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DIVORCE IN CANADA, 1922.

Divorce has for many years been increasing on this continent. In the United States the divorces in 1916 numbered 112,036, as against 72,062 in 1906, 42,937 in 1896, and 27,919 in 1887. No comprehensive statistics are available for the years subsequent to 1916, but partial statements indicate the continued increase of divorce.

According to figures compiled by the General Statistics Branch of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics the number of divorces annually granted in Canada was, for many years subsequent to Confederation, very small, 1883 with 13 divorces being the first year in which the number attained two figures, while 1903 with 21 divorces was the record year up to that time. Thereafter the numbers grew more rapidly, 1909 showing 51 divorces and 1913, the last year before the war, 59 divorces. This number was, however, less than 1 per 1000 of the marriages contracted in Canada in that year.

The effect of the war was to increase very greatly the number of divorces granted in Canada. The causes may be found in the generally unsettling psychological effect of the war period; also the long separations of men on active service from their wives often resulted in estrangement. The provision of new facilities for divorce is also to be considered; under a decision of the Imperial Privy Council divorces in the Prairie Provinces have subsequently to 1913 been granted by the Courts of these provinces, Ontario and Quebec being the only provinces in which the applicant for divorce must still secure a private Act of Parliament.

The combined result of the above causes has been that as shown on Table I, the divorces granted in Canada have increased from 90 in 1918, to 375 in 1919, 429 in 1920, 548 in 1921 and 544 in 1922, this latter being the first among recent years not to show an increase. These numbers are those of final decrees, which alone really constitute divorces. The divorces granted in 1922 were about two-thirds of one per cent of the marriages contracted and constituted a much larger proportion of these in the West than in the East, where in Prince Edward Island only one divorce has been granted since Confederation. The 1922 figures may possibly indicate that the wave of divorces due to the war has reached its highest point, but the decline from 1921 is too small for any definite conclusions to be drawn.

In Australia and New Zealand the same phenomenon of increasing divorce has been experienced for the same causes, divorces in the former country increasing from 617 in 1916 to 1,051 in 1920 and in the latter from 246 in 1916 to 660 in 1921.

Table 2 shows the divorces granted in 1922 by the sex of the plaintiff; from this it will be seen that the husbands are the plaintiffs in nearly 60 per cent of the cases. In the United States the wives are the plaintiffs in the majority of cases, the divorces granted to them in 1916 numbering 74,893 as against 33,809 granted to husbands.





I. DIVORCES GRANTED IN CANADA, 1913-1922:

Year	Ontario	Quebec	Alberta	Saskat- chewan	Manitoba	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	British Colum- bia	Total for Canada
1913.....	20	4	4	1	6	-	4	20	59
1914.....	18	7	4	2	2	10	12	15	70
1915.....	10	3	3	1	1	13	6	16	53
1916.....	18	1	1	2	2	14	11	18	67
1917.....	10	4	2	1	-	3	6	23	54
1918.....	10	2	2	1	-	24	10	65	114
1919.....	49	4	36	3	83	36	13	147	376
1920.....	91	9	65	26	42	45	15	136	429
1921.....	101	9	84	50	122	41	13	128	548
1922.....	90	6	129	37	97	35	12	138	544

Note.- In Prince Edward Island only one divorce was granted between 1868 and 1922; this was granted in 1913.

II. DIVORCES GRANTED IN CANADA IN 1922, BY PROVINCES AND BY SEX OF PLAINTIFF.

Province	To Husbands	To Wives	Total
Prince Edward Island.....	0	0	0
Nova Scotia.....	19	16	35
New Brunswick.....	6	6	12
Quebec.....	2	4	6
Ontario.....	55	35	90
Manitoba.....	56	41	97
Saskatchewan.....	29	8	37
Alberta.....	80	49	129
British Columbia.....	69	69	138
	316	228	544

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