

CHAPTER IV.—POPULATION.*

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. Owing to the extent of the field covered, it is quite impossible to include in each edition of the Year Book a full digest of population statistics. The policy adopted, therefore, is to maintain the skeleton of the chapter and the historical tables as a permanent feature and build up each section as statistics are available following each census. After complete and accurate summary statistics have been given publicity, the chapter is cut down to skeleton limits, with adequate references, until the next census. The 1934-35 Year Book gave at pp. 98-169 as complete a picture of the 1931 Census statistics as will appear in one Year Book.

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. 58-60 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 full value 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, gaols, lunatic asylums, etc., are counted where found.

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