

Birth-rates (Legitimate) per 1,000 Married Women at Child-bearing Ages for each Census Year, 1878 to 1906.

Year (Census).	Number of Married Women between 15 and 45 Years of Age.	Number of Legitimate Births (Confinements).	Birth-rate per 1,000 Married Women of from 15 to 45 Years of Age.
1878	50,995	17,196	337.2
1881	57,458	18,003	313.3
1886	62,704	18,532	295.5
1891	63,165	17,455	276.3
1896	69,807	17,596	252.1
1901	79,406	19,355	243.8
1906	98,211	22,352	227.6

And another table is given, showing for a period of twenty years the numbers of married women at the quinquennial periods of age belonging to the full term 15 to 45 years, with the proportions that those numbers bear to every 100 married women living at 15-45.

These proportions are found to have diminished appreciably at the earlier ages, 15-20 and 20-25; but the numbers of the living are much smaller at those ages than at the higher ones, 25-30 and onwards to 40-45, and the effect of this lesser number of wives at the lower ages in reducing the birth-rate would not be so much as might at first be thought probable.

It is, however, undoubtedly a fact that to have a growing proportion of wives at the earlier productive ages is the best position, but it is not the one which obtains at present in New Zealand.

Married Women under 45 Years of Age, given according to Age-groups, as at the Censuses of 1881, 1891, 1901, and 1906; with the Proportion in each Group for every 100 of the Whole.

Age-groups.	Married Women under 45, excluding Chinese.							
	Numbers at Census.				Proportion per Cent.			
	1881.	1891.	1901.	1906.	1881.	1891.	1901.	1906.
15-20	1,233	750	777	928	2.14	1.19	0.98	0.95
20-25	8,996	8,862	10,053	12,153	15.66	14.03	12.66	12.37
25-30	13,133	14,540	17,923	24,030	22.86	23.02	22.57	24.47
30-35	12,656	14,576	19,617	23,025	22.03	23.08	24.70	23.44
35-40	11,811	12,959	16,854	21,453	20.55	20.51	21.23	21.84
40-45	9,629	11,478	14,182	16,622	16.76	18.17	17.86	16.93
Totals	57,458	63,165	79,406	98,211	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

A further table shows the declining birth-rate, and the increase in the marriage-rate, in the United Kingdom.

Birth and Marriage Rates in the United Kingdom, 1886, 1891, 1896, 1901, 1903, and 1905.

Year.	Mean Population.	Births.		Marriages.	
		Number.	Rate per 1,000 of Population.	Number.	Rate per 1,000 of Population.
1886	36,313,582	1,145,577	31.5	241,180	6.6
1891	37,802,440	1,148,259	30.4	275,970	7.3
1896	39,599,072	1,152,144	29.0	296,089	7.5
1901	41,550,773	1,162,975	28.0	313,351	7.5
1903	42,371,219	1,183,601	27.9	316,415	7.5
1905	43,221,145	1,163,506	26.9	315,063	7.3

The above figures are taken from the report of the Registrar-General of England (67th number) published in 1907.

The birth-rates for ten years in Great Britain and certain countries of the European Continent are also given from the same source. The rates in England and Wales, and in Scotland, are higher than those in New Zealand, but the rate for Ireland is lower. France has the lowest rate of all quoted.