

Section 3.—Deaths*

The Canadian death rate has moved downward from 10.3 per 1,000 of the population in 1931 to 8.2 for each of the years 1954 to 1957 and to a record low of 7.9 for 1958. Table 1, pp. 236-237, shows that this decline has been apparent in varying degrees in all provinces. The generally low rates in the Prairie Provinces are partly the result of their younger average population; the uniformly higher rate in British Columbia is mainly attributable to a high proportion of people in the older age groups.

Subsection 1.—General Mortality

Age and Sex Distribution of Deaths.—There has been a considerable reduction in infant mortality over the past 25 or 30 years, although more deaths still occur in the first year of life than in any other single year. Of the 104,517 deaths occurring in 1931, 25,737 or almost one-quarter were of children under five years of age and over three-quarters of those were of children under one year of age. Of the 135,201 deaths in 1958, 16,327 or 12 p.c. were of children under five years of age and, of those, 14,178 or nearly 87 p.c. were under one year. Most of the reduction took place among children over the age of one month but there was also a notable decrease in all childhood ages up to five years.

The trend in the over-all mortality pattern has been steeply downward since the early 1920's, the most important reduction being in the childhood and early adult ages. In 1931 over 19 p.c. of all male deaths were of persons five to 45 years of age; in 1958 only a little over 10 p.c. of the deaths occurred in this age group. Among females in the five to 45 age group the proportion dropped from just under 22 p.c. to 8 p.c. in the same comparison. While death rates for males up to age 45 have been roughly halved during the past 25 years, those for females under 45 years have been reduced as much as three to four times. In other words, the death rates for females at every age have declined more than those for males; the male rates have almost always been consistently higher than those for females and the differences are widening.

These reductions in the mortality rates in early and middle years of life have had the effect of increasing the number of people in the older age groups and raising the average age at death. In 1931 the average age at death of males was 43.1 years and of females 44.8 years; by 1958 this had advanced to 58.4 years and 61.4 years, respectively. These trends are indicated clearly in Table 12.

* For international comparisons, see Section 7, pp. 267-268.

12.—Distribution of Deaths, by Age and Sex, 1931, 1941, 1951 and 1958

Age Group	1931 ¹		1941 ¹		1951		1958	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	NUMBERS							
Under 1 year.....	11,667	8,693	8,788	6,448	8,375	6,298	8,152	6,026
1 — 4 years.....	2,844	2,533	1,878	1,566	1,421	1,151	1,190	959
5 — 9 ".....	1,241	963	888	670	711	466	679	414
10 — 14 ".....	821	806	787	536	461	284	490	278
15 — 19 ".....	1,311	1,132	1,118	823	721	457	751	306
20 — 24 ".....	1,502	1,453	1,332	1,039	1,009	549	894	328
25 — 29 ".....	1,388	1,414	1,317	1,173	988	660	991	441
30 — 34 ".....	1,301	1,432	1,211	1,148	1,070	778	1,054	636
35 — 39 ".....	1,512	1,574	1,497	1,242	1,281	1,015	1,364	898
40 — 44 ".....	1,888	1,493	1,744	1,464	1,756	1,266	1,926	1,192
45 — 49 ".....	2,314	1,738	2,416	1,817	2,463	1,607	2,831	1,563
50 — 54 ".....	2,855	1,993	3,355	2,227	3,525	2,083	4,003	2,024
55 — 59 ".....	3,057	2,246	4,394	2,851	4,741	2,832	5,321	2,731
60 — 64 ".....	3,583	2,855	5,288	3,483	6,465	3,902	6,607	3,692
65 — 69 ".....	4,249	3,348	6,057	4,412	8,007	5,119	8,527	5,112
70 — 74 ".....	4,867	4,073	6,495	4,981	8,748	6,439	10,068	6,797
75 — 79 ".....	4,368	4,029	6,421	5,461	8,254	6,904	9,980	7,793
80 — 84 ".....	3,206	3,215	5,020	4,906	6,232	6,130	7,844	7,075
85 years or over.....	2,555	2,998	3,846	4,540	5,336	6,319	6,473	7,793
Totals, All Ages.....	56,529	47,988	63,852	50,787	71,564	54,259	79,145	56,056

¹ Excludes the Yukon and Northwest Territories.