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DIVORCE IN CANADA 1923.

Figures compiled by the General Statistics Branch of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics show a slight decrease in the number of divorces granted in Canada in 1923. Whereas in 1922, 544 divorces were granted in the Dominion, the second largest number on record, the figure for 1923 shows a decrease of 39, or 7.2 p.c., to 505.

In explanation of the surprising increase from the 67 divorces granted in 1916 to 548 in 1921, emphasis may be laid on two main causes, - (1) the unsettling psychological effects of the war period, combined with the long separations, and (2) the provision of new facilities for divorce resulting from a decision of the Imperial Privy Council in 1918, which enabled the courts of the Prairie Provinces to grant divorces where previously an Act of Parliament had been necessary. The slight decrease in divorces granted in 1922 from the previous year, followed by the more marked decline during 1923, may indicate that the wave of divorce due to the war has passed its crest.

The number of divorces granted in 1923 by provinces (exclusive of Prince Edward Island), (Table 1), was 139 in British Columbia, 105 in Ontario, 87 in Alberta, 81 in Manitoba, 41 in Saskatchewan, 22 in Nova Scotia, 19 in New Brunswick and 11 in Quebec, increases during the year being evident in Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and British Columbia, offset by rather marked decreases in Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia. There was one divorce to every 4,000 persons in British Columbia, to every 7,000 in Alberta, to every 8,000 in Manitoba, to every 15,000 in Saskatchewan, 21,000 in New Brunswick, 24,000 in Nova Scotia, 29,000 in Ontario and to every 222,000 in Quebec. The figure for the Dominion shows one divorce granted in 1923 to approximately every 18,000 of the estimated population of that year. The figures for British Columbia and Quebec may be taken as rather exceptional, due in the former case to the disparity of the sexes and the rather shifting nature of the population, and in the latter to the influence of the Church.

The distinction illustrated in Table 2 between divorces granted to husbands and wives is of some interest. Whereas in the United States from 1889 to 1922, the proportion between divorces granted to husbands and wives has been approximately 1 to 2 respectively, and while in New Zealand the numbers granted to each sex are practically the same, in Canada the greater number of divorces are granted to husbands, such decrees in 1922 constituting 58 p.c. of the total and in 1923, 53.5 p.c. (A possible indication of the grounds of petitions and decrees may be had from statistics of divorce in New Zealand, where a preponderance of divorces are granted to husbands on grounds of adultery and separation, while a corresponding preponderance of decrees based on desertion are granted to wives).

In the same connection it will be noticed in Table 2 that while in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia a greater number of wives are granted divorces, in the other provinces the reverse is the case. This may be due to the alleged inequality of the divorce law as between the sexes in the prairie provinces.

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I. DIVORCES GRANTED IN CANADA 1913-1923.

Year	Ont.	Que.	Alta.	Sask.	Man.	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	-	8	6	23	54
1918	10	2	2	1	-	24	10	65	114
1919	49	4	36	3	88	36	13	147	376
1920	91	9	65	26	48	45	15	136	429
1921	101	9	84	50	122	41	13	128	548
1922	90	6	129	37	97	35	12	138	544
1923	105	11	87	41	81	22	19	139 1/2	505

