

CHAPTER IV.—POPULATION.¹

The Population chapter of the Year Book is a *précis* of the results of investigations into the number and the constitution of the population made in the seven censuses of Canada since Confederation, summarizing the growth and distribution of population between 1871 and 1931, as shown by the successive decennial censuses, in regard to the chief matters investigated at the censuses.

The modern census, now established in all civilized countries as the chief method of measuring periodically the population and its social and economic condition, has been described by a modern United States writer as the greatest single peace-time activity in which a government engages, both in respect of the physical extent of its organization and the important part which its results play in the general administration of public affairs.

Under the Canadian constitution, the legal *raison d'être* of the census is to determine representation in the House of Commons; after each decennial census a redistribution of seats in the House, following the course of the movement of population, is made in the manner described on pp. 80-83 of this volume. But the census, especially since the introduction of methods of mechanical tabulation, has become far more than a mere counting of heads. It is a great periodical stock-taking of the people and their affairs, designed to show as fully as possible the stage which has been reached in the progress of the nation. Thus the numbers, local distribution, age, sex, racial origin, nationality, language, religion, education, housing and occupations of the people, severally constitute investigations of enormous importance, to which all the continuous and routine statistics collected in the ordinary course of administration must be related if their importance is to be realized. The census, in fine, rounds out and completes the scheme of information upon which the Government relies in conducting the business of the country.

On account of the requirements as to parliamentary representation and the payment of provincial subsidies, which are based on population, the Canadian census is taken on the *de jure* principle; *i.e.*, each person is counted as belonging to the locality in which he is regularly domiciled, irrespective of where he may be at the date of the enumeration. Under the *de facto* method, adopted in the United Kingdom, each individual is counted as belonging to the locality where he is found on the census date. The *de facto* method is undoubtedly simpler, but the *de jure* plan better portrays the permanent condition of the population. The chief difficulty in the application of the latter method is found in connection with holiday resorts, in the segregation of "visitors" and the tracing of "absentees". A date prior to the opening of the holiday season is accordingly chosen for the date of the census. In the Canadian census, students and inmates of hospitals are assigned to their home localities, while inmates of prisons, jails, lunatic asylums, etc., are counted where found.

Section 1.—Census Statistics of General Population.

Since the creation of the Dominion of Canada, in 1867, decennial censuses have been taken on the *de jure* plan as of the dates April 2, 1871, April 4, 1881, April 5, 1891, April 1, 1901, June 1, 1911, 1921, and 1931. The population of Canada and its percentage distribution as on each date, together with the absolute and percentage increases from decade to decade, are given in Tables 1 to 4 immediately following.

¹This chapter has been revised by E. S. Macphail, Chief, Demography Branch, Dominion Bureau of Statistics. A list of the publications of this branch will be found in Chapter XXIX, Section I, under "Population".