

the code from that which obtained a century and a half ago. In 1764, according to Blackstone, there were in England 160 capital offences on the Statute Book. It is stated that there was a strong feeling against the accompanying wholesale hangings and that judges and juries resorted to all sorts of subterfuges to evade the letter of the law. The work of practical reform and modification was slow, however, owing to the opposition of the House of Lords, but the days of the indiscriminating infliction of capital punishment ended with the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832, at which time forty kinds of forgery and many less serious offences were still capital crimes.

The statistics presented in the tables that follow, which are summarized from the Annual Report of Statistics of Criminal and Other Offences, are collected directly from the criminal courts in the different judicial districts throughout the Dominion. There are 159 judicial districts, including 4 sub-districts, divided as to provinces as follows: Prince Edward Island 3, Nova Scotia 18, New Brunswick 15, Quebec 25, Ontario 47, Manitoba 6, Saskatchewan 22, Alberta 14, British Columbia 8 and Yukon 1. The figures for the Northwest Territories are obtained from the reports of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Section 1.—General Tables.

The statistics relate to years ended Sept. 30, the latest report being for 1931. Beginning with the report for 1922, an enlargement of the classification of offences has been adopted, by which offences of juvenile offenders are compiled separately from those of adults. The term "indictable" applies to offences of adults only, similar offences committed by juveniles being termed "major" offences; similarly, "non-indictable" offences of adults are termed "minor" offences when attributed to juveniles. All current tables have been worked out for 1922 and subsequent years in accordance with the new classification, but a comparative historical table, giving the totals for different classes of criminal offences and minor offences including those of juvenile delinquents, is here published (Table 1), together with a more detailed table for recent years (Table 2). In the consideration of the former it should be remembered that, while the criminal code undergoes little change over periods of time, the figures of summary convictions depend very much upon the changes in the customs of the people, and are apt to increase with the increasing urbanization of the population. The most significant column of Table 1 is the figure of criminal offences per 100,000 of population. Attention may be drawn to the increase in the proportion of both criminal offences and minor offences to population in the past year, convictions for criminal offences having risen from 284 per 100,000 population in 1921 to 425 per 100,000 population in 1931 and convictions for minor offences from 1,732 per 100,000 in 1921 to 3,113 per 100,000 in 1931.

It should be understood that the classification of offences in these general tables is irrespective of the mode of procedure. That is to say, the "criminal" cases include many indictable offences disposed of summarily under the Summary Trials Act. Hence any addition of indictable and major and minor offences, as shown in other tables, will not agree with the figures given in Tables 1 and 2. The object here is to show a broad historical record of criminal and minor offences respectively.