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THE DECLINE OF THE COUNTRY TOWN.

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This paper does not pretend to be anything more than a statistical pursuit of certain queries suggested by Table B in the Preliminary Report of the Census of 1926.

TABLE A.

TYPE OF DISTRICT (1)	POPULATION IN		POPULATION IN		POPULATION IN	
	1841 (2)	1861 (3)	1861 (4)	1926 (5)	1841 (6)	1926 (7)
1. Dublin and 4 adjoining Urban Districts	100.0	116.1	100.0	126.6	100.0	147.0
2. Other towns (10) with over 10,000 population	100.0	94.9	100.0	91.8	100.0	87.0
3. 14 towns with 5,000 to 10,000 population	100.0	90.1	100.0	83.3	100.0	75.0
4. 53 towns with 2,000 to 5,000 population	100.0	82.8	100.0	80.5	100.0	66.7
5. 134 towns with 500 to 2,000 population	100.0	81.8	100.0	69.7	100.0	57.0
6. 202 towns with 200 to 500 population ..	100.0	80.1	100.0	63.5	100.0	50.9
7. "Country Districts"	100.0	61.0	100.0	58.2	100.0	35.6

"It is of special interest to note from the above table the regularity of the sequences in columns (3), (5), and (7), read vertically. The smaller the town the worse it fared, the 'country districts' faring worst of all."

Some work in another connection had already suggested to me the possibility that this regular gradation no longer held universally, and that in some regions, at least, certain types of town are losing population more rapidly even than the country districts. It also occurred to me that the regularity might be due in part to the

arbitrary selection of dates and categories. If the Table be extended to include not only the years 1841, 1861, and 1926, but every census year since 1841, numerous anomalies appear, and indeed the intercensal period 1871-81 is the only one which exhibits a regular gradation. But some of the irregularities merely correct each other and would be cancelled out by aggregating several censuses. Thus, a flow into the larger towns as one of the immediate results of the Famine is represented by ratios for these towns in 1851 higher than would otherwise be expected, and it is drained away in the following decennium, the result being represented by extraordinarily low ratios for these towns in 1861. The amalgamation produces the regularity noted in Table A. But there is no reason why 1861 should be taken as the dividing line: it is in no sense a critical year. If the population figures at each census since 1841 be plotted on a chart, three cycles immediately become evident; each commencing with a high rate of depopulation which regularly diminishes to the end of the cycle, when a new impulse is received which similarly dies away. The first cycle lasted from 1841 to 1881; the second from 1881 to 1911; the third commenced in 1911, and it is as yet impossible to say what its ultimate movement will be. In each succeeding cycle the initial rate of depopulation has been less. The critical years are thus 1881, 1911, and 1926. In order to render the changes in the three periods directly comparable, they have all been reduced to average annual rates of change (per cent.).

TABLE B.

TYPE OF DISTRICT	1841—81	1881—1911	1911—26
1	+0.47	+0.49	+0.35
2	-0.30	-0.13	+0.14
3	-0.47	-0.21	-0.23
4	-0.72	-0.28	-0.21
5	-0.78	-0.60	-0.45
6	-0.85	-0.77	-0.68
7	-1.61	-0.99	-0.57

For the completed cycles the progression is regular, as in Table A, but the relatively rapid recovery of types (3), (4), and (7), and the relative loss of ground by type (6) already threaten to destroy the symmetry. In the third period the relative recovery of type (7) and decline of type (6) continue; (4)'s recovery is sharply decelerated and (3)'s turned into an absolute decline, while their place is taken by type (2). The result is that the symmetry of the 1911-26 figures is broken by the abnormal rates of loss shown by types (3) and (6). The question arises whether this is a temporary deviation, similar to those of 1841-51 and 1851-61, to be levelled out in subsequent censuses, or a permanent tendency for certain types of towns to disappear. It is, of course, impossible to say at present, but the view that it is not simply a temporary accident is supported by the fact that it is in large part the result of processes of long standing. What follows is an attempt to find what more exact information on this question can be furnished by the last census with a more detailed analysis of the towns by reference to size, function and locality.

