

CHAPTER XVI

MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Vital Statistics

The number of deaths recorded during the period 1869 to 1880 averaged 19,351 annually, which gave an average death-rate of 20.74 per thousand. The average for the last five years of the period was no less than 29.781 (giving a rate of 31.9 per thousand) which was, however, swollen by the excessive mortality of 1879 when 56,300 deaths were recorded, fever alone accounting for as many as 27,000 of these deaths. In the following decade the death-rate averaged 32.1 per thousand and from 1891 to 1900 it remained almost the same, the average rate being 32.01. The death-rate would have been much lower had it not been for the excessive mortality of infants during 1892 and 1894 and the influenza epidemic of the latter year; the number of births was largely in excess of the recorded mortality, the average birth-rate from 1891 to 1900 being 40.31 per thousand. Deaths exceeded births in 1892 and 1894. The highest death-rate was 47.12 in 1894, a wet year, which registered an enormous mortality from fever. From 1901 to 1904 the death-rate was generally in the region of 30 per thousand, except in 1903 when it rose to 47.5 per thousand, partly owing to the ravages of fever and partly to a serious outbreak of plague in the district. In the five years from 1917 to 1921 the death-rate swelled to an average of 54.35 per thousand owing to a very high mortality from fever and influenza, the maximum rate being 79.61 in 1918. Deaths exceeded births from 1918 to 1921.

The mean decennial birth and death-rates of the last three decades for the district as a whole and for its rural and urban areas are given below :

Population	Mean decennial birth-rate			Mean decennial death-rate		
	1941—50	1931—40	1921—30	1941—50	1931—40	1921—30
Total	23.1	33.5	35.3	16.0	22.9	25.0
Rural	22.4	33.5	36.1	15.7	22.8	25.4
Urban	31.2	33.4	24.3	20.1	23.2	19.6

During the ten years from 1948 to 1957, the death-rate kept inordinately low, the average ranging from 6.13 (in 1954) to 14.85 (in 1948). The first statistical statement in Chapter III gives the variations in the population in the last five decades and shows that during the period from 1901 to 1920 the population of the district recorded a decrease of 7.3 per cent when that of the State fell by 4.0 per cent only. The district appears

to have suffered much more from epidemics (including that of influenza in 1918-19) during this period than did the rest of the State in general; in the five years from 1917 to 1921, the death-rate averaged as much as 51.35 per thousand, the maximum rate (in 1918) being 79.16. The census of 1931 showed that the population in the district was 21.8 per cent higher than that in 1881 and was much above the Divisional and slightly above the State average. Births exceeded deaths in every year of the decade 1921-30 and the increase in population was thus due entirely to natural causes. The increase during 1931-40 was below the State average. In 1951 the population of the district was 17.4 per cent higher than it was half a century before, the increase in the rural population being 16.3 per cent and in the urban 32.4 per cent as compared with the increase of 50 per cent in the population of the State during the same period.

Diseases Common to District

Fever—As everywhere, the most common disease of the district is fever (the term includes pneumonia, typhoid, malaria and a large number of unidentified ailments) which prevails in all its parts, particularly in the Tambaour and Thangaon areas in the east and in Maholi, Hargaon and Kamulpur in the upland, these being the tracts in which depressions are most numerous which serve as breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Intermittent fever of a virulent type often appears during the months following the monsoon. From 1869 to 1880 fever was responsible for 60 per cent of the recorded deaths. In the following ten years the proportion rose to 72.2 per cent and from 1891 to 1900 it averaged no less than 77 per cent. The most serious outbreaks of fever recorded were in 1879, 1892, 1894, 1897, 1899, 1902 and 1903 when over 27,000 deaths were attributed to this disease. From 1904 to 1931 the number of deaths from fever was less than 27,000 only in the years from 1912 to 1916, 1922, 1923, 1924 and 1931. During the decade 1932-41 fever accounted for 2,29,607 deaths (82.2 per cent), the total number of deaths ranging from 16,512 to 28,280 each year. In the following ten years the number of deaths on account of fever came down to 1,65,669 but it still remained the greatest killer accounting for 83.1 per cent of the deaths. In the next five years (1952-56) fever was more or less tamed, the number of deaths never exceeding 6,901 in any year. The general pattern, however, remains unchanged, for even after 1956 about 63.0 per cent of the deaths were caused by fever.

Anti-malarial Measures—The National Malaria Control Programme Scheme (now called the Malaria Eradication Programme) was given effect to in the district from November 1, 1956, in order to eradicate malaria in *ganjar* area. A National Malaria Control Unit under a senior malaria inspector was established for the districts of Sitapur and Hardoi (with its headquarters in Hardoi), which surveyed the malarious tracts of the district and then started mass disinfection in the form of house-to-house D. D. T. spraying and by other methods.

