

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. 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 together, only 126 per 1,000 of the 1911 population and 149 per 1,000 of the 1921 population had passed 45 years of age, while in Quebec 178, in Ontario 233 and in Prince Edward Island 264 per 1,000 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 1,000 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 23).

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 1921 to 1926 by provinces in Table 1. The figures for 1926 are subject to revision.

The province of Quebec has one of the highest rates of natural increase per 1,000 of population in any civilized country, 23.4 in 1921, 21.8 in 1922, 18.6 in 1923, 22.0 in 1924, 20.9 in 1925, 17.5 in 1926. This brings the average for Canada (exclusive of the territories) up to 17.8 per 1,000 in 1921, 16.5 in 1922, 14.7 in 1923, 15.8 in 1924, 15.2 in 1925 and 13.3 in 1926.

In Australia the rate of natural increase in 1925 was 13.7 per 1,000, in New Zealand in 1925 12.9, in England and Wales in 1926 6.2, in Scotland in 1925 7.9, and in the Irish Free State 6.2, so that Canada compares quite favourably with other British countries.

The rates of natural increase per annum per 1,000 of mean population for other countries in the latest years are as follows, the figures being for 1925 unless otherwise indicated:—Denmark 10.2; Japan 14.6; Netherlands (1926) 14.0; Norway (1926) 9.1; Finland 8.8; Italy 10.9; Switzerland 6.2; Sweden 5.8; Spain (1926) 10.9; France (1926) 1.3.

The present natural increase of the population of Canada is in the neighbourhood of 140,000 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 1925 in Table 2.