

### 3.—Marriages.

Nearly a century ago it was observed in the United Kingdom that the number of marriages tended to be high when the price of wheat was low and to be low when the price of wheat was high. This was quite naturally the case among a population, the majority of which was living at a comparatively low standard of comfort, and where the staple food, as a consequence, was the chief factor in the cost of living.

More recently, the curve showing marriage rates has in the United Kingdom and in other English-speaking countries ceased to bear any constant relation to the price of wheat, the staple food of the people, though it still does so in poorer countries. Its place in influencing the marriage rate has, however, been taken by the general level of prosperity. Marriages in such countries as the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Australia tend to increase in "good times" and to diminish in "hard times," when great numbers of those who are contemplating marriage are led to postpone such marriage until the advent of better industrial conditions.

Even in the short period covered by the vital statistics of the registration area of Canada, the truth of the above statement is supported by the evidence. In 1920, a year of great prosperity, the marriages occurring in the registration area of Canada numbered 59,344 or 9.5 per thousand of population; in 1921 they declined to 51,073 or 8.0 per thousand, and in 1922 to 47,811 or 7.3 per thousand of population, largely owing to the industrial depression in these years, while in 1923 they showed an increase to 49,056, the rate, however, remaining much the same as in 1922, at 7.4 per thousand of population. It should also be mentioned, of course, that there doubtless occurred in 1920 a number of deferred marriages, which under more normal conditions would have occurred in the war years. Summary statistics of marriages contracted in 1922 and 1923 appear in Table 9.

9.—Marriages and Marriage Rates, by Provinces, 1922 and 1923.

Provinces.	Population in thousands, 1922.	Marriages, 1922.		Population in thousands, 1923. <sup>1</sup>	Marriages, 1923.	
		No.	Per 1,000 pop.		No.	Per 1,000 pop.
Prince Edward Island.....	88	579	6.6	88	454	5.2
Nova Scotia.....	528	3,169	6.0	530	3,240	6.1
New Brunswick.....	392	2,799	7.1	396	2,905	7.3
Ontario.....	2,981	23,360	7.8	3,019	24,829	8.2
Manitoba.....	626	4,808	7.7	637	4,544	7.1
Saskatchewan.....	786	5,061	6.4	797	5,044	6.3
Alberta.....	611	4,272	7.0	621	4,110	6.6
British Columbia.....	539	3,763	7.0	544	3,930	7.2
Canada (registration area).....	6,551	47,811	7.3	6,632	49,056	7.4
Quebec.....	2,402	16,609	6.5	—	—	—
Canada (exclusive of the Terri- tories).....	8,953	64,420	7.2	—	—	—

NOTE.—The figures for 1923 are preliminary.

<sup>1</sup> Revised estimate of population.

**Conjugal Condition of Brides and Grooms.**—Statistics showing the previously existing conjugal condition of the contracting parties in the 47,811 marriages which took place in the registration area in 1922 are presented in Table 10.