The basis of classification in the Tables already dealt with is open to criticism on a number of points. They take account only of the population inside the legal boundaries of towns which have such, but from the social and economic point of view the centre of interest is the whole "urban agglomeration," irrespective of its accidental legal boundaries. Some approach to this idea is made by the amalgamation with Dublin of the four adjacent urban districts, but it requires wider application. The following "agglomerations" are intended to include in one unit the whole population directly subject to approximately the same complex of social and economic conditions, the whole group immediately dependent on the urban centre, by the inclusion of all suburbs—whether residential, industrial, or marine—and semi-suburban residential and agricultural districts. It is not pretended that the division into population primarily urban and associated with the town or city and population primarily rural is wholly exact or satisfactory, since it is based in the first instance on density and general knowledge, not on local investigation. Neither is there any suggestion that the units thus defined are suitable units for municipal government.

TABLE C.

1. "Dublin" includes D.E.D. Nos. 1-34, 45, 47, 50, 53, 58-60, 62-67, 69, 71, 72, 74-76, and the boundary-towns of Finglas, Finglas Bridge, Tallaght and Templeogue in Co. Dublin, and D.E.D. Nos. 3-5 (i.e. Bray) in Co. Wicklow; that is, a tract extending from Malahide Inlet to Bray Head and inland as far as the foothills of the Dublin Mountains and Lucan. The density of the rural D.E.D. included ranges from 335 persons per 100 acres (No. 74, Milltown) to 42 (No. 53, Lucan), while Nos. 71 and 45 (Ballybrack and Kinsaley), with densities of 37 and 22 respectively, are included for the sake of territorial continuity. The density of population in the rest of the county is 17 persons per 100 acres.
2. "Cork" includes D.E.D. Nos. 1-7, 9, 16, 88, 94, 95, 107 and 111 in Co. Cork: the density of the rural ones ranges from 349 (No. 88, Blackrock) to 26 (No. 107, Monkstown), the average for the rest of the county being 15.
3. "Limerick" includes D.E.D. Nos. 1-8, 73, 74 and the port of Foynes. Nos. 73 and 74 (rural) have densities of 62 and 87 respectively.
4. "Waterford" includes Tramore.
5. "Dundalk" includes Dundalk Rural D.E.D. (density 43) and Greenore.
6. "Wexford" includes the port of Rosslare.
7. "Tralee" includes the port of Feint.
8. "Mullingar" includes Mullingar Rural D.E.D. (density 43).
9. "Ballina" includes Killala.
10. Stranorlar and Ballybofey are considered as one town.

In Tables A and B the towns have been classified by reference to their population in 1926, i.e., the terminus *ad quem*. This is misleading, for if there is any correlation between the sizes of towns and the rate of depopulation, it is plainly the size of the town at the commencement of the period which is relevant, and not that which results from the process. Classification by reference to the result

will particularly distort the relation in cases where a town has moved from one class to another within the period, for all the increases will be attributed to the larger class and the decreases to the smaller. Thus, in a group of 11 towns (Arklow, Bundoran, Carrickmacross, Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Dingle, Donegal, Dungarvan, Fermoy, Portarlinton, and Templemore) which moved from one class to another between 1911 and 1926, the following rates of change (per cent.) of the population in each class or type would be given by the two methods:

TABLE D.

TYPE OF DISTRICT	Towns classified according to Population in 1926	Towns classified according to Population in 1911
3	-6.1	-21.1
4	-12.3	-6.7
5	-13.4	+23.9

With a large number of towns, of which only a small proportion moved from one category to another, this effect would be diminished, but the classification by reference to the final population distinctly loads the dice against the smaller towns.

To apply these two corrections to the whole series of census figures since 1841 would involve certain difficulties of definition and comparison which need not detain us here, since they can be applied to the years 1911 and 1926 quite easily, and give a result noticeably different from that of the uncorrected table.

TABLE E.—AVERAGE ANNUAL RATES OF CHANGE, 1911-26.

TYPE OF DISTRICT	Uncorrected figures of Table B.	Corrected figures
1	+0.35	+0.40
2	+0.14	+0.08
3	-0.23	-0.45
4	-0.21	-0.26
5	-0.45	-0.70
6	-0.68	-0.89
7	-0.57	-0.58

The reconstruction of the table accentuates the anomalous record of the 3rd and 6th types, and shows that the 5th also is decreasing more rapidly than the country districts.

