

First, in spite of the improvements recently effected, registration generally, and the registration of births in particular, is not universally carried out. The great extent of the country, and the isolation of many of its inhabitants, partly account for this unsatisfactory situation.

Secondly, the great differences in the age and sex distribution of the population in different provinces, as shown by the Census of 1921, make comparisons (of crude birth rates, for instance), as among the provinces unfair and misleading. Thus, for instance, in British Columbia in 1921, there were only 773 females of ages 15 to 44 to every 1,000 males of these ages, while in Quebec there were 1,017 and in Prince Edward Island 986. Evidently in view of the great disproportion between the sexes in British Columbia, the crude birth rate per 1,000 of population in that province cannot properly be compared with the crude birth rate in Quebec or Prince Edward Island. Again, in consequence of different age distributions of population in the different provinces—the Prairie Provinces, for instance, have a very young population because of the healthy young immigrants whom they attract—a comparison of crude death-rates of the provinces is misleading. In the Prairie Provinces, taken as a unit, only 126 per thousand of the 1911 population and 149 per thousand of the 1921 population had passed 45 years of age, while in Quebec 178, in Ontario 233 and in Prince Edward Island 264 per thousand of the population were in 1921 over 45 years of age. These latter provinces, having a much larger proportion of persons of advanced ages, will inevitably have a higher crude death rate per thousand of population than the Prairie Provinces.

The natural increase of the population of Canada is first dealt with, followed by detailed tables of births, marriages and deaths in the order named.

### 1.—Natural Increase.

Summary statistics of the births, marriages, deaths and natural increase per 1,000 of population are given for the years 1920, 1921 and 1922 by provinces in Table 38. The figures for 1922 are provisional and are not available for the province of Quebec, which is not included in the registration area.

The province of Quebec has perhaps the highest rate of natural increase per 1,000 of population of any civilized country, 20·0 in 1920 and 23·4 in 1921. This brings the average for Canada (exclusive of the territories) up to 15·6 in 1920 and 17·8 in 1921, while the remaining eight provinces, constituting the registration area, show as their rate of natural increase 13·7 for 1920 and 15·7 in 1921. In Australia the average rate of natural increase for the quinquennium 1917 to 1921 was 14·26 and in New Zealand 13·29, in England and Wales 7·20 and in Scotland 8·54 per thousand of population, so that the registration area of Canada compares quite favourably with other British countries. It must be remembered, however, that 1917 and 1918 were war years.

The rates of natural increase per annum per 1000 of mean population for other countries during recent years are as follows, the period on which observation is based being given in each case in parentheses: Denmark (1911-15), 12·87; Japan (1914-17), 12·26; Netherlands (1916-20), 12·25; Norway (1911-15), 11·82; Finland (1913-17), 9·14; Italy (1913-17), 8·11; Switzerland (1912-16), 7·89; Sweden (1916-20), 6·60; Spain (1915-19), 4·60; Ireland (1916-20), 3·89; France (1910-14), 0·43.