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DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE
DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS
GENERAL STATISTICS BRANCH

DIVORCES GRANTED IN CANADA

in

1939

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Published by Authority of the HON. W.D. EULER
Minister of Trade and Commerce.

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OTTAWA

1940

Price 10 cents

CHAPTER 1

THEORY OF THE STATE AND GOVERNMENT
IN THE UNITED STATES

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DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS

Dominion Statistician: R. H. Coats, LL.D., F.R.S.C., F.S.S. (Hon.)

DIVORCES IN CANADA, 1939.

There were 2,022 divorces granted in Canada in the calendar year 1939, 1,972 being granted by the courts of seven provinces, while 50 were granted by the Dominion Parliament, to petitioners whose legal domicile was in the Province of Quebec.

As compared with 1938 there was an increase of 137 divorces, or 7.3 p.c. The increase is accounted for largely by the British Columbia figures, 554 decrees having been granted in that Province as compared with 309 in 1938. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and Alberta all registered slight increases. The most significant decrease was shown in Ontario, divorces falling from 813 to 743, or by 8.6 p.c. Table 1 shows the divorces granted, by provinces, in each of the 22 years from 1918 to 1939.

The Sex of Applicants for Divorces.- Up till 1924, Canada's divorce statistics differed from those of most other countries in that they showed that a majority of the divorces granted were on the petition of the husband. In 1924 wives obtained 51.2 p.c. of the decrees granted, but in 1925 husbands were again in the majority of successful petitioners with 50.6 p.c. From 1926 to 1933 wives received between 50 and 60 p.c. of the divorces granted. From 1934 to 1939 they received 68.5, 61.6, 64.0, 63.4, 63.6 and 65.3 p.c. respectively. In New Zealand wives received between 50 and 60 p.c. of the divorces granted between 1928 and 1937, while in the United States they received from 70.5 to 73.5 p.c. of the petitions granted in the years 1927 to 1932.

Proportion of Divorced Persons in the Population.- At the 1931 Census, there were enumerated 4,049 divorced males and 3,392 divorced females in the Dominion, or 0.08 p.c. and 0.07 p.c. of each sex, respectively, while in 1921 the figures recorded were 3,670 and 3,731 or 0.08 p.c. and 0.09 p.c., respectively. As among the nine provinces, British Columbia showed the highest percentage of divorced persons in the population with 0.24 of each sex, while Quebec showed the lowest percentage with 0.02 males and 0.03 females. Divorced persons who have subsequently been remarried are, of course, recorded in the census as married.

Remarriage of Divorced Persons. - An interesting side-light on the divorce question is afforded by the figures of divorced persons who remarried in the years 1926 to 1938, as shown in Table 3. The statistics indicate that the number of divorced persons remarrying is increasing pari passu with the number of divorces. Table 4 shows by provinces the number of divorced persons who remarried in the five years 1934 to 1938.

STATISTICS OF THE 1955-56 SEASON

There were 1,015 divorces granted in 1955 in the calendar year 1955, 1,015 being granted by the courts of law, while 50 were granted by the Registrar General, to persons whose legal domicile was in Great Britain.

The figures for 1955 show a marked increase of 127 divorces on 1954. The increase is accounted for largely by the British Overseas Divorce Act, 1954, which has been applied in that provision in respect of the 1954-55 season. The most marked increase is in the number of divorces granted by the Registrar General, who in 1955 granted 50 divorces, while in 1954 he granted 12 divorces. The increase in the number of divorces granted by the Registrar General is due to the fact that in 1955 the Registrar General granted 50 divorces, while in 1954 he granted 12 divorces.

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1. DIVORCES GRANTED IN CANADA, 1918 - 1939.

(Final Decrees)

Note. - In Prince Edward Island, one divorce was granted in 1931 and two in 1935, 1937 and 1938.

Year	N.S.	N.B.	QUE.	ONT.	MAN.	SASK.	ALTA.	B.C.	Total for Canada
1918	24	10	2	10	-	1	2	65	114
1919	36	13	4	46	88	3	36	147	373
1920	45	15	9	89	42	26	65	136	427
1921	41	13	10	96	122	50	84	128	544
1922	35	12	6	91	97	37	129	138	545
1923	22	19	10	102	81	41	87	139	501
1924	42	15	13	113	77	28	118	136	542
1925	30	15	13	119	79	42	101	150	549
1926	19	12	10	111	85	48	154	167	606
1927	29	17	13	181	101	60	148	197	746
1928	28	13	24	213	79	55	168	203	783
1929	30	21	30	207	89	69	147	222	815
1930	19	27	41	204	114	62	151	255	873
1931	36	20	38	90	94	51	154	208	692
1932	35	26	27	338	114	61	149	245	995
1933	27	12	24	303	116	48	135	258	923
1934	33	17	38	356	126	62	168	306	1,106
1935	52	36	28	460	145	60	209	384	1,376
1936	41	38	40	507	179	79	209	433	1,526
1937	36	54	43	596	200	109	241	589	1,870
1938	51	39	83	813	205	122 1/	261	309	1,885 1/
1939	64	40	50	743	181	124	266	554	2,022

1/ Revised

2. DIVORCES GRANTED IN CANADA, 1937 - 1939, BY PROVINCES

AND SEX OF PLAINTIFF

(Final Decrees)

