

A different split-up of the urban and rural population is given in the following table:—

Table No. 59.—Table showing the Population in Urban and Rural Districts at various Censuses from 1901 to 1936

—	1901.	1906.	1911.	1916.	1921.	1926.	1936.
Boroughs and Town Districts with Populations of—	<i>Numbers</i>						
1,000– 2,500 ..	59,117	66,046	81,011	93,995	98,292	102,201	99,875
2,500– 5,000 ..	74,489	57,030	67,322	76,914	92,778	85,439	70,768
5,000–10,000 ..	66,259	94,742	98,435	87,096	67,575	82,144	96,859
10,000–25,000 ..	53,821	10,239	56,519	78,860	135,493	185,580	244,407
25,000 or over ..	77,851	182,297	199,553	248,437	295,997	337,221	373,309
Total urban ..	331,537	410,354	502,840	585,302	690,135	792,576	885,218
Rural ..	437,419	473,752	500,620	501,960	523,547	544,808	601,594
Grand total (excluding migratory)	768,956	884,106	1,003,460	1,087,262	1,213,682	1,337,384	1,486,812
	<i>Percentage of Total</i>						
1,000– 2,500 ..	7·69	7·47	8·07	8·65	8·10	7·64	6·72
2,500– 5,000 ..	9·69	6·45	6·71	7·07	7·64	6·39	4·76
5,000–10,000 ..	8·62	10·72	9·81	8·01	5·57	6·14	6·51
10,000–25,000 ..	7·00	1·16	5·63	7·25	11·16	13·88	16·44
25,000 or over ..	10·12	20·62	19·89	22·85	24·39	25·21	25·11
Total urban ..	43·12	46·42	50·11	53·83	56·86	59·26	59·54
Rural ..	56·88	53·58	49·89	46·17	43·14	40·74	40·46
Grand total (excluding migratory)	100·00	100·00	100·00	100·00	100·00	100·00	100·00

At the beginning of the present century about 20 per cent. of the population lived in towns of over 10,000 population. By 1936, however, this proportion had grown to 40 per cent. Only 10 per cent. of the population lived in the larger cities in 1901. This had increased to 25 per cent. in 1936. In the secondary cities between 10,000 and 25,000 the increase was from 7 per cent. to 16·44 per cent. The rural population had increased from 437,419 to 601,594, but had fallen relatively from 56·88 to 40·46 per cent. It should be noted, however, that, contrary to the experience of Australia, there has not been the tendency for the population to congregate in one large town. While the four major cities occupy a predominant place in the urban areas, there is a growing tendency for a distribution of the population into the smaller areas. Prior to the 1914–18 war there were only four cities in the Dominion. (The term “city” has no legal significance, but is granted to a borough which has a population of over 20,000.) In 1945, there were nine cities.*

C. THE URBAN DRIFT

A good deal is made from time to time of what is called the urban drift, and many deductions are made of the necessity to counter this particular development. In the Section dealing with agriculture it will be shown that the numbers engaged directly in agriculture have increased at a rate only slightly less than the rate of increase of the total occupied population. There is a good deal of loose thinking on this subject of the urban drift. The important factor in connection with agriculture is not the number

* Nelson, which has a population of under 20,000, is also entitled to the appellation of “city,” but this has an historical significance.