

CHAPTER V.—VITAL STATISTICS*

CONSPECTUS

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A short historical outline of the early collection of vital statistics in Canada is given at pp. 104-105 of the 1940 edition of the Year Book. Co-operation of the provinces in the collection of comparable statistics was finally brought about as a result of the establishment of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, under the Statistics Act of 1918. From 1921 to 1925 vital statistics were compiled by the Bureau on a comparable basis for all provinces, except Quebec. Quebec has been included in the registration area from Jan. 1, 1926. From that date, vital statistics have been on a comparable basis for all provinces.

The main tables of the Summary and of Sections 2-5 which follow cover statistics for the nine provinces. Section 6 deals with those of Yukon and the Northwest Territories; the reasons for this separation are given at that place.

A Section dealing with communicable diseases has been included for the first time at the end of the Chapter.

Classification of Vital Statistics.—Until recently, vital statistics data were all classified by place of occurrence. In 1944, however, the classification of births and deaths by place of residence was begun, births being classified by the place of residence of the mother. A number of special tabulations by place of residence have been made for a few years prior to 1944; in Tables 2 to 5 the figures for 1941-44 are given by place of residence. In all the other tables of this Chapter, only the figures for 1944 are by place of residence, except in Tables 11, 23 and 28, which deal with urban centres. The sub-headings and footnotes of the tables throughout will clearly indicate the classification employed.

With respect to many provincial figures and rates, the change in classification may result in comparatively small differences. But in the case of individual localities, the resulting differences may be of much greater importance. In such cases, the figures for the single years 1941 and after are not comparable to the five-year averages for the earlier years.

Section 1.—Population and Summary of Vital Statistics

Population by Sex and Age.—For the calculation of many vital-statistics rates, it is important to know each year not only the total population but also the distribution by sex and age. Hitherto, calculations requiring this information have been, for the most part, restricted to the years about each census, since it was felt that the use of sex and age distributions for periods more than two or three years

* This Chapter has been revised by J. T. Marshall, Chief of the Vital Statistics Branch, Dominion Bureau of Statistics. A list of the publications of this Branch will be found in Chapter XXXII, Sect. 1, under "Population".