.19	1.82
1936	28.63	8.88	3.01	5.55	2.54	1.68
1937	28.42	9.11	2.32	6.61	2.20	1.35
1938	26.54	7.93	3.04	7.93	2.54	2.07

SECTION 2.—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

Attached are tables showing the notification of infectious and other notifiable diseases in the Dominion for the year 1938. Tables A, B, and C, and unless otherwise stated, the comments and tables in this section deal with Europeans only.

GENERAL.

Apart from the severe epidemic of measles already referred to, the year was a quiet one as regards the prevalence of infectious diseases. As measles is not notifiable, the extent of the epidemic cannot be stated with any accuracy, but it was widespread and of more than usual severity.

The notifications of infectious and other notifiable diseases during the year numbered 3,790, compared with 4,203 in 1937 and 3,652 in 1936. Increases occurred in the following infectious diseases, the increase in each case being shown: Diphtheria (187), typhoid fever (8), pulmonary tuberculosis (116), cerebro-spinal meningitis (11), erysipelas (193), hydatids (2), lethargic encephalitis (4), bacillary dysentery (142), actinomycosis (1). In addition, there was an increase of four in the number of notified cases of chronic lead poisoning.

There were marked decreases in the notifications for scarlet fever (262) and poliomyelitis (743).

Tables and comments regarding the more common infectious diseases are given below:—

(a) *Scarlet Fever.*

Year.	Number of Notifications.	Deaths.		
		Number.	Rates per 10,000 of Mean Population.	Case-fatality Rate per Cent.
1933	783	4	0.03	0.51
1934	762	8	0.05	1.05
1935	863	8	0.05	0.93
1936	1,152	8	0.05	0.69
1937	924	6	0.04	0.65
1938	662	2	0.01	0.30

During the past seven years notifications of scarlet fever have on only one occasion (1936) exceeded 1,000. This condition, which in the past took a heavy toll of child life, has declined markedly in importance as a cause of death. In 1876–77 there was an epidemic which caused 331