Basic Trends of Social Change in South Dakota: I. Population Tendencies

W. F. Kumlien
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I. Population Tendencies

By W. F. Kumlien

South Dakota is one of the five remaining states whose farm families comprise more than one-half of the total population. Four of these states are in the predominantly agricultural part of the nation which lies in the Mississippi Valley and the fifth is North Carolina in the southern and eastern drainage area of the Appalachian Mountains. Most of the other states have less than 25 percent farm population.

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Explanatory Note

This is the first of a projected series of ten bulletins carrying the general title of “Basic Trends of Social Change in South Dakota.” Appropriate subtitles for each field covered will appear as follows:

(1) Population Tendencies
(2) Adjustment to Physical Environment
(3) Social Organization
(4) Family Relationships
(5) Public Health Facilities
(6) Education in Transition
(7) Governmental Developments
(8) The Church Situation
(9) Recreation Activities
(10) Social Welfare Service

Because of the large number of significant trends in each field and in order to conserve space, the series will be published largely as graphic summaries.

The timeliness of the study is occasioned not only by the fact that November 2, 1939, is the fiftieth anniversary of South Dakota’s admission to the Union as a state, but also because the recent extended period of drought and depression has made the people of the state increasingly conscious of the need for economic and social planning in the future.

In such planning it is imperative that we carefully scrutinize what has happened in the past. This series, which will be published during a period of several years, is being prepared so that federal, state, county and local planning agencies, as well as individuals, operating in the state may obtain a clearer view of the direction and implications of the more definite trends of social change in each of the fields listed above.

One of the main purposes of this series of studies on social change is not to merely enumerate and analyze the separate trends in each field, but to interpret and interrelate these trends and fields into a picture of the changing social life of South Dakota as a whole.

Attention is called to the sequence of the ten bulletins of the series. The first three bulletins will deal with the dynamic influences exerted by three of the more important social forces operating in society; namely, population, physical environment, and social organization. The perpetual interaction of these three social forces go to make up what John T. Greenan in his book, “American Civilization Today,” has called “the eternal triangle of civilization.”

The remaining seven bulletins will deal in greater detail with seven institutional fields which function as important parts of social organization in the state.
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Digest

1. South Dakota will celebrate its 50th anniversary of statehood, November 2, 1939.

2. The settlement of South Dakota has been a part of the gradual westward movement of population for the United States. (Page 8). All but five of the eastern states have sent us more migrants than we have sent back. All of the states west of South Dakota, including North Dakota, Oklahoma, and Texas, have gained more migrants from this state than have been sent to us. (Page 35).

3. The total population of South Dakota increased consistently with each decade from 1870 to 1930, but has declined over 20,000 since the latter date. The rate of increase declined sharply after 1910. (Page 12).

4. American-born whites, living in South Dakota in 1930, constituted 90.5 percent of the total white population, while the foreign born composed 9.5 percent (Page 28). Of all the whites born in South Dakota 66.1 percent are still living in the state, while 33.9 percent have moved away to other states. 56.5 percent of the total population of South Dakota are South Dakota born. (Page 29.)

5. In 1890, 15 percent of South Dakota's population was under five years of age, while only 2.4 percent was 65 or over. By 1930 those under five years of age had declined to 10.3 percent, while those 65 or over had increased to 5.4 percent. The middle group between 20 and 64 have remained fairly constant during the 50 year period. (Page 39).

6. In general there has been a tendency towards equality in the sex ratio of South Dakota's population from 1890-1930. There are certain factors, however, which have tended to keep the ratio of males to 100 females relatively high. Among these factors are the predominance of agriculture in the state, lack of urbanization and industrialization, a relatively high proportion of foreign born, and comparatively recent settlement. (Page 44.)

7. South Dakota has since 1925 shown a tendency towards a definitely declining crude birth rate, and since 1933 a slightly increasing crude death rate. These trends, together with a virtual cessation of foreign immigrants, and a net loss in native migrants in and out of the state, have resulted in a decline in population first recorded in the state census of 1935. (Page 46.)

8. There are strong indications that because of the combination of limiting factors mentioned above which are operating in population growth, South Dakota will soon reach a stationary level. It is not inconceivable that we may have already passed the peak of numbers in population in 1930, unless in the future some new cause for an immigration influx should arise. (Page 49.)
Basic Trends of Social Change in South Dakota
By W. F. Kumlien*

I. Introduction

The Problem. The central problem confronting the people of South Dakota has been, and will continue to be, how to bring about a more realistic adjustment to the physical and social environments of the state.

It is believed that in recent years South Dakotans have become much more aware of the need for making special adjustments to the vagaries of a physical environment located in the Great Plains region. Likewise, because of continued depression, unemployment and other unusual disturbing factors, many citizens of the state are commencing to think in terms of needed fundamental changes in reorganizing their economic, political and social institutions. As yet, however, most people have not thought of connecting these needed changes with population trends. Oddly enough, until recent years, we have assumed that population would go on expanding indefinitely and retain its usual composition. Now that there are unmistakable evidences that population in the state is “leveling off” in growth, and even approaching maturity in composition, many questions soon will arise which will merit a careful answer. Following are some of the practical questions which already are being raised:

Why are elementary school enrollments declining in nearly every county of the state, while high school and college enrollments are, as yet, increasing?
If the birth rate has been declining ever since the state was first settled, why has such an important trend passed unnoticed?
Why is our state death rate bound to slowly rise from now on in the face of rapid gains in health conditions including a consistently declining infant mortality rate?
How and why have the aged, 65 and over, recently increased in proportion to the rest of the population?
Will the much-discussed trend toward a stationary population in the near future apply to South Dakota as well as to the rest of the nation?
When did the trend of foreign immigration go into reverse?

* Acknowledgements.—This study was made possible by the generous cooperation of the State and Federal Works Progress Administration with the South Dakota State College Experiment Station. The official name of the project has been known as “Basic Trends of Social Change in South Dakota.” The original project was designated as WPA Project Number 415-74-3-255. For the current year it has been designated as 665-74-3-58.
The WPA has financed the larger share of the study by furnishing clerical helpers working under the technical guidance of an analyst, while the general project supervision and the cost of publishing the manuscript has been furnished by the Experiment Station.
The author gratefully acknowledges the faithful assistance rendered by all those working on the study. Special mention is made of the valuable assistance given by Miss Vera Fetheram for supervising the work of the tabulators and acting as project analyst; to Harold Brady who served as office supervisor for several months at the beginning of the study; and to R. L. McNamara who, as Assistant State Supervisor of Rural Research, gave helpful assistance in formulating the project proposal and in various other administrative services incident to the study’s completion.
Will the proportion of farm population continue to decline and the urban continue to grow? At what point may we expect to reach an equilibrium between farm, village and urban populations in the state?