Further, the categories employed in these tables are artificial; they do not correspond to any natural grouping of the towns, nor do they exhibit the chief merit of an arbitrary classification: the arithmetical

or geometrical equality of the class-intervals. If the towns be arranged in descending order of magnitude according to their population in 1911, certain regions of the scale become obvious where the towns are apt to cluster and others where there are either no or very few examples—e.g., the space between Waterford (29,108) and Dundalk (15,745); the cluster of 8 towns between and including Dundalk and Clonmel (10,209); the space between Clonmel and Athlone (7,472). Classification by this natural grouping produces the following results:

TABLE F.

Type of District	No.	Population 1911 Persons	Population 1926		
			Persons	% of 1911	
1. 29,108 or more ..	4	643,183	672,865	104.6	4.3
2. 15,745 to 10,209 ..	8	95,218	97,052	101.9	5.9
3. 7,472 ,, 4,272 ..	20	111,538	107,371	96.3	9.8
4. 4,047 ,, 2,585 ..	25	83,425	76,741	92.0	11.3
5. 2,401 ,, 1,473 ..	40	76,767	73,167	95.3	13.8
6. 1,371 ,, 705 ..	61	59,421	54,003	90.9	14.8
7. 681 ,, 401 ..	94	49,795	44,246	88.9	14.7
8. 395 ,, 201 ..	158	45,008	39,931	88.9	15.9
9. 199 or less ..	275	35,756	32,835	91.8	22.4
TOTAL ..	685	1,200,111	1,198,211	99.9	—
10. Country Districts ..	—	1,939,577	1,773,781	91.5	—

This table emphasises again the failure of types (4), (6), (7) and (8) to fit into the symmetrical scheme; it shows also the marked tendency for three distinct groups to single themselves out, the first consisting of types (1) and (2) (all of which are seaports except Kilkenny and Clonmel), the second of types (3) and (5), and the third of the remainder of the population. But more important is the lack of homogeneity in each group indicated by the size of the standard deviation of the percentage changes shown in the last column: in every case except the first it is a multiple of the average change shown by the group. The next problem is to explore the diversities in each group.

In the first place, it becomes evident that a number of towns which were formerly largely dependent upon British military stations have suffered with exceptional severity. Many cities and towns, such as Dublin and Limerick, possessed military barracks whose occupants were not as numerous in 1926 as in 1911, but their relations with the military were only a small part of the economic life of such places, and it is impossible to separate the loss of population due to the departure of the military from the movements due to other and more influential conditions. This list is intended to include only those towns whose military establishment was so large relatively to the town that its removal or diminution has been an important factor in the town's history. Queenstown should be included in this list if it were not already absorbed in the "urban agglomeration" of Cork.

TABLE G.—MILITARY TOWNS.

Type of Town	Towns	No.	Population 1911	Population 1926		Other Towns % of 1911
			Persons	Persons	% of 1911	
3	Fermoy, Tipperary ..	2	13,508	10,065	74.6	99.3
4	Kildare, Naas, New- bridge ..	3	10,977	8,897	81.1	93.6
5	Bundoran, Caher ..	2	4,046	3,048	75.3	96.5
6	Castletown Bearhaven ..	1	986	721	73.1	91.2
8	Kilworth	1	401	305	76.1	88.9
9	Rerrin	1	152	336	221.1	91.3
	TOTAL	10	30,070	23,372	77.7	—
	Other Towns of the same types	569	381,845	360,678	—	94.4
	All other Towns ..	675	1,170,041	1,174,839	—	100.4
	Country Districts ..	—	1,939,577	1,773,781	91.5	—

[Bundoran is a peculiar case included here with some hesitation: it is not only adjacent to Finner Camp, but is also a holiday resort, and there is some doubt about the reliability of its figure for 1911.]

The anomalous position of the 4th, 6th, 7th and 8th types, and the tendency of the last three to be depopulated even more rapidly than the open country, is left unaffected by the exclusion of the towns largely dependent upon the military.

Secondly, a coastal situation might be expected to affect the fortunes of a town. It provides opportunities for the town to function as a seaport, a fishing centre, or a holiday resort. In the aggregate, the 99 towns of all types having a maritime situation held their own better than the inland towns, increasing their population by 3.5% between 1911 and 1926, while the remaining 576 towns decreased by 6.3%. For the first of the functions mentioned above, railway connection was in 1926 indispensable (the great development of road motor transport not yet having occurred); for the second also it was practically necessary in the conditions of the Irish fishing industry, but a favourite holiday resort could flourish without it. Of the 99 coastal towns, only 43 had rail connections of any sort, and 16 others were more or less popular seaside resorts. These 59 increased by 3.9%, while the remaining 40 lost 18.0% of their population: to them their situation on the coast was a positive disadvantage.

