Subsection 2.—Infant Mortality

Table 1, pp. 236-237, and Table 20 show the striking improvement that has taken place in the rate of infant mortality during the past twenty years. Although 62,397 of the 2,342,626 children born in the five years 1960-64 died before reaching their first birthday, 157,576 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 1964 male infant mortality rates ranged from a low of 24 to a high of 35, compared with the national average of 28—the latter including the very high rate among the Northwest Territories aboriginal population. Female rates ranged from 17 to 27, compared with the national rate of 21. While 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 1964, 28 died before reaching their first birthday, whereas out of every 1,000 infant girls born alive, 21 died within one year. As already pointed out, there are on the average 1,057 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 1961-64 there were 956,795 male children born compared with 907,280 female children, an excess of 49,515 or 5.5 p.c.; in the same period, 28,371 male children died during their first year compared with 20,949 female children so that the excess of males at one year of age was reduced to 42,093 or 4.7 p.c.

20.—Distribution of Infant Deaths by Province and Sex, 1941-64

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
	No.	No.				No.	No.		
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
1962	327	270	42.2	36.9	1961	2,464	1,855	34.7	28.0
1963	377	215	47.3	28.7	1962	2,491	1,803	35.9	27.5
1964	259	197	35.1	27.0	1963	2,228	1,784	32.6	27.3
					1964	2,060	1,527	30.6	24.1
P. E. Island.....1941	102	61	94.6	62.8					
1951	60	30	43.7	23.5	Ontario.....1941	1,910	1,384	51.3	39.5
1961	55	38	37.4	27.8	1951	2,010	1,535	33.9	27.6
1962	50	37	33.2	28.4	1961	2,090	1,536	25.9	20.0
1963	46	17	30.6	11.8	1962	2,054	1,567	25.7	20.6
1964	50	22	35.2	16.8	1963	2,043	1,489	25.6	19.7
					1964	1,898	1,357	24.1	18.3
Nova Scotia.....1941	545	363	77.0	53.2					
1951	344	250	38.9	30.2	Manitoba.....1941	447	341	58.7	47.4
1961	309	229	31.0	24.3	1951	369	289	35.6	30.2
1962	320	294	32.0	31.2	1961	341	247	28.6	21.7
1963	306	207	31.4	22.5	1962	350	250	29.9	22.3
1964	263	201	28.1	22.4	1963	310	251	26.8	22.5
					1964	304	251	27.2	23.8
New Brunswick...1941	515	421	83.1	69.3					
1951	472	363	57.6	46.0	Saskatchewan.....1941	531	415	56.1	46.2
1961	248	186	29.1	23.0	1951	353	323	31.8	30.4
1962	272	226	31.9	28.5	1961	373	245	30.3	21.0
1963	244	191	29.9	25.1	1962	339	266	28.5	23.3
1964	223	177	28.4	23.7	1963	385	253	31.9	22.0
					1964	332	257	28.6	23.2