8.—Single and Multiple Births, Live and Stillborn, 1950-52—concluded

(Exclusive of the Territories)

Confinements and Births	Numbers			Percentages		
	1950	1951	1952	1950	1951	1952
Births—						
Single—						
Live........................	362,712	371,539	393,597	98·1	98·2	98·3
Stillborn...................	6,866	6,707	6,899	1·9	1·8	1·7
Twin—						
Live........................	8,261	8,458	8,822	96·4	96·6	96·2
Stillborn...................	309	296	352	3·6	3·5	3·8
Triplet—						
Live........................	98	104	108	96·1	93·7	92·3
Stillborn...................	4	7	9	3·9	6·3	7·7
Quadruplet—						
Live........................	—	—	—	—	—	—
Stillborn...................	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals, Births..............	**378,250**	**387,111**	**409,787**	**100·0**	**100·0**	**100·0**
Live............................	371,071	380,101	402,527	98·1	98·2	98·2
Stillborn........................	7,179	7,010	7,260	1·9	1·8	1·8

Fertility Rates.*—Sex and age distribution of the population is an important factor in determining birth, death and marriage rates. Since more than 95 p.c. of children are born to women between the ages of 15 and 50, as was noted earlier, variations in the proportion of women of these ages to the population as a whole will cause variations in the birth rates of different countries or regions, even though the fertility of women at each age may be the same. Measures of fertility which are independent of the sex and age distribution of the population have, therefore, been devised. The best known of these are age-specific fertility rates and reproduction rates.

Ages of Parents.—Ages of the parents is an important variable in any analysis of birth statistics. The numerical and percentage distribution of legitimate live births by the ages of the parents is given for 1941, 1951, and 1952 in Table **9,** of illegitimate live births by the age of the mother in Table **10,** and of stillbirths by the age of the mother in Table **11,** as well as the average ages of the parents for each year shown.

Besides the fertility rates at each age, three other factors help, in the main, to determine the average age of parents having children: firstly, the average age of potential parents, at any point in time, that is, of the population between the ages of 15 and 50; secondly, the average age of couples at marriage; and thirdly, the proportions of first and second births to total births. Other things being equal, a high proportion of first and second births will result in a lower average age of parents. In 1930-32, first and second births were 43 p.c. of the total births. By the period 1945-48, first and second births together were 57 p.c. of the total. This change is very great and accounts for the lower average age of parents in the latter period. However, by 1952 the proportion of first and second births had declined to about 53 p.c.