What direct effects have population changes already had on our economic and social life in South Dakota, and what may we further expect for the near future?

The present study has been projected to attempt to answer these and other similar questions.

**The Purpose.** The purpose of this study is to show what actually have been the trends in population and what has been the adjustment to the factors controlling population, as well as to show what implications these trends may have for the future development of our policies and social institutions.

**Scope and Method.** This study has attempted to cover the main phases of population, data being secured for the state in all cases, and for counties where this breakdown was available. Whenever possible data were obtained for the years 1890-1935, although many population characteristics could not be had for a later date than 1930.

Care has been taken to obtain the data for these publications from authentic sources. As far as possible we have used the federal and state census material and official institutional reports. It was not possible in some cases to secure data for the full 50 years, but such data as were available and were considered statistically accurate were used.

**II. History of Settlement**

South Dakota is part of the territory purchased from France in 1803, known as the Louisiana Purchase. It was governed under a number of different territories before it finally was admitted to the Union as a state in 1889. (Fig. 1). Settlement of South Dakota came as a part of the great westward expansion of population, which quickly filled up the Great Plains area during the last half of the nineteenth century. Figure 2 shows how after 1860 the area which is now South Dakota gradually became settled from east to west. Concurrent with the settlement of the state were a number of treaties and agreements made with the Indians for the relinquishment of their lands. A series of treaties beginning in 1851 opened most of the present territory of South Dakota to settlement by the whites by the time it became a state in 1889. (Fig. 3).

Even today South Dakota is still largely a frontier state according to the census definition of frontier which defines it as that area where the population per square mile is less than six persons. South Dakota very nearly is bisected by the frontier line which also marks the region where rainfall is less than 20 inches and fluctuates seasonally. This tends to cause cycles of shortage and plenty which prevents the support of a very large population.

The fact that South Dakota was settled rather late in the westward expansion is an indication that early settlers passed it by for areas of greater rainfall. That it still is sparsely settled indicates that people to some extent have recognized its limitations as an agricultural state. If these limitations are considered more carefully in the future, South Dakota should have rather bright prospects ahead.

(1) The territory west of the Missouri River was unorganized from 1834-1854. At this time Nebraska Territory was formed taking in this area.

(2) Included the present states of North and South Dakota, Montana, and the north half of Wyoming. (Note that in the above chart the date should read 1861-1863 instead of 1861-1889. See footnotes (3) and (4) for explanation of two later changes.)

(3) Included the present states of North and South Dakota and Wyoming.

(4) Included only the two present states of North and South Dakota. In 1882 another slight change was made in the boundary line when Nebraska was given the tract of land south of the forty-third parallel and north of the Keya Paha and Niobrara rivers.
Fig. 2. Westward Movement of Settlement. South Dakota is truly a frontier state according to the federal census which defines "frontier" as being that line beyond which density of population is less than six persons per square mile. The frontier line in South Dakota falls between the ninety-eighth and one-hundredth meridians. The basis for this rather constant line of demarcation between eastern and western United States rests primarily on rainfall. East of this line there is generally sufficient rainfall favorably distributed for crop production. West of this line rainfall is scarce and subject to fluctuations which often make for short crops. As a result this land does not support as large a population as that where sufficient rainfall is more assured. Since South Dakota is almost entirely dependent upon an agricultural economy, only some added resource such as oil, metals, or minerals, is likely to permit much increase in density. Thus it seems probable that South Dakota's density pattern is pretty well established. No map for 1930 or 1935 has been included as there has been no appreciable change in the line of frontier since 1920.
III. Growth of Population

Rate of Growth. South Dakota has shown unusually large population gains during two 10-year periods since 1870. (Fig. 4). The first of these was between 1880 and 1890, a period of intensive settlement, and the second came between 1900 and 1910. The following table shows the amount of population for each decade, together with the amount and percent of increase or decrease over the previous decade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Increase or decrease over previous decade</th>
<th>Percent of increase or decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>675,082</td>
<td>-17,767</td>
<td>-2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>692,849</td>
<td>56,302</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>535,888</td>
<td>52,859</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>583,388</td>
<td>182,318</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>401,570</td>
<td>52,970</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>348,600</td>
<td>250,352</td>
<td>254.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>386,492</td>
<td>36,892</td>
<td>734.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
South Dakota's rate of growth during these two decades was greater than that of the United States for the same periods, but after 1910 South Dakota gained population much less rapidly. (Fig. 6). Despite the decrease in total growth, the urban population still is increasing at a fairly rapid rate. (Fig. 5). When compared with the states immediately surrounding it, South Dakota's rate of growth has been greater than that of the older states to the east and south, but less than that of North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado. (Fig. 7). The various changes in population growth by counties shows the spread of settlement from east to west. In the early decades the eastern counties showed large gains; later, these large gains were seen in the west river counties, while the east river counties either gained less rapidly or declined slightly. By 1935, however, this decrease had become prevalent throughout the state. Although the population of nearly all the counties of the state decreased between 1930 and 1935, the greatest decreases were found in the central part, indicating a great need for population adjustment. (Fig. 8, 9 and 10). The same thing is also evidenced by the increases and decreases in the population of the townships in the state. This shows even more clearly the almost universal loss of farm population in the state. (Fig. 11).

Density of Population. South Dakota's population density has increased consistently with its growth inasmuch as the area has remained the same. The density was slightly less in 1935, as there was a decrease of 17,767 persons in the state's population between 1930 and 1935. (Fig. 12). South Dakota is in a bloc of Great Plains and Mountain states which have a density of less than 20 persons per square mile. All of these states, except Oregon, are in the Great Plains area or in the Rocky Mountains. (Fig. 13). South Dakota's density is about nine people per square mile, and since it appears that its population peak may have been reached, it is doubtful as least if this density will be greatly increased.

The counties of South Dakota present a distinct density pattern and, despite a steadily increasing density, they have shown the same pattern since 1890. The most densely settled counties are in the southeast part of the state, with a gradual lessening of density to the north and west. West of the river most of the counties have less than six persons per square mile. (Fig. 14). In relation to the other states of the West North Central region, South Dakota is the least densely settled with the exception of North Dakota. This difference shows up even more clearly when the density of only the farm population is shown for these states. (Fig. 15 and 16).

Rural and Urban Distribution. South Dakota is one of the five remaining states in the Union which has more than 50 percent of its population living on farms (see cover page), but at the same time, there is taking place a steady shift in the proportions of farm, village, and urban populations in the state. The following table shows this shift in percentages of the total population between 1890 and 1935:
There is, even so, a difference of almost 40 percent between the proportion of urban to total population in South Dakota and the United States. (Fig. 17). In the West North Central states, only North Dakota has a larger proportion of rural population than South Dakota, and, conversely, only North Dakota has a smaller proportion of urban population. (Fig. 18).

