

Subsection 2.—Infant Mortality

Table 1, pp. 250-251, and Table 20 show the striking improvement that has taken place in the rate of infant mortality during the past twenty years. Although 68,142 of the 2,670,380 children born in the six years 1961-66 died before reaching their first birthday, 182,607 others lived who *would have died* at the infant mortality rate prevailing in the period 1926-30. This improvement is attributable to many factors—the higher proportion of births taking place in hospital or under proper prenatal and postnatal care, better supervision of water supplies, improved sanitation, pasteurization of milk, the use of antibiotics, improved home environment as a result of higher living standards and, in recent years, the generally lower age of mothers.

The variations that exist in infant mortality rates from province to province and from one locality to another may be explained by differences in the extent to which these factors apply provincially or locally. Among the provinces, the 1966 male infant mortality rates ranged from a low of 22.8 to a high of 32.8, compared with the national average of 25.8—the latter including the very high rate among the Northwest Territories aboriginal population. Female rates ranged from 17.3 to 23.2, compared with the national rate of 20.2. Although the national and provincial rates for both sexes have been declining steadily for some years, for some unknown reason there were recently a number of reversals in provincial rates.

Table 20 shows that mortality among male infants is 25 p.c. to 30 p.c. higher than that among female infants for Canada, with wider variations for the individual provinces. For the country as a whole, out of every 1,000 infant boys born alive in 1966, 26 died before reaching their first birthday, whereas out of every 1,000 infant girls born alive, 20 died within one year. As already pointed out, there are on the average 1,056 males born to every 1,000 females but, because male infant mortality is higher, the excess of males is reduced greatly by the end of the first year. For example, in 1961-66 there were 1,370,835 male children born compared with 1,299,545 female children, an excess of 71,290 or 5.5 p.c.; in the same period, 39,135 male children died during their first year compared with 29,007 female children so that the excess of males at one year of age was reduced to 61,162 or 4.8 p.c.

20.—Distribution of Infant Deaths by Province and Sex, 1941-66

Province and Year	Males	Females	Rate per 1,000 Male Live Births	Rate per 1,000 Female Live Births	Province and Year	Males	Females	Rate per 1,000 Male Live Births	Rate per 1,000 Female Live Births
Newfoundland.....1951	361	276	60.3	48.0	Quebec.....1941	3,916	2,854	85.3	65.9
1961	335	253	41.7	33.5	1951	3,335	2,486	53.7	42.3
1964	259	197	35.1	27.0	1961	2,464	1,855	34.7	28.0
1965	236	223	31.2	31.1	1964	2,060	1,527	30.6	24.1
1966	237	158	32.8	23.0	1965	1,820	1,340	29.3	22.9
					1966	1,565	1,211	27.7	22.7
P. E. Island.....1941	102	61	94.6	62.8	Ontario.....1941	1,910	1,384	51.3	39.5
1951	60	30	43.7	23.5	1951	2,010	1,535	33.9	27.6
1961	55	38	37.4	27.8	1961	2,090	1,536	25.9	20.0
1964	50	22	35.2	16.8	1964	1,898	1,357	24.1	18.3
1965	43	31	33.2	25.4	1965	1,680	1,227	23.1	17.8
1966	34	23	29.9	21.7	1966	1,540	1,129	22.8	17.5
Nova Scotia.....1941	545	363	77.0	53.2	Manitoba.....1941	447	341	58.7	47.4
1951	344	250	38.9	30.2	1951	369	289	35.6	30.2
1961	309	229	31.0	24.3	1961	341	247	28.6	21.7
1964	263	201	28.1	22.4	1964	304	251	27.2	23.8
1965	210	184	25.0	22.7	1965	256	204	24.9	21.0
1966	221	163	28.1	22.1	1966	231	152	25.1	17.3
New Brunswick...1941	515	421	83.1	69.3	Saskatchewan....1941	531	415	56.1	46.2
1951	472	363	57.6	46.0	1951	353	323	31.8	30.4
1961	248	186	29.1	23.0	1961	373	245	30.3	21.0
1964	223	177	28.4	23.7	1964	332	257	28.6	23.2
1965	177	149	24.4	21.6	1965	298	205	28.4	20.5
1966	163	143	24.9	23.2	1966	278	183	28.3	19.9