

Table 1 shows the population of Canada by sex and age for the years 1931 to 1945. The figures for 1931 and 1941 are those of the Census. For the other years they are estimates, calculated from the census figures, the births and deaths in each year, and known migration into and out of the country.

The starting point in this calculation was the population of the 1931 Census. The Census is taken at the beginning of June. The number of children under one year of age on June 1 of each year was obtained by subtracting the number who had died during the previous 12 months from the number who had been born. At each other year of age, the deaths at that age were subtracted from the census figures to give an estimate of the number at the next higher age in the following year. This process was carried forward for each year to 1941, and gave what may be called the 'expected' figures of population for that year. These expected figures were then compared with the actual figures of the 1941 Census, the differences at each age noted, and the estimates for the previous years revised in the light of these differences. The differences for each year were distributed between the two sexes and the different ages in the same ratio as the differences between the actual and 'expected' figures in 1941. The sum of the differences in 1941 was about 90,000 and is believed to be largely due to unrecorded migration into and out of the country.

The estimates for the years after 1941 are being made in the same way as the estimates for the years before 1941. The figures for 1942 to 1945 will be revised after the 1951 Census; those for the years 1932 to 1940 are now final.

The population of Canada in 1931 and 1941 by sex and age is shown graphically in the Chart following p. 185. Tables 2 to 6 give a summary of the vital statistics of Canada and the provinces for the years 1926 to 1945.

In comparing the birth, death and marriage rates of the provinces, it is useful to bear in mind that part of the differences observed may be due to differences in the sex and age distribution of their populations. Similarly, changes in these rates may be partly due to changes in this distribution. For example, the birth rate of Quebec is approximately the same as that of New Brunswick, and considerably higher than that of Prince Edward Island. Yet the fertility of the female population is highest in New Brunswick and approximately equal in the other two provinces. Over the past 15 years, the death rate in British Columbia has been rising, while in Ontario it has been more or less stable, with the result that, though 15 years ago the death rate in Ontario was considerably higher than in British Columbia, at present they are about equal. This does not mean, however, that the mortality rates at each age have risen in British Columbia. On the contrary, they have been falling. The death rate for the population as a whole has been rising because the increase in the proportion of the population in the higher age groups has more than outweighed the fall in the mortality rates at each age.

These remarks also apply to international comparisons of birth, death and marriage rates.