But the advantage to the aggregate of 59 towns is unevenly distributed between the several types. For many of these their coastal situation is really irrelevant, except that it diminishes the area within a given radius of the urban centre, generally entails a sparser and poorer population in the surrounding territory, and offers the possibility of fishing as a compensation for these deficiencies. In general, therefore, coastal towns might be expected to show a lower "viability" than corresponding inland towns, unless by functioning as seaports, fishery centres, or holiday resorts they extend their economic activities to tap areas beyond their

immediate neighbourhood. This suggestion is already partly confirmed by the excessive rate of depopulation of the 40 towns just mentioned. In view of the present development of the fishing industry in Ireland, the second of these three functions can be neglected. For its function as a seaport to have any significant effect upon a town's fortunes, it required in 1926 to have railway connection with a district more extensive than that usually dependent upon an inland market town of the same type. Only the following 14 towns satisfied this condition:

TABLE H.—SEAPORTS.

Type of District	Names	No.	Population 1911		Population 1926		% of 1911	
			Persons	Persons	% of 1911	Other Coastal Towns	Towns Other	
1	Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Waterford	4	643,183	672,865	104.6	—	—	
2	Drogheda, Dundalk, Galway, Sligo, Tralee, Wexford	6	74,495	77,950	104.6	—	92.3	
3	Ballina, Dungarvan	2	10,142	10,552	104.6	92.4	99.6	
4	Westport	1	3,674	3,488	94.9	85.7	96.3	
6	Donegal	1	1,104	1,272	115.6	107.2	89.2	
	Total	14	732,588	766,127	104.6	—	—	
	Other Coastal Towns	85	66,808	61,823	—	92.5	—	
	Other Towns	576	370,645	346,889	—	—	93.7	
	Country Districts ..	—	1,939,577	1,773,781	91.5	—	—	

It is noticeable that the coastal towns of the 3rd and 4th types, which are not major ports, suffer more heavily than their inland fellows.

TABLE I.—HOLIDAY RESORTS.

Type of District	No.	Population 1911		Population 1926		Other Coastal Towns, % of 1911
		Persons	Persons	Persons	% of 1911	
5.	3	5,498	5,964	108.4	95.4	
6.	1	1,226	1,594	129.9	99.3	
7.	4	1,898	2,213	116.5	80.5	
8.	7	1,967	1,971	100.2	88.8	
9.	8	1,104	1,261	114.6	82.6	
Total	23	11,693	13,003	111.2	—	
Other Coastal ..	62	55,115	48,820	—	88.6	

These remaining 62 coastal towns have been subject to influences not essentially different from those affecting the ordinary inland towns, and may be grouped along with them according to size. Their greater loss is due to the more rapid rural depopulation in many

districts adjacent to the coast. The original Table F may now be reconstructed by the segregation of these three special types:

TABLE J.

TYPE OF DISTRICT	No.	Population 1911 Persons	Population 1926	
			Persons	% of 1911
Holiday Resorts	23	11,693	13,003	111.2
Major Seaports	14	732,588	766,127	104.6
10,514 to 10,209	2	20,723	19,102	92.3
7,472 to 4,272	16	87,888	86,754	98.7
4,047 to 2,585	21	68,774	64,356	93.5
2,401 to 1,473	35	67,223	64,155	95.5
1,371 to 705	58	56,105	50,416	89.8
681 to 401	90	47,897	42,033	87.8
395 to 201	150	42,640	37,655	88.3
199 or less	266	34,500	31,238	90.5
Military Towns	10	30,070	23,372	77.7
Total	685	1,200,111	1,198,211	99.9
Country Districts	—	1,939,577	1,773,781	91.5

The irregularities previously noticed remain. The table indicates a tendency for a larger and a smaller (averaging, respectively, 5,400 and 1,800 inhabitants) type of inland country town to persist, while the intervening types disappear, and for the types with less than 1,400 inhabitants to conform roughly to the movement of rural population, but generally losing ground slightly more rapidly. Much the same phenomenon appears in each of the five principal regions into which the Irish Free State can be divided with reference to its country towns, although the particular resistant types vary. The regions are described in the following five tables:

TABLE K.—NORTH-WEST COAST.