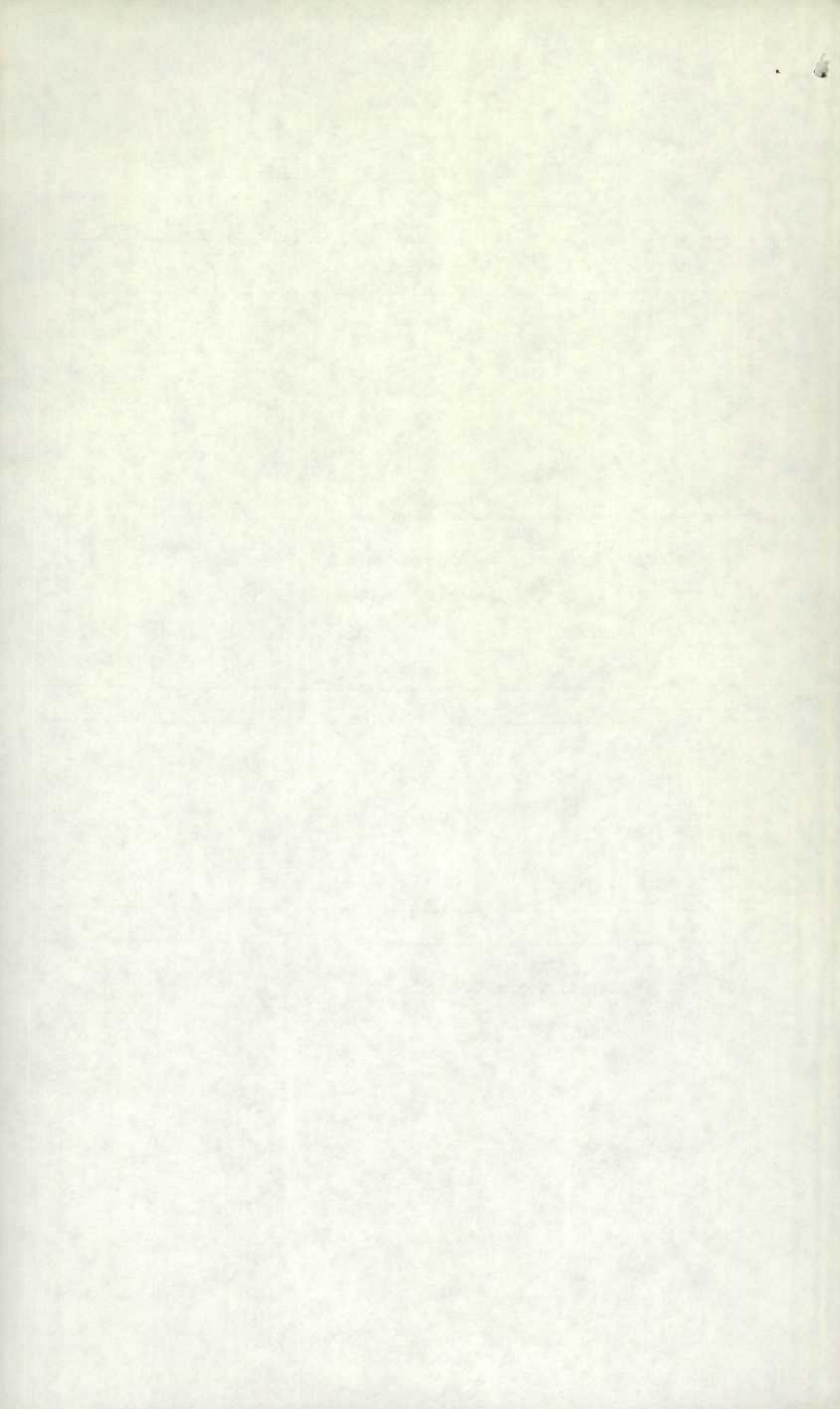
Note:- In Prince Edward Island only one divorce was granted between 1868 and 1923; this was granted in 1913.

1/ One granted by Dom. Parliament.

II. DIVORCES GRANTED IN CANADA IN 1923, BY PROVINCES
AND SEX OF PLAINTIFF.

Provinces.	To Husbands	To Wives	Total
Prince Edward Island	-	-	-
Nova Scotia	14	8	22
New Brunswick	10	9	19
Quebec	4	7	11
Ontario	45	60	105
Manitoba	49	32	81
Saskatchewan	25	16	41
Alberta	58	29	87
British Columbia	65	74 1/2	139 1/2
Canada	270	235	505

1/ One granted by Dominion Parliament.



COMPARISON WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.

In Table 3 are added comparative figures of divorces and marriages in England and Wales, Australia, New Zealand and Canada for the years 1916 to 1921 or 1922. The percentage of divorces to marriages, taking place in the same year, as here given, is seen in the case of England and Wales to have increased during six years from 0.7 p.c. to 2.2 p.c.; in Australia from 1.5 p.c. to 2.0 p.c.; in New Zealand from 3.0 p.c. to 6.2 p.c. and in Canada from 0.1 p.c. to 0.8 p.c. Similar figures for the United States, where, of course, the total number of divorces is unusually large owing to the comparative ease with which they may be obtained, show increases from 27,919 in 1887 to 42,937 in 1896, 72,062 in 1906, 112,036 in 1916 and 148,554 in 1922. The percentage of divorces to marriages increased from 10.8 to 13.2 during the years 1916 to 1922, divorces alone during this period increasing by 33 p.c.

III. NUMBER OF MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES IN ENGLAND AND WALES, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA, 1916-1923.

Year :	England and Wales		Australia		New Zealand		Canada	
	No. of Marriages	No. of Divorces	No. of Marriages	No. of Div.	No. of Marr.	No. of Div.	No. of Marr.	No. of Divorces
1916	279,846	1,908	40,289	617	8,213	246	65,000 1/	67
1917	258,855	1,956	33,656	652	6,417	221	60,000 1/	54
1918	287,163	2,222	33,141	721	6,227	279	55,000 1/	114
1919	369,411	3,308	40,540	871	9,519	479	70,000 1/	376
1920	379,982	6,180	51,552	1,051	12,175	574	80,931	429
1921	320,852	7,044	46,869	-	10,635	660	69,732	548
1922	-	-	-	-	-	-	65,000 1/	544
1923	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	505

1/ estimated.

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