In 1935, there were in South Dakota 19 cities with a population of more than 2,500 located as shown in Fig. 19. As would be expected from the density pattern, most of these urban centers are located in the eastern part of the state. Figure 20 shows how relatively unimportant, as far as numbers are concerned, are the unincorporated towns in the state.

Figures 21 and 22 show the relationship between the urban population, the population in incorporated places under 2,500, and the population in unincorporated territory, in both South Dakota and the United States. There has been a decided increase in the urban population, a decrease in the unincorporated or farm population, and the village population has remained approximately the same. Of course, the urban population in the United States is larger, and the village and farm populations smaller, than the corresponding groups in South Dakota. In the charts referred to here, it should be noted that the farm population includes the unincorporated towns which exaggerates the proportion of farm population.

Individual towns have been inconsistent in their growth, although in earlier decades most of them showed an increase. Between 1930 and 1935 however, a large number of towns, especially the smaller ones, declined in population. (Fig. 23).

Definition of Terms. In order to facilitate understanding of data presented, the following terms are defined:

Urban population is that population living in cities and other incorporated places having 2,500 inhabitants or more. The word city is also used in this bulletin to designate an urban area.

Rural population is that population living outside the limits of an incorporated place of over 2,500 population.

Rural-farm population is that population living on farms in rural areas. It includes practically all farm population in South Dakota and in this study is sometimes designated as farm population.

Rural-nonfarm population includes, in general, all persons living outside cities or other incorporated places having 2,500 inhabitants or more who do not live on farms. This is sometimes termed “village” population.

* The rural population was divided into rural-farm and rural-nonfarm in only two censuses, 1920 and 1930.
Fig. 4. Changes in Population Numbers, 1870-1935. Two periods, 1880-1890 and 1900-1910 have shown unusual gains. The first was a period of intensive settlement. The second came during an unusually prosperous period for American agriculture, when there was a gradual shift from a cash-grain to a corn-hog type of farming. Population continued to increase until 1930. There has been some loss since. Future population growth depends upon the excess of births over deaths and the differential between immigration and emigration.

Fig. 5. Increase or Decrease in Rural and Urban Populations in South Dakota, 1890-1935. Similar to the United States as a whole, the urban places have grown at a much more rapid rate than have the rural areas.
Fig. 6. Population Growth of South Dakota and the United States, 1890-1930. During only two decades, 1880-1890 and 1900-1910, has South Dakota’s population growth been at a more rapid rate than that of the United States as a whole. Our two settlement booms were caused by immigration from foreign countries and other states. This came as a part of the great westward expansion after which our population increased at a relatively slow rate.

Fig. 7. Increase in the Population of South Dakota Compared With Neighboring States, 1890-1930. South Dakota and her neighboring states have shown distinct differences in their rates of growth since 1890. South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana and Wyoming are newer states and perhaps have greater physical limitations.
Fig. 8. The Population of South Dakota Counties, 1870-1935. Ten counties were organized between 1857, when the first permanent settlements were made, and 1870. Eastern South Dakota was almost settled, and four Black Hills counties had been established before 1890. The west river counties were settled next. The decade, 1900-1910, saw the greatest boom in our history, but seven western and three eastern counties lost population. The next two decades brought various fluctuations. Falling prices and bank failures following the wartime boom caused even the eastern counties to lose population. Then the drought and depression between 1930 and 1935 came as a climax which brought population losses to 54 of the 69 counties.
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Fig. 9. Population Decreases in South Dakota, 1930-1935.

Fig. 10. Rural-farm Population Decrease in South Dakota, 1930-1935. Only 15 counties in South Dakota gained in total population and one county, Lawrence, gained in farm population in 1930-1935. Five of these 15 counties were in the intensive farming region and three were in the Black Hills region. Loss of farm population indicates a need for adjustment in land use, such as changes in size of farm, types of farming, and social institutions. Similar adjustments possibly will eventually take place in practically every county of the state, although it probably will be more widespread in the ranching areas.
Fig. 11. Population Gains and Losses of South Dakota Townships, 1930-1935. Seventy to eighty percent of the approximately 1,600 organized townships in the state decreased in population during the period from 1930 to 1935, the largest losses being in the central part of the state. The symbol, "no change," used in this map means that there was exactly the same population in both 1930 and 1935. The symbol, "no comparison," means that these townships were unorganized either in 1930 or 1935, or in both years. The percentage of increase or decrease is based on figures which exclude all incorporated places.
Fig. 12. Increasing Density of Population in South Dakota, 1870-1935. South Dakota had a population density of only 8.8 persons per square mile in 1935. The density possibly will not increase much, if at all, in the next few years.

Fig. 13. Comparative Population Density in South Dakota With That of Other States, 1930. Only seven states had a lower density in 1930 than South Dakota. The greater density of the other 40 states is due to such factors as higher rainfall, or additional commercial resources.
Fig. 14. Varying Population Density of South Dakota Counties, 1890-1930. By 1890 the present density pattern of the state was fairly well established, showing a distinct correlation with rainfall, crop yields, land values, and types of farming. Most counties west of the 98th or 100th meridian had less than six persons per square mile in 1935. Two counties had a population density of 40 or more. Several counties which have larger urban centers would have a higher density if it were not for their large area. The fact that Sioux City serves as a metropolitan center for such a wide territory tends to keep down the growth of towns in the smaller southeastern counties.
Fig. 15. Increasing Population Density in the West North Central States, 1890-1930. South Dakota is the least densely settled of the seven states in the West North Central region. Missouri and Iowa, more urbanized, have the greatest numbers. These states also have more natural advantages and larger consuming centers. Nebraska, Kansas, and Minnesota occupy a middle position. The regions of scanty rainfall in North and South Dakota will prevent any great expansion of farm population, and a lack of a variety of other industries probably will prevent the expansion of their cities to the class of metropolitan centers.
Fig. 16. Variations in Density of the Rural Farm Population in the West North Central States, 1930. South Dakota compares favorably with North Dakota and Nebraska as far as farm population density is concerned, but cannot support as dense a population as the states directly east of it. Probably no other occupation reflects so clearly physical and economic conditions as does agriculture, and this chart shows graphically the limitations of climate and natural resources in this group of states. The sooner these physical and economic differences are clearly recognized, the greater chance each section has of making the necessary adjustments. During the next 10 or 20 years many counties, especially those west of the line of frontier which runs almost directly north and south through the approximate center of North and South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas, will find it advantageous to modify much of their present program of economic and social organization.
Fig. 17. Proportion of Rural and Urban Populations in South Dakota and the United States, 1890-1930. Rural and urban growth in South Dakota and the United States shows much the same trend, although the proportions are different. The percentage of urban population is increasing in both areas, but the proportion of rural population is much greater in South Dakota than in the United States. The downward trend in farm population is even greater than for the rural population as a whole. The village population is decreasing slightly in South Dakota. The urban population in the United States has outnumbered the rural population since 1920, and no doubt, this trend will continue in the future.
Fig. 18. Decreasing Proportion of Rural Population and an Increasing Proportion of Urban Population in the West North Central States, 1890-1930. All seven of the West North Central states have experienced a shift from a predominance of rural population to a greater proportion of urban population during the last 10 years. Only in Missouri and Minnesota are the rural and urban populations approximately equal. Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska form a middle group wherein villages, towns and cities claim 40 percent of the total population. In North and South Dakota, rural families constitute 80 percent of the states' inhabitants. While the respective ages of these seven states have a bearing on their town-country population distributions, the main factors are their natural resources, such as oil, minerals, weather conditions, topography, and distances from consuming centers. The above differences must be recognized. The sooner each state realizes its limitations and differences in resources, physical, economic and social, and makes the necessary adjustments thereto, the more likely it is to approach its optimum prosperity.
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Fig. 19. The Decade in Which Each Present Urban Center of South Dakota Reached a Population of 2,500. In 1880 South Dakota had only two urban places; by 1890 there were seven; and in 1935 there were 19. Their population increased from 8.2 percent to 22.04 percent of the total in 1890-1935. They seem to be fairly well located, being about 50 to 75 miles apart in the east river country.

