

BIRTHS AND DEATHS

The *movement of the population* will appear from the figures given below :

	Born living:	Deaths:	Excess of births:
1876—1885 . . .	31.4 ‰	24.5 ‰	6.6 ‰
1886—1896 . . .	31.0 —	19.5 —	11.5 —
1896—1905 . . .	29.0 —	17.1 —	11.9 —
1906—1915 . . .	27.0 —	15.2 —	11.8 —
1916—1920 . . .	26.6 —	14.1 —	12.5 —
1921—1925 . . .	26.3 —	13.8 —	12.5 —
1926	26.6 —	11.2 —	15.4 —
1927	25.8 —	12.5 —	13.3 —
1928	24.8 —	10.8 —	14.0 —

This table shows a steady decline in the number of births during the past 40 years, accompanied by a still greater fall in the death-rate and an ever growing natural increase of the population, due to the excess of births.

The decline in the birth-rate has, however, been very slow, and the number of births is at present comparatively higher in Iceland than in other countries in north-western Europe.

Of every 1000 children, born in the years 1920—25, twenty five were *still-born*. In this number there has, however, been a steady decline of late (of every 1000 children born during 1886—95, 36 were still-born).

Of children born in Iceland a comparatively greater number is *illegitimate* than in other European countries. In 1921—25 illegitimate births amounted to 13.5 per 100. Yet illegitimate births are comparatively much fewer now than they were 40 years ago, as the following table will make clear:

1876—1885	20.2 p. c.
1886—1895	19.3 —
1896—1905	14.8 —
1906—1915	13.2 —
1916—1920	13.3 —
1921—1925	13.5 —

The *death-rate* in Iceland is at present rather low, compared with the mortality in other countries, and as the above table shows there has been a great decline during the last 40 years. In the years 1926—28 there have been only 11.5 deaths per 1000 of the population. During the same period the death-rate was lower only in 3 European countries, viz. The Netherlands, Norway, and Denmark.

The low death-rate is primarily due to the low *mortality amongst*