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, and consequently a table has been included showing the legitimate birth rate per 1,000 married women between 15 and 44 years of age. 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. A table showing the death rates as adjusted on the basis of the English "standard million" of 1901 has therefore been included. (Table 22).

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 to 1924 by provinces in Table 1. The figures for 1924 are provisional and are not available for the province of Quebec, which was 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, 23·4 in 1921, 21·8 in 1922 and 18·6 in 1923. This brings the average for Canada (exclusive of the territories) up to 17·8 in 1921, 16·5 in 1922 and 14·7 in 1923, while the remaining eight provinces, constituting the registration area, show as their rate of natural increase 15·8 for 1921, 14·5 in 1922, 13·1 for 1923 and 13·4 for 1924. 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 1,000 of population, so that the registration area of Canada compares quite favourably with other British countries.

The rates of natural increase per annum per 1,000 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.

The present natural increase of the population of Canada is in the neighbourhood of 135,000 per annum, about one-third of which is due to Quebec.

The births, marriages, deaths and natural increase in Canadian cities having a population of 10,000 and over are given for the calendar year 1923 in Table 2.