	To Husbands			:	To Wives			:	Total	
	1937	1938	1939	1937	1938	1939	1937	1938	1939	
P. E. I.	1	Nil	Nil	1	2	Nil	2	2	Nil	
N. S.	18	19	22	18	32	42	36	51	64	
N. B.	23	15	20	31	24	20	54	39	40	
Que.	8	18	11	35	65	39	43	83	50	
Ont.	205	288	257	391	525	486	596	813	743	
Man.	79	82	68	121	123	113	200	205	181	
Sask.	44	42	57	65	80 1/	67	109	122 1/	124	
Alta.	102	103	103	139	158	163	241	261	266	
B. C.	205	118	161	384	191	393	589	309	554	
CANADA	685	685	699	1,185	1,200 1/	1,323	1,870	1,885 1/	2,022	

1/ Revised

3. DIVORCED PERSONS REMARRIED, BY SEX, 1926 - 38.

Year	Males	Females
1926	484	512
1927	586	521
1928	749	739
1929	756	703
1930	759	668
1931	669	589
1932	661	579
1933	654	606
1934	741	660
1935	814	696
1936	851	727
1937	895	731
1938	887	789

4. DIVORCED PERSONS REMARRIED, BY PROVINCES, 1934 - 38.

Note. - The number of divorced men who married divorced women was 85 in 1934, 94 in 1935, 104 in 1936, 110 in 1937 and 124 in 1938.

Provinces	1934		1935		1936		1937		1938	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
P. E. I. ...	-	1	3	2	-	2	7	1	1	1
N. S.	37	24	47	26	37	29	49	30	45	29
N. B.	38	23	30	25	37	18	39	21	29	39
Que.	47	43	56	48	64	47	71	59	96	57
Ont.	249	186	279	162	238	174	127	84	90	57
Man.	55	56	79	83	84	84	134	85	120	107
Sask.	39	32	44	38	41	37	65	45	62	47
Alta.	94	103	106	116	126	123	132	133	139	147
B. C.	182	192	170	196	224	213	271	273	305	305
Total	741	660	814	696	851	727	895	731	887	789

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COMPARISONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

In Table 5 are given comparative figures of divorces and marriages in England and Wales, Australia, New Zealand and Canada for the years 1916 and subsequently. 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 these years from 0.35 p.c. to 1.36 p.c.; in Australia from 1.53 p.c. to 4.23 p.c.; in New Zealand from 2.41 p.c. to 6.38 p.c.; and in Canada from 0.1 p.c. to 2.13 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, 114,000 in 1916, 148,815 in 1922, 165,096 in 1923, 170,952 in 1924, 175,449 in 1925, 180,853 in 1926, 192,037 in 1927, 195,939 in 1928, 201,468 in 1929, falling to 191,591 in 1930, 183,564 in 1931 and 160,338 in 1932. The percentage of divorces to marriages increased from 10.6 to 16.3 during the years 1916 to 1932, divorces during this period increasing by 40.64 p.c. (In 1932 divorces granted to women in the United States constituted 73.5 p.c. of the total granted, as compared with 72.8 p.c. in 1931). No statistics of divorces granted in the United States have been published since those for 1932, but estimates would indicate that there were some 165,000 divorces granted in 1933, 204,000 in 1934 and 218,000 in 1935. The estimated percentages of divorces to marriages were 15.0 p.c., 15.7 p.c. and 16.4 p.c. in the same three years.

5. NUMBER OF MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES IN ENGLAND AND WALES, AUSTRALIA,

NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA IN RECENT YEARS

	England and Wales		Australia		New Zealand		Canada	
	No. of Mar- riages	No. of Di- vorces	No. of Mar- riages	No. of Di- vorces	No. of Mar- riages	No. of Di- vorces	No. of Mar- riages	No. of Di- vorces
1916	279,846	990	40,289	617	8,213	198	65,000 1/	67
1917	258,855	703	33,666	652	6,417	219	60,000 1/	54
1918	287,163	1,111	33,141	681	6,227	199	55,000 1/	114
1919	369,411	1,654	40,540	879	9,519	336	70,000 1/	373
1920	379,658	3,090	51,552	1,152	12,175	469	80,931	427
1921	320,852	3,522	46,869	1,480	10,635	511	69,732	544
1922	299,524	2,588	44,731	1,326	9,566	522	64,420	545
1923	292,408	2,667	44,541	1,460	10,070	522	66,463	501
1924	296,416	2,286	45,869	1,528	10,259	526	65,129	542
1925	295,689	2,605	46,899	1,844	10,419	612	64,644	549
1926	279,860	2,622	47,865	1,632	10,680	614	66,658	606
1927	308,370	3,190	49,033	1,899	10,478	540	69,515	746
1928	303,228	4,018	48,593	1,829	10,537	572	74,311	783
1929	313,316	3,396	47,500	2,036	10,967	635	77,288	815
1930	315,109	3,563	43,255	1,783	11,075	620	71,657	873
1931	311,847	3,764	38,882	1,938	9,817	591	66,591	692
1932	307,184	3,894	43,634	1,680	9,896	612	62,531	995
1933	318,191	4,042	46,595	1,948	10,510	648	63,865	923
1934	342,307	4,287	51,465	2,282	11,256	683	73,092	1,106
1935	349,536	4,069	56,826	2,357	12,187	653	76,893	1,376
1936	354,644	4,057	58,709	2,483	13,808	849	80,904	1,526
1937	359,160	4,886	59,448	-	14,364	917	87,800	1,870
1938							88,438	1,885

1/ Estimated