Fig. 20. Relative Proportions of the Population in Incorporated Towns, Unincorporated Towns, and the Open Country in South Dakota, 1935. Approximately 53 percent of the state's population lives on farms, and 47 percent in cities, towns, and villages. There is, however, a rapid trend toward equality in this respect.
Fig. 21. Changing Proportions of Farm, Village and Urban Population in the United States, 1880-1930.

Fig. 22. Changing Proportions of Farm, Village and Urban Population in South Dakota, 1880-1935. There has been an increasing proportion of non-farm population and a decreasing proportion of farm population since 1880 in both South Dakota and the United States. This trend probably will continue.
Fig. 23. Changing Population of South Dakota Towns, 1900-1935. Although when taken as a whole the hamlets, villages, towns, and cities of South Dakota have gained consistently each decade, individual towns vary greatly in their fluctuations of growth. Towns over 2,500 population grow most consistently but even these sometimes show a decline. Each decade there has been an increasing number of towns of different sizes which have shown a decline in population. Certain towns grow much more rapidly than do others, generally because of a favorable location as a center of a certain type of farming area, or as centrally located county-seat towns. As would be expected, the distribution of towns follows quite closely the population density pattern of the state.

**IV. Nativity of Population**

South Dakota is a state peopled predominantly by white persons, (Fig. 24), largely of north European origin. The colored group, which in 1930 was less than 6 percent of the total, is made up almost entirely of Indians who are largely segregated on reservations. As a consequence they are concentrated in a small number of counties of the state. (Fig. 33). The proportion of foreign born is decreasing rapidly, the proportion born of native parents is increasing sharply, as is also the proportion who have been born in South Dakota. By 1930 there was only 9.8* percent of the white population who were foreign-born, (Fig. 26), slightly more than 60 percent of the native whites were born of native-born parents, (Fig. 28), and about 56 percent were born in South Dakota, (Fig. 29).

The proportion of foreign-born whites has decreased considerably in both rural and urban areas, but the proportion is larger in the rural areas, (Fig. 25 and 27). The rural areas also show a much larger proportion of the colored races than do the urban. (Fig. 25). This also is largely due to the segregation of the Indians on reservations.

* By 1935 this proportion had declined to 7.3 percent.
The county distribution of the various nativity groups shows some rather distinct patterns. The foreign-born whites are found mainly in the eastern counties. (Fig. 30). The native whites of foreign or mixed parentage, although present in much larger proportions, follow very closely the distribution of the foreign born. (Fig. 31). This results in a greater concentration of the native whites of native parentage in the central and western part of the state. (Fig. 32). These sections were settled at a later date and the settlers were more largely from other states than they were from foreign countries.

The foreign-born population of the state came almost entirely from north European countries. (Fig. 34). Consequently the parents of the native born of foreign or mixed parentage are largely from these same countries. (Fig. 35). The county distribution in 1930 of persons from different countries of Europe shows various concentrations of certain nationalities. Figure 36 shows that those born in Norway are found in largest numbers in a row of counties along the eastern border of the state. The Germans are scattered throughout the state following quite closely the population density pattern of the state. The other nationalities considered here show concentrations in a few counties of the state. Figure 37 shows that practically the same distributions can be noted for the children of the foreign born.

South Dakota is rapidly becoming a state of native-born white population. Foreign immigration has practically ceased, and indications are that the restrictions placed upon it will not be relaxed. Migration from other states is lessening so that more and more of the population have been born in South Dakota. It seems almost inevitable that our population will become more and more native white born of native-white South Dakota parents.

As the foreign born disappear from the population there will be a lessening of the social problems which have resulted from our lack of socialization. The presence of cliques and pressure groups based principally upon nationality, religion, and locality have brought about maladjustments to both physical environment and to certain types of social institutions. As time goes on the greater proportion of South Dakota native born white persons in the population should help to eliminate many of these problems.

The predominance of native-white population will, no doubt, lead to conservatism in the future, but on the other hand, we will probably escape the more serious race problems of the South and of the Pacific and Atlantic Coasts.

Definition of Terms. In order that the data in this section may be understood more easily, the following terms are defined:

Native whites of native parentage are those whites who were born in this country and whose parents were also born either in the United States or in its outlying possessions.

Native whites of foreign or mixed parentage are those native whites who either had both parents born in foreign countries, or had one foreign-born parent and one native-born parent.

Foreign-born whites are white persons born outside of continental United States or its outlying possessions.

Colored races in this study include Indians, Mexicans, Negroes, and Orientals.
Fig. 24. Proportion of White and Colored Races in the Population of South Dakota, 1890-1930.

Fig. 25. Rural and Urban Racial and Nativity Groups in South Dakota, 1890-1930. In 1930, 96.6 percent of the total population was white.
Fig. 26. Native and Foreign-Born White Population in South Dakota, 1890-1930.

Fig. 27. Native White Population in Rural and Urban Areas of South Dakota, 1890-1930. The largest proportion of the population is native-born white. The foreign-born element is rapidly declining.
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Fig. 28. The Increasing Proportion of the Population of Native White Parentage, 1890-1930. There has been a decided increase in the proportion of native whites of native parentage, an abrupt decline in those of foreign parentage, and a slight increase in those of mixed foreign and native parentage since 1890.

