

2.—Urban Municipalities.

The statistics of the rural and urban population of Canada, appearing on pages 116 to 123 of this issue of the Year Book, show that between 1901 and 1921 the urban population of Canada more than doubled, increasing from 2,014,222 to 4,352,442; further, this growth has been greater in the cities, more especially the larger cities, than in the towns and villages. The aggregation of great numbers of people into the cities within a comparatively short space of time has made it necessary for costly public services to be furnished to the newcomers. Problems of water supply, road and bridge building, police and fire protection, sanitation and sewerage, transportation, education, public health and recreation have been faced and more or less satisfactorily solved, often at great expense. Some municipalities, indeed, in the period before the war, considered it expedient to provide public services for prospective, as well as for existing population, and later found that the prospects did not become actualities as rapidly as they had expected. The result of the great actual growth and the great expectations of growth was a rapid increase in municipal taxation which has made municipal public finance a very important part of the public finance of Canada, attracting a very considerable amount of attention from theoretical students of public finance, from municipal officials, from bond houses and generally from the urban ratepayer.

Investigators of municipal public finance have, however, found great difficulties in pursuing their studies on account of the incomparability of the statistics collected by Provincial Governments, or the entire absence of such statistics, for, as late as 1919, only six provinces compiled and published their municipal statistics. Accordingly, in response to suggestions from the Union of Canadian Municipalities and the Municipal Improvement League of Canada, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics undertook to collect independently through its Finance Branch the statistics for a fixed group of municipalities of 10,000 population or over, according to schedules and methods of compilation approved by the provinces. The results of the first investigation for the calendar year 1919 were published in summary form on pp. 570-80 of the 1920 Year Book, as well as in greater detail in a special report. Subsequently other reports appeared of the municipal statistics of urban municipalities of between 3,000 and 10,000 population and municipalities of between 1,000 and 3,000 population. The statistics of these later reports were summarized on pp. 802-5 of the 1922-23 Year Book.

In the 1925 edition of the Year Book, summary statistics were presented of 81 urban municipalities of 5,000 population and over reporting to the Bureau for the calendar year 1922 (see pp. 806-8). Details were published in a special report, obtainable on application to the Bureau of Statistics. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics has also secured in comparable form and published a report on the statistics of 257 urban municipalities of between 1,000 and 5,000 population having an estimated aggregate population of 551,461 in 1922. The figures are for the calendar year 1922, and a summary of the financial statistics was given at pp. 808-12 of the 1925 Year Book. Copies of the report may be obtained from the Bureau.

Statistics of Canadian Cities in 1926.—The principal financial and other statistics of Canadian cities with a population of 10,000 and over have been compiled from the provincial reports for 1926 and are published as Table 32.