

Birth Rates in Various Countries.—The relative position occupied by Canada and its individual provinces among the countries of the world with respect to crude birth rate (the annual number of births per 1,000 of population) is shown in Table 12.

12.—Crude Birth Rates of Various Countries in Recent Years.

Countries.	Years.	Crude Birth Rate.	Countries.	Years.	Crude Birth Rate.
Egypt.....	1923	43.0	Ontario.....	1924	23.2
Chile.....	1923	39.6	Western Australia.....	1924	23.1
Ceylon.....	1922	39.1	Canada (Registration Area)	1924	23.1
Jamaica.....	1923	38.2	Scotland.....	1924	22.8
Rumania.....	1922	37.1	Alberta.....	1924	22.4
Bulgaria.....	1923	35.6	United States.....	1923	22.4
Russia (European).....	1921	35.5	Austria.....	1923	22.3
Japan.....	1922	34.2	Northern Ireland.....	1924	22.2
Portugal.....	1922	32.8	Victoria.....	1923	22.0
Quebec.....	1923	32.3	Latvia.....	1923	21.9
Argentina.....	1922	32.1	Nova Scotia.....	1924	21.9
Spain.....	1924	29.9	South Australia.....	1924	21.9
Italy.....	1923	29.3	New Zealand.....	1923	21.9
Newfoundland.....	1923	27.4	Denmark.....	1924	21.9
Czechoslovakia.....	1923	27.3	Prussia.....	1923	21.8
New Brunswick.....	1924	26.7	Norway.....	1924	21.7
Union of South Africa (Whites).....	1924	26.5	Germany.....	1923	20.9
Hungary.....	1924	26.3	Irish Free State.....	1924	20.1
Netherlands.....	1923	26.0	Prince Edward Island.....	1924	20.0
Saskatchewan.....	1924	25.9	Belgium.....	1924	19.9
Uruguay.....	1923	25.4	Switzerland.....	1923	19.4
Finland.....	1923	25.4	Esthonia.....	1923	19.4
Tasmania.....	1924	25.0	France.....	1924	19.2
New South Wales.....	1924	24.1	England and Wales.....	1924	18.8
Manitoba.....	1924	23.9	Sweden.....	1924	18.1
Queensland.....	1924	23.9	British Columbia.....	1924	17.5
Australia.....	1923	23.8			

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 1,000 of population; in 1921 they declined to 51,073 or 8.0 per 1,000, and in 1922 to 47,811 or 7.3 per 1,000 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 1,000 of population. Again, in 1924, a rather unfavourable