Fig. 29. The Changing Nativity Elements in South Dakota, 1890-1930. This is rapidly becoming a state of native Americans, the majority being South Dakota born. If the same rate of change continues until 1940, at least 65 percent of the population will have been born in South Dakota.
Since 1900 the foreign-born population in South Dakota has shown a distinct county distribution pattern. A few counties mostly in the eastern and northern part of the state always have shown the largest percentage of foreign born.
The basic trends of social change in South Dakota are reflected in the county distribution of the Native White Stock and the Colored Races from 1900 to 1930.

Fig. 32. County Distribution of the Native White Stock, 1900-1930.

Fig. 33. County Distribution of the Colored Races, 1900-1930. The concentrated distribution of foreign-born whites also is reflected in the distribution of other nativity groups. The colored races, in South Dakota—mainly Indians, are most numerous in certain west river counties which include a number of reservations.
Fig. 34. The Changing Distribution of Foreign-Born Whites by Country of Birth, 1890-1930.

Fig. 35. Distribution of Native Whites of Foreign or Mixed Parentage by Their Parent's Country of Birth, 1890-1930. Foreign-born whites in our state have declined from 38.3 percent of the total whites in 1880 to 7.3 percent in 1935. Since 1890, six nationalities have made up about 90 percent of the total foreign born, and they have kept the same relative position to each other. If the present trend in restrictive immigration continues, it will only be a matter of a few generations before both the foreign born and the native whites of foreign or mixed parentage practically will disappear from our population.
The foreign-born population from each of these countries shows a distinct distribution pattern. Norwegians are concentrated in the eastern counties of the state, Germans are well distributed throughout. Other nationalities are in rather localized areas. These differences in nationality distribution account for many variations in local customs and culture patterns.
Fig. 37. County Distribution of Native Whites with One or Both Parents Born in Europe, 1930. The native whites of foreign or mixed parentage show pretty much the same nationality distribution as do the foreign born, but the numbers are much greater. This serves to intensify the differences in local customs and modes of living formerly mentioned as a result of the localized distribution of the foreign born.
V. Interstate Migration

Considering the net gains or losses to the white population of South Dakota through interstate migration as recorded in the 1930 census, it is significant that all but five states lying east of our eastern state boundary line have contributed more migrants to us than we have sent back. On the other hand, all but two of the states west of our eastern border have received more migrants from us than they have sent.

The states to which we are most indebted for net gain in native-white population stock are Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Nebraska, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. The states to which we have lost the most heavily are: California, Washington, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, Texas, and Oklahoma. (Fig. 38).

When viewed as a whole, we see that by far the largest portion of the native-white immigrants have come from the Middle West, the East North Central, and the Middle Atlantic states. These people have been mainly of north European stock, just as our foreign immigrants have come largely from the north European countries. (Fig. 39).

This predominance of persons of north European origin in our population has had a distinct effect upon our culture patterns and social institutions such as our family life, our schools, our churches, and our local government.

The outward movement has in recent years been divided between the Pacific Coast states and the nearby states in the Middle West. (Fig. 40). A great many people have returned to Minnesota so that the immigrants from that state and emigrants to that state are now nearly balanced. Fewer have returned to Iowa, Wisconsin and Illinois.

Fig. 38. Net Difference of Interstate Migration of South Dakota Population, 1930. This refers to the difference between the total number of migrants having come in to South Dakota by 1930 and the total number of migrants having gone out from South Dakota by 1930. Eastern states have sent more migrants than we have sent back, while more migrants from South Dakota have gone to western states than they have sent back.
Fig. 39. Native White Migrants Into Dakota Territory and South Dakota from State of Birth, 1870-1930. Note particularly the large numbers that have come from nearby states, especially those states to the east of South Dakota.
Fig. 40. Native White Migrants Born in Dakota Territory and South Dakota Living Elsewhere, 1870-1930. Note the large numbers going to nearby states and to states on the Pacific Coast.
VI. Age Composition

The changing age distribution is one of the most certain indications that our population is maturing. Since 1890 there has been a decided decrease in the proportion of persons in the younger age groups and a decided increase in the proportions in the older age groups. The productive age groups have remained fairly constant in their proportion of the total throughout the entire history of the state. (Fig. 41). During this period the median age of the population increased from 21.2 years to 24.4 years. (Fig. 42). The number of children under five years of age per 1000 women of childbearing age, in any given year, is considered to be one of the most “all around” tests applied to a well ordered or “adjusted” civilization. Figure 43 shows that in the central and western part of the state the population is probably less mature and certain adjustments have yet to be made. The distribution by age groups in rural and urban areas is distinctly different. The rural group under 20 years of age is much larger than the urban group under 20. It is surprising that so much difference exists since our urban centers are comparatively small. If the population were divided into farm and urban there would, no doubt, be even a greater difference. The proportion of aged has been increasing in both areas and it is slightly larger in the rural than in the urban areas. (Fig. 44). South Dakota has a somewhat larger proportion of population under 15 years of age than does the United States, but there is less difference than might be expected in view of our recent settlement. This is largely due to the rapid maturing of our population. (Fig. 45). The various nativity groups show distinct variations also. The foreign-born group is rapidly becoming concentrated in the upper age groups, and only a very few are found in the younger ages. The native-whites of foreign or mixed parentage are also ageing rapidly. (Fig. 46). The colored races are the only group that shows an increasing proportion of persons under 20 years of age. The probable reason for this increase is due to a great reduction in their infant and childhood mortality rates. The colored races have also gradually learned to make a much better adjustment to their physical and social environment. These races also have an increasing proportion of aged persons so that the group in the productive ages is becoming less. (Fig. 47).

This shift in age composition is bringing about various problems which our state in its pioneer stage did not have to face. First the decrease in the number of children has been reflected during the past few years in the decreasing elementary school enrollment and is now beginning to show up slightly in our first year high school enrollment. This will shortly necessitate some changes in our school system in order that all children may have a school available without maintaining the small and costly school of less than five pupils.

On the other hand, the increase in aged persons makes necessary more widespread aid in the form of pensions or old age assistance. This will, no doubt, become an increasing expense which will offset any decreased expense for the education of children.
Fig. 41. Changes in Age Distribution of South Dakota Population by Sex, 1890-1930. South Dakota now has many more old people and fewer children than in 1890. This is noticeable in our school enrollment, and is due to a rapidly declining birth rate and an increase in the average expectancy of life at birth. It is also an indication of a maturing population.

Fig. 42. Increase in the Median Age of South Dakota Population, 1890-1930. The median age in 1930 was 24.4 years or 3.2 years older than in 1890. This trend will likely continue.
Fig. 43. Proportion of Children Under Five to the Number of Women 20 to 44 Years of Age by Counties, 1930. The lowest ratios of children per 1,000 women are found in those counties of South Dakota which have urban centers or are in the more intensive farming regions, while the highest are found in the Indian reservation counties west of the river.