Type of District	No.	Population 1911 Persons	Population 1926		Rest of Country	
			Persons	% of 1911	No.	% of 1911
4.	2	6,678	7,559	113.2	19	91.5
5.	2	3,779	3,645	95.5	33	95.4
6.	6	5,591	5,629	100.7	52	88.7
7.	12	6,553	6,344	96.8	78	86.4
8.	18	5,380	5,048	93.8	132	87.4
9.	27	3,591	3,444	95.9	239	89.9
Total	67	31,572	31,767	100.6	571	90.4
All Towns	73	55,032	55,874	101.6	612	99.7
Country Districts	—	354,808	317,936	89.3	—	91.8
Proportion of Urban	—	13.4%	14.9%	—	—	41.9%

This region is characterised by a rapid depopulation of the open country, a low urban proportion, and an absence of the larger types of country town: in it all types of town are relatively more successful than in the rest of the Free State, the 4th and 6th types

being particularly strong, and gaining at the expense of the other types (Table Q). The sharpest contrast between this region and the rest of the country is also afforded by these two types.

TABLE L.—NORTH CENTRAL.

Type of District	No.	Population 1911 Persons	Population 1926		Rest of Country	
			Persons	% of 1911	No.	% of 1911
3.	3	16,913	17,421	103.1	15	96.4
4.	4	13,459	12,470	92.6	17	93.8
5.	8	15,654	15,458	98.7	27	94.4
6.	20	20,416	18,829	92.3	38	88.5
7.	15	8,603	7,627	88.7	75	87.5
8.	35	9,668	8,423	87.1	115	88.6
9.	41	5,204	4,501	86.6	225	91.3
Total	126	89,913	84,729	94.2	512	92.6
All towns	128	93,133	87,340	93.8	557	100.3
Country Districts	—	508,026	453,192	89.2	—	92.2
Urban proportion	—	15.5%	16.2%	—	—	43.6%

This region also is characterised by a rapidly diminishing rural population and a low urban proportion, in which towns of type 3 are relatively less numerous and of type 6 more numerous than elsewhere. The towns as a whole are holding their own better than the rest of the country, except for the distinct failure of the two smallest types. The 3rd and 5th types are gaining ground at the expense of the others, corresponding to the 4th and 6th in the first region.

TABLE M.—SOUTH WEST.

Type of District	No.	Population 1911 Persons	Population 1926		Rest of Country	
			Persons	% of 1911	No.	% of 1911
2.	1	10,209	9,056	88.7	1	95.5
3.	4	21,131	19,886	94.2	12	100.5
4.	10	30,989	27,471	88.6	11	97.6
5.	11	19,840	17,223	86.8	24	99.0
6.	18	16,975	15,077	88.7	40	90.3
7.	27	13,380	11,087	82.9	63	89.6
8.	45	12,901	11,302	87.6	105	88.6
9.	99	12,788	11,544	90.3	167	90.7
Total	215	138,233	122,646	88.7	423	95.0
All towns	232	314,224	296,908	94.6	453	101.7
Country Districts	—	482,120	444,774	92.3	—	91.2
Urban Proportion	—	39.5%	40.0%	—	—	37.8%

This region is characterised by its large number of towns and its high urban proportion. Among them the 4th type is relatively predominant. Their heavy losses of population, both absolutely and relatively to the rest of the country and to their own regional country population, are remarkable. Every type lost more heavily than the average, and all except the 3rd more heavily than the rural

population. This region is an effective contrast to the first. The 3rd and 9th types are the only ones relatively holding their own: the great number of this last type may be noted.

TABLE N.—SOUTH MIDLAND.

Type of District	No.	Population 1911 Persons	Population 1926		Rest of Country	
			Persons	% of 1911	No.	% of 1911
2.	1	10,514	10,046	95.5	1	88.7
3.	7	37,384	37,504	100.3	9	96.1
4.	2	6,936	6,719	96.9	19	93.2
5.	8	16,142	16,462	102.0	27	93.4
6.	9	8,984	8,318	92.6	49	89.1
7.	17	9,502	8,381	88.2	73	87.7
8.	29	8,145	7,235	88.8	121	88.2
9.	56	7,132	6,505	91.2	210	90.4
Total	129	104,739	101,170	96.6	509	91.8
All Towns	136	175,398	173,598	99.0	549	100.0
Country Districts	—	334,495	308,775	92.3	—	91.3
Urban Proportion	—	34.4%