

The Increase of Gainfully Employed Females.—Proportionately more remarkable than any of the developments among gainfully employed males between 1891 and 1921, has been the increase from 195,990 to 490,150 in the number of gainfully employed females, as shown in Table 48. This is an increase of 294,160 or 150.1 p.c., while the increase in the total female population of 10 years old and over was only 81.3 p.c. In other words, the gainfully employed females have increased from 11.1 p.c. to 15.2 p.c. of the female population of 10 years old and over.

Still more remarkable than the total increase, however, has been the increase in certain occupations. Whereas in 1891 51.9 p.c. of all gainfully employed females were occupied in domestic and personal service, *i.e.*, in the occupations of the house-keeper, in 1921 only 27.5 p.c. of the gainfully occupied females were in this class, while the remainder had spread themselves out over a wide variety of fields, particularly in the professions and in trade and merchandising. Women in the professions increased their numbers from 20,051 in 1891 to 118,670 in 1921, or nearly six-fold; indeed, in this field, owing to the great number of women teachers and nurses, they outnumbered the males, who were only 103,479 in 1921 as compared with the 118,670 females. In trade and merchandising, the gainfully employed females increased from 7,918 in 1891 to 77,911 in 1921, or nearly ten-fold. In transportation, again, their numbers increased from 948 in 1891 to 21,145 in 1921, or over twenty-fold. Finally, in civil and municipal government, their numbers increased from 767 in 1891 to 12,582 in 1921 or over sixteen-fold. These great increases have brought it about that while the number of women in manufactures increased from 52,251 in 1891 to 106,410 in 1921, their percentage fell from 26.7 p.c. to 21.7 p.c. of the total of gainfully occupied women.

It is true, of course, that the increase in the number of gainfully employed females is to a great extent a matter of specialization of function rather than of the entry by women into fields with which they have had nothing to do in the past. Teaching and nursing, the making of clothes, the keeping of small shops, have always been pre-eminently female employments, and the main difference between the present and the past is the more specialized manner in which such occupations as teaching and nursing are generally carried on in the community.

A remarkable feature of the gainfully employed women is their comparative youth. A very large number of them follow their gainful occupations only for a few years, when they marry and join the ranks of those who can no longer be classed as gainfully occupied. The married women of Canada, numbering 1,631,761 in 1921, together with numerous unmarried women and widows keeping house for their families, are doubtless producers in a very real sense, but they cannot be regarded as "gainfully employed". Yet the keeper of a boarding-house, doing practically the same type of work, is quite properly regarded as "gainfully employed". In view of the inauguration of mothers' pensions—a method of paying widows or otherwise impoverished mothers for looking after their families—it may be conceded that even the economic contribution of the two sexes to the carrying on of the State cannot be regarded wholly in the light of the respective numbers of the two sexes gainfully employed.