Fig. 44. Gradual Ageing of the Population in Rural and Urban Areas of South Dakota, 1890-1930. The urban areas have a slightly larger proportion of aged persons, which is contrary to the situation in the United States as a whole.

Transpose Explanations under Figures 43 and 44
Fig. 45. Comparative Age Distribution of Urban With Total Population for South Dakota and the United States, 1930. Although South Dakota is a relatively new state, it is rapidly approaching the American age distribution norm. Its population shows a large proportion of persons under 24 years of age. This is particularly true of the group under five years of age. Our urban population probably resembles our total South Dakota population more closely than it does the urban population in the United States. There is, however, a larger proportion of persons in the productive age groups than there is in the total state population. This difference probably is due to the fact that our cities are on the whole comparatively small and their population has only recently been recruited from farms. All the pyramids show comparatively smaller proportions under 14 years of age. The proportion of the aged are about the same in each while there are larger proportions of people in the productive ages in all urban groups.
Fig. 46. Differences in Age Distribution Among Nativity Groups in South Dakota, 1890-1930. In the above chart the native whites of foreign or mixed parentage were superimposed upon a base of native whites of native parentage. In the final step the foreign-born whites were placed upon this double base. With each decade since South Dakota was admitted to the Union, there has been a changing proportional relationship between the three nativity classes. The foreign born have been aging rapidly, and the native born of foreign or mixed parentage are becoming more numerous in the older age groups, a natural result of the aging of the foreign born and the lack of further foreign immigration.
VII. Sex Composition

The ratio of males to 100 females is another indication of the maturity of a population. The ratio is always high in a newly settled, agricultural state, such as South Dakota was in 1890. In South Dakota, however, it has been decreasing rapidly and by 1930 there were only 110 men for each 100 women. (Fig. 48). Although this is still relatively high as compared to more urbanized states, it is not so high when the predominantly agricultural character of the state is considered. It is still somewhat higher than the ratio for the United States as a whole. (Fig. 49).

It is the foreign-born population which has by far the highest ratio of males to females. (Fig. 50). The farm group also has a large excess of men over women due to the nature of farm work, which makes it much easier for a single man than a single woman to run a farm. By 1930 the urban places, with their greater opportunities for working women, had an excess of women. (Fig. 51).

Since foreign immigration has practically ceased and the farm population is declining in proportion of the total, the decrease in the sex ratio will, no doubt, be even more noticeable in the future.
Fig. 48. A Tendency Toward an Equal Number of Males and Females in the Population of South Dakota, 1890-1930. South Dakota had 119 males for every 100 females in its population in 1890, but the trend has been definitely and consistently toward a balanced ratio of the two sexes since that time. In 1930 the ratio was 110 males for each 100 females. As the state passed out of the pioneer stage of settlement, it became more urbanized, and its immigration has recently fallen off.

Fig. 49. Comparative Sex Ratios for South Dakota and the United States, 1890-1930. Throughout the state's history South Dakota has had a higher ratio of males to females than has the nation. At the present time, although still high, South Dakota's ratio is beginning to approach that of the United States as a whole.
Fig. 50. Variations in the Sex Ratios Among Race and Nativity Groups in South Dakota, 1890-1930. The foreign-born whites have the highest ratio of males to females due to an excess of males among immigrants to this country. The native whites have a slightly higher ratio than the colored races, but both are much lower than the foreign-born whites.

Fig. 51. Comparative Sex Ratios for the Various Residence Groups in South Dakota, 1910-1930. The farm population still shows the highest ratio of males to females. The cities logically have a larger number of females, since they offer more opportunity for women who are gainfully employed.
VIII. Births and Deaths

The crude birth rate and the crude death rate are the means of measuring the natural increase of population. The crude birth rate can be defined as the number of births per 1,000 population; the crude death rate is the number of deaths per 1,000 population; natural increase is the excess of births over deaths.

Although South Dakota has had since 1922 a rapidly declining birth rate, (Fig. 52), there were 22 states which had a lower crude birth rate in 1937. Our birth rate is rather low, however, in view of our large proportions of both rural and foreign population. A high percentage of old age tends to keep the rate lower.

On the other hand, South Dakota has a low crude death rate although it has been increasing slightly. (Fig. 53). Our large proportion of rural population and certain natural health advantages have helped to keep our death rate down. The slight increase is due largely to the rapidly increasing proportion of aged people in the population. As our death rate increases and our birth rate declines, there will be a gradual loss in the amount of natural increase. There is still a sufficiently large difference between the two, however, so that our population would probably have grown quite rapidly were it not for the migration out of the state during the last few years.

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Fig. 52. The Declining Crude Birth Rate in South Dakota, 1915-1935. The crude birth rate has been declining quite rapidly since about 1925. By 1937 our rate was twenty-third from the lowest in the Union due largely to a high ratio of males to females and an increasingly large proportion of older people.
Fig. 53. The Decrease and Increase in South Dakota’s Crude Death Rate, 1915-1935. Although in 1937 South Dakota’s crude death rate was still the third lowest in the United States, it has been slowly increasing since 1925. This low death rate is due to the relatively small proportion of aged persons in our population, our large proportion of rural population, the lack of over-crowding, and a predominance of white persons. In spite of these advantages, however, our crude death rate will, no doubt, go up to about 15 or 16 per 1,000 primarily because we are approaching maturity in our population.

IX. Foreign Immigration

Although South Dakota had a large foreign immigration in early years, it has declined very rapidly since about 1915, and since 1932 there has been a net loss. Figure 54 shows that the two peak years of immigrations after 1899 were 1903 and 1910. Although a large number of immigrants had come in before this period, the years from 1900 to 1910 saw a large increase. Figure 55 shows the net immigration from 1909 to 1935. During this period the peak was reached in 1910 and after that declined very abruptly. The bulk of the foreign immigrants really came here between 1870 and 1890, there being about 90,000 here when South Dakota became a state in 1889. While this was less than one-third of the total population (348,600), there has only been one census since when the total number of foreign born was larger, namely 1910.

The total number of foreign-born immigrants in the state for each census is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890-91,055</td>
<td>1920-82,534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-88,508</td>
<td>1930-66,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-100,790</td>
<td>1935-49,375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Foreign immigration has had a modifying effect upon our population composition. It brought in a disproportionately large number of males which made for an unbalanced sex ratio in the areas in which they settled. Age distribution was skewed because of the almost entire lack of children amongst the foreign born. As immigration decreases, there is an increasingly greater concentration in the older age groups which helps to account for our present large proportion of aged people.
Fig. 54. Gradual Decline in the Number of Immigrants Coming to South Dakota, 1899-1935.

