

Subsection 2.—Infantile Mortality.

In recent years a great part of the energy devoted by the medical profession and sanitarians to effect a decline in the death rate has gone to reduce infantile mortality, and in this field a large measure of success has been attained. In Canada, the Dominion, Provincial, and municipal health authorities have all taken part in the struggle to reduce infantile mortality, and usually, in the absence of epidemics, statistics show an improvement each year. In the eighteen years for which figures are available there is evident a very considerable decline in infantile mortality. Figures for 1938 show the lowest rate since the system was established, viz., 63 per thousand live births. In 1921 the infant death rate for Canada (using figures from provincial sources for Quebec) was 102 per 1,000 live births. Table 23 gives figures for the whole of Canada for the years 1931 to 1938 and averages for the five-year periods 1921-25, 1926-30, and 1931-35. Quebec with a rate of 83 has the highest rate of all provinces for 1938. But a study of the Quebec rates shows that steady improvement has been made in the twelve-year period during which the Province has been included in the registration area and 1938 figures show a decrease of over 1,000 as compared with 1937. In Canada as a whole almost 9,000 infant lives were preserved in 1938 which, under conditions prevailing in 1926, would probably have been lost.

23.—Infantile Mortality and Rates per 1,000 Live Births, by Provinces, 1931-38, with Averages, 1921-25, 1926-30, and 1931-35.

Year.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Canada. ¹
INFANT DEATHS.										
Averages, 1921-25.....	151	1,139	1,165	²	5,916	1,394	1,789	1,327	621	²
Averages, 1926-30.....	122	934	1,039	10,518	5,091	1,031	1,559	1,195	571	22,060
Averages, 1931-35.....	131	840	857	7,756	3,962	835	1,261	998	464	17,104
1931.....	128	914	944	9,443	4,833	924	1,463	1,197	514	20,360
1932.....	132	849	774	7,744	4,133	836	1,321	997	477	17,263
1933.....	118	791	821	7,270	3,804	844	1,231	966	439	16,284
1934.....	130	807	878	7,388	3,523	734	1,093	891	426	15,870
1935.....	145	838	866	6,939	3,515	837	1,194	936	460	15,730
1936.....	137	781	806	6,220	3,416	779	1,030	940	465	14,574
1937.....	152	812	1,072	7,580	3,382	826	1,245	994	630	16,693
1938.....	114	754	859	6,486	3,245	750	941	812	556	14,517
INFANT DEATH RATES PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS.										
Averages, 1921-25.....	77	94	105	²	83	84	83	86	61	²
Averages, 1926-30.....	71	85	101	127	74	72	73	75	55	93
Averages, 1931-35.....	67	73	82	98	61	61	62	60	46	75
1931.....	68	79	87	113	70	64	69	69	49	85
1932.....	65	73	72	94	62	59	63	59	47	73
1933.....	61	71	82	95	60	63	61	60	46	73
1934.....	67	71	86	97	57	55	55	55	43	72
1935.....	72	72	83	92	56	63	61	58	46	71
1936.....	69	66	77	83	55	61	54	60	44	66
1937.....	73	70	101	100	55	64	67	63	56	76
1938.....	58	62	75	83	49	56	52	51	45	63

¹ Exclusive of the Territories.

² Quebec was not included in the registration area prior to 1926.

Infantile Mortality by Causes of Death.—Twenty-one principal causes of death accounted in the years 1926 to 1938 for between 90 and 92 p.c. of the infantile mortality experienced in the Dominion, as is shown in Table 24. It is noteworthy