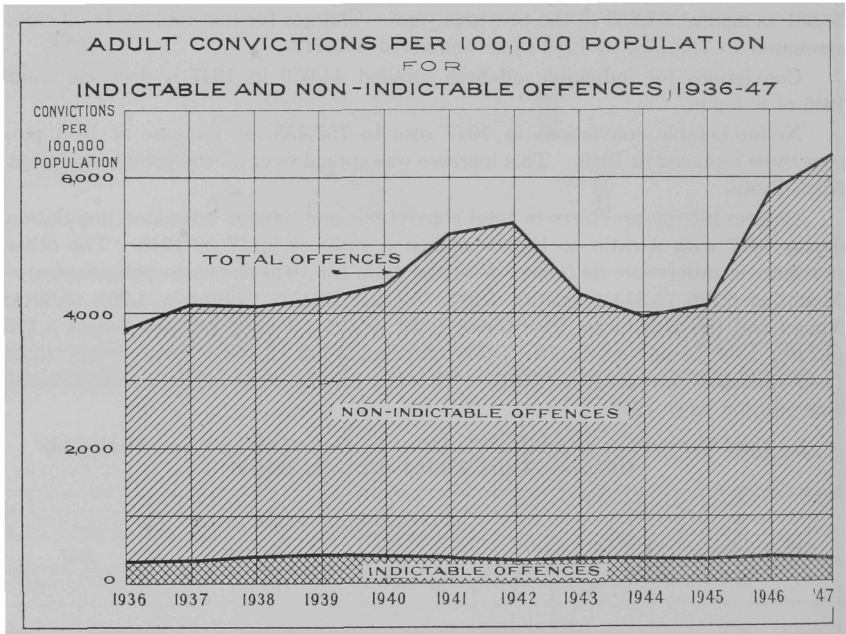The text on p. 295 is published so that comparisons with Year Book figures of other years may be made. However, a fairer picture is obtained, as shown in Table 1, by calculating the ratio of total convictions to the estimated population of 16 years or over, the ages of adult offenders. Although this raises the figure in each case, it does very little to change the alignment of the provinces according to the number of convictions to the estimated population of 16 years or over per 100,000. The rates would then be as follows: Ontario 13,878, Manitoba 9,375, Quebec 7,991, British Columbia 6,355, New Brunswick 4,858, Prince Edward Island 4,690, Alberta 3,974, Nova Scotia 3,269, and Saskatchewan 2,988.

If, however, only the ratio of indictable offences to the estimated population of 16 years or over were taken into account the order of the provinces would be changed considerably with Alberta having the largest ratio of serious crimes, Saskatchewan moving from the bottom to the seventh place, Quebec dropping from third to eighth place and Prince Edward Island having the lowest proportion.

ADULT CONVICTIONS PER 100,000 POPULATION FOR INDICTABLE AND NON-INDICTABLE OFFENCES, 1936-47

Subsection 1.—Indictable Offences

The main interest in criminal statistics is concerned chiefly with the more serious offences. While such offences are by far the least numerous, nevertheless, from the standpoint of protection of the person and of property, they are the most important.

In 1938 the total number of convictions for indictable crimes was 43,599; in 1947 it had increased to 44,056, only 1 p.c. The increase in the estimated population of 16 years or over during the same period was 14·1 p.c.