

Canadian Births.—In Canada, the birth rate in 1921 was 29 per 1,000 population. As a rate of 35 per 1,000 is very high for countries of modern western civilization, the Canadian birth rate had probably not fallen far or for long before 1921. It fell continuously until 1937 when it was 20 per 1,000 but then, owing to economic recovery and the War, it rose to 22 in 1940, to 24 in 1943 and reached its highest point in 1947 at 28·7. As was the case in most other countries, there was a slight decline in 1948 but the Canadian rate remained remarkably steady at just over 27 for the four years 1948 to 1951. However, it rose to 27·9 in 1952 when, for the first time, more than 400,000 births were registered. The birth rates in the provinces followed the same general trend with a similar increase in the 1952 rate.

It has always been assumed that the Province of Quebec has had the highest birth rate in Canada, but Table 1 shows that since the late 1930's or early 1940's Newfoundland and New Brunswick have had higher birth rates than Quebec. In 1952 Newfoundland had a crude rate of 33·6, New Brunswick 31·7 and Quebec 30·3; British Columbia had the lowest rate at 24·9. However, these crude rates are based on total population and therefore do not reflect the fertility of the women who are of reproductive age in the different provinces. A more accurate measure of fertility is the rate based on the number of married women in the population in the reproductive age group, 15 to 49. The following are birth rates per 1,000 married women in the age group 15 to 49, by province:—

Newfoundland.....	220	Quebec.....	193	Alberta.....	160
Prince Edward Island..	186	Ontario.....	138	British Columbia.....	130
Nova Scotia.....	162	Manitoba.....	147	CANADA (Exclusive of	—
New Brunswick.....	200	Saskatchewan.....	155	the Territories).....	160

On this basis, Newfoundland still had the highest birth rate, followed by New Brunswick and Quebec, and British Columbia had the lowest rate.

Sex of Live Births.—Wherever birth statistics have been collected, they have shown an excess of male over female births. No conclusive explanation of this excess has yet been given. Nevertheless it is so much of an accepted statistical fact that a proper ratio of male to female births has become one of the criteria of complete registration. The number of males to every 1,000 females born in Canada in 1941-52 varied between 1,051 and 1,067. In 1952 there were 1,064 males born for every 1,000 females. Variations in the provincial sex ratios are due to chance variation because of the relatively small number of births involved—the smaller the total number of births, the greater the chance of wide sex-ratio variations from year to year.

4.—Sex Ratio of Live Births, by Province, 1921-52

Province and Year	Male	Female	Males to 1,000 Females	Province and Year	Male	Female	Males to 1,000 Females		
	No.	No.	No.		No.	No.	No.		
Newfoundland.....	1951	5,984	5,754	1,040	Nova Scotia.....	1921	6,695	6,326	1,058
	1952	6,443	6,118	1,053		1931	5,931	5,684	1,043
P. E. Island.....	1921	1,073	1,083	991		1941	7,074	6,829	1,036
	1931	998	881	1,132		1951	8,842	8,283	1,067
	1941	1,078	971	1,110		1952	9,275	8,676	1,069
	1951	1,373	1,278	1,074					
	1952	1,405	1,298	1,082					