Fig. 55. Decline in Net Immigration into South Dakota, 1909-1935. If present trends continue, the movement of foreign-born immigration into South Dakota seems to have about completed its course. Since 1932 there has actually been a net loss, that is, more are returning to their mother countries than are coming in. The first period of immigration was before 1900 during which period 62 percent of our immigrants came in. During the second period from 1901-1914 about 30 percent came in and only about eight percent of the total immigration has occurred since 1914 which may be considered as the third period.
X. Estimated Future Population Trends

No one knows, of course, what the exact amount and type of South Dakota's future population will be, but we do know that there are definite factors which will probably be the determinants of future population trends.

Estimates made by population experts take these various factors into consideration and indicate what may be expected to happen if the assumptions they make continue to hold true. If some unusual or unforeseen circumstances happen, these estimates as such will likely be appreciably modified.

The factors which in the future will continue to determine natural increase or decrease of population will be the differential between birth rate and death rate. Another important pair of factors will be the gains or losses between immigration and emigration which may either come from or go to foreign countries or other American states. Lying back of these factors in an agricultural state, such as we have, will be such items as adjusted land use, climate, available natural resources, the standard of living, together with the cultural and psychological level of the population and trends in the expectation of life.

The estimate of future population for South Dakota, as shown in Fig. 56, was drawn up by W. S. Thompson and P. K. Whelpton, two eminent American population experts, and published in 1935. They have charted the exact rate of growth from 1890-1930, and then projected by a statistical device known as extrapolation an estimate for each census period from 1940-1960. In making these estimates they assumed that the past tendency for birth and death rates of individual states to approach the national rate would continue in the future. It was further assumed that the differential between specific birth and death rates for certain ages for the United States and those for the urban, rural-nonfarm, and rural-farm populations of each state, will be reduced about one-third from 1930-1960. One estimate was made on the more probable assumption that migration in and out of the state will take place, and the other assumed no migration.

It appears that both of these estimates are too high at least for 1940, probably because they did not consider in detail the effects of the depression and drought and they did not know of our probable over-expansion as evidenced by bank failures, mortgage foreclosures, intensity of emergency relief and agricultural subsidies. Assuming that we continue to be an agricultural state and make a fair adjustment in the future to our natural resources, it may be that our peak population will not rise above the 1930 level at least for several decades to come.

Although it appears that Thompson and Whelpton's estimates of total population are too high, it would seem that their estimates of the trends in age distribution are the continuation of basic trends which cannot be ignored. According to their estimates (Fig. 57) the decrease in children will continue rapidly as will also the increase in aged persons.

These changes in age composition, if they materialize, will have rather far-reaching implications. For instance, a probable ultimate decline of from 12-15 percent in the school census population would necessitate considerable alteration of both our elementary and our high school districts, school property, and teaching personnel. It appears that our ele-
mentary school enrollment reached its peak several years ago, and it is possible that the high school enrollment reached its peak in 1937.

An increase of 6.6 percent by 1960 (Fig. 57) in the proportion of the old-age group would increase the present total number by 3,684. As the old age group increases, there will be an increasing burden of caring for old persons who cannot care for themselves. These changes in age composition will, no doubt, have the greatest effect upon the future numbers of population in the state.

Fig. 56. The Actual Population, 1890-1930, and the Estimated Future Population of South Dakota. Both estimates of population made here seem to be too high. Actually there has been a loss between 1930 and the present time. This appears now to have been somewhat checked, but it may be questioned as to whether the population will increase to as high a point as here estimated.
XI. Summary, Implications and Conclusions

Below are the more significant trends of population change. In each case the trend is followed by its respective social implications:

1. Birth Rate Falling Rapidly.
   a. This is not a new trend since the birth rate has been gradually falling for nearly a century. It has been overlooked until recent years because paralleled by a similarly falling death rate.
   b. Factors Leading to a Falling Birth Rate.
      (a) Birth control practices spreading among all classes.
      (b) Fertility rate lower among urbanites—more people are living in towns and cities.
      (c) An increasing proportion of young people are marrying later than formerly.
   (d) More people wish for smaller or no families.
   (e) Our rising standard of living competes with cost of rearing children.

c. If the birth rate continues to decline and the death rate to rise, natural increase will eventually cease and a stationary or declining population will result.

d. It is resulting in a smaller proportion of children in the total population and also in smaller-sized families.

e. There has already been a marked decline in elementary school enrollment and this will soon be noticeable in high
schools and later in higher institutions.
f. There will be a gradually slackening demand for children's goods, such as clothes, toys, and school supplies.
g. The birth rate on farms is falling at a faster rate than in the towns.
h. The time may come when special exemptions and encouragements will be offered by the state or government to stimulate the raising of larger families. This may eventually reverse the present trend, especially if the more well-to-do and privileged people can be encouraged to raise larger families.

2. Death Rate Slowly Rising.
a. The increase in proportion of aged in the total population will inevitably raise the death rate from now on.
b. The present trend is the reverse of what it has been. Because of the former large proportion of children and a falling infant mortality rate, the death rate has been on the decline until recently.
c. As South Dakota's population approaches the stationary stage, the death rate will probably rise to 13 or 14 per 1000 population. This will be especially true when the average life expectancy reaches 65 or 70 years. It is now slightly over 60.
d. Natural increase is now declining at both ends. The combined falling birth rate and the rising death rate has produced a double effect.
e. This will tend to equalize the sex ratio as the length of the expectation of life is greater among women.

3. Foreign Immigration Is In Reverse.
a. This has automatically increased the percentage of South Dakota born while the foreign-born are rapidly becoming a negligible part of South Dakota's population.
b. It has slowed down the growth of population since there is a net loss through more foreign peoples returning than are coming in.
c. Because very few foreign-born persons came in after 1910, there is a disproportionately large percentage of aged among this group.
d. This will facilitate greater interest in the union of church denominations as connection with foreign origins becomes less.
e. This will be conducive to a more integrated population since there will be fewer groups clinging to the differing customs of various parts of Europe.

4. Interstate Migration Decreasing.
a. The present trend of a net loss between people moving in from and out to other states is greatly accelerating the "leveling off" process.
b. This movement is probably the most responsive factor in adjusting our loss to resources. When South Dakota families feel that they can do better elsewhere, the probability is that they will migrate.
c. Barring the discovery of some new resources, it is likely that interstate migration will continue at a considerably lesser rate in the next few years than it has during the past 50 years of settlement. Thus growth will
be determined by natural increase, that is, the difference between the birth rate and the death rate.

5. Proportion of South Dakota Born Whites Increasing Rapidly.
   a. Many factors have conduced to this end, such as the consistent decline of the foreign born, the decrease in interstate migration and the relatively low rate of increase of the colored races in the state.
   b. The effect of more South Dakota born will probably produce more like-mindedness and reduce some of the obstacles to cooperation and unity.
   c. May “speed up” a better adjustment to South Dakota conditions.
   d. May eventually lead to more conservatism in thought in spite of modern agencies of transportation and communication.

   a. Will result in smaller sized families.
   b. A smaller proportion of the typical family budget will go for food and nurture of children.
   c. While there will be fewer children to educate, the quality of education will rise.
   d. The elementary school enrollment is already pitching downward in both town and country, but the decline has just begun in high school and in a few years will probably affect our higher institutions.
   e. A complete recasting of our South Dakota rural school districts is inevitable since about one-quarter of our rural schools already have an enrollment too small to be really efficient. Only in rapidly growing towns will school systems continue to expand.
   f. The compulsory school age will probably be raised with greater emphasis given to vocational training and training for citizenship.
   g. If youngsters become fewer, better health care will be given, resulting in still greater improvement in infant mortality.
   h. The greater saving of babies past the stage of youth will lengthen the average expectation of life.
   i. Fewer children will help relieve unemployment as there will be fewer recruits to enter the labor ranks each year. This will be true, however, only if a demand for replacement of goods can be established so that there will be a market for the goods produced by this smaller number of working people.
   j. If there are fewer children there will be a greater social emphasis on assistance to dependent and underprivileged children.

   a. Many demands for modification of old age pension schemes.
   b. Shifts in producing more goods for elderly people.
   c. Shifts in building demands for more, smaller, and cheaper apartments to accommodate old people.
   d. More attention given to diseases of the aged.
   e. More leisure time activities for old people, such as books, games, parks, etc.
   f. More attention to either public health facilities or cooperative health insurance.
   g. Political opinion will become more conservative and more
political attention will be shifted from youth to the aged.

h. As the productive years of labor are shortened excluding both youth and old age, there will probably be less mobility of population.

i. Both the number and percentage of church membership will undoubtedly increase.

j. As the expectation of life lengthens, a larger proportion of the population will reach the ages of 65 and over.

k. As the proportion of the aged increases, the demand for real estate may slacken somewhat. The aged are not in the productive group nor are they looking for investments.


a. This trend under South Dakota conditions is a fair indication that:
   (a) Pioneering is drawing to a close;
   (b) That industrialization is modifying a predominantly rural state;
   (c) That population is maturing in composition;
   (d) That foreign immigration is becoming a negligible factor.

b. Will help reduce unemployment, especially if the number of gainfully employed women and children are not increased.

c. Will increase consumer market demands.

d. Will introduce more refinements into our civilization.

e. Will increase the number of “normal” families.

f. Will make for a more normal social life by stabilizing the population, increasing the growth of homes and slowing down excessive mobility.


a. As farms must inevitably increase in size to make possible a type of agriculture adapted to the Great Plains environment, the number of farm families will decrease in proportion to the total.

b. The size of farm families is changing more rapidly than the size of town or city families.

c. As industrialization of the state advances, the proportion of the total population living in villages, towns, and cities is increasing. South Dakota may have less than 50 percent of its people living on farms in 1940.

d. As more population is concentrated in towns and urban centers, more of the social and economic institutional life will center there and they will serve more of the surrounding trade territory.

e. Closer town-country relationships will “speed up” the process of socialization more than in the past.

f. The next 30 years will see a veritable epidemic of consolidations or unionizing of school systems, church denominations, units of local government and health facilities. This will make larger and more efficient units possible.
Conclusions

1. It is entirely possible that the peak total in South Dakota's population, for several decades to come, may have been reached in 1930 at the top figure of 692,849. During the five years from 1930 to 1935 the state had a population loss of 17,767 people. Two sample studies made since 1935, indicate that the trend is still downward, although it seems to be slowing up somewhat.

   The reasons for this unusual turn of affairs lie in the recent reversed trends of the four most fundamental factors of population growth; namely, the number of persons who are born, the number of persons who die, the number of persons who move into a state, and the number of people who move out. Stating it another way, the birth rate in 1922 received a new impetus downward; the death rate since 1932 is slowly rising; foreign immigration in 1932 started to show a net loss; while the people moving out of the state since 1930 has exceeded those moving in. These reverse trends may continue in the direction they are now going until an equilibrium is reached.

2. The population is showing unmistakable signs of maturing in composition. The trends indicating this are:
   
   (a) The lessening proportion of children.
   (b) The expanding proportion of old folks.
   (c) An increase in the proportion of population which is South Dakota born.
   (d) The sex ratio approaching equality.
   (e) The declining proportion of farm population.
   (f) The increasing proportion of non-farm population.

   By population "maturing" is meant, taking on the "earmarks," of a typical, older state.

3. South Dakotans can definitely expect that an approaching stationary population will have very definite effects on our social and economic life. It will affect every group of people in the state whether farm or non-farm, all age groups, and both sexes. To cope with the situation these facts should be faced frankly and considerable attention given to planning so as to make the transition as easy as possible.

4. We should not conclude that a declining population necessarily means a decadent future. Careful reflection will reveal that at present the number of children born per family is only about one-fourth of human capacity to reproduce itself. When the time comes that people want an increase in the number of children more than they want higher standards of living, they can and will, have more children.
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Fig. 53. The Decrease and Increase in South Dakota's Crude Death Rate, 1915-1935

Fig. 54. Gradual Decline in the Number of Immigrants Coming to South Dakota, 1899-1935

Fig. 55. Decline in Net Immigration into South Dakota, 1909-1935

Fig. 56. The Actual Population 1890-1930 and the Estimated Future Population of South Dakota

Fig. 57. Age Distribution of the Actual Population, 1890-1930, and of the Estimated Future Population
How South Dakota Ranks Among the States in Population Characteristics

1. General Population Features

36th in total population
42nd in population per square mile (density)
46th in percent urban population
3rd in percent rural population
4th in percent rural-farm population
19th in percent rural-nonfarm population

2. Racial Characteristics

4th in number of Indians
46th in number of Negroes
27th in number of Mexicans
16th in number of whites

3. Nativity

21st in percentage of foreign-born whites in the population
13th in percentage of native white
36th in percentage of population born in state of residence
31st in percentage of native whites of native parentage
9th in percentage of native whites of foreign or mixed parentage

4. Age Composition

19th in percent of persons under five years of age
24th in percent of persons 65 years of age and over
35th in percent of persons in productive age groups (20-39, inclusive)

5. Sex Composition

8th in number of males per 100 females
11th in number of males per 100 females in rural areas
24th in number of males per 100 females in urban areas

6. Deaths

3rd in crude death rate, 1937*
23rd in infant mortality, 1937*

7. Births

23rd in crude birth rate, 1937

* These are ranked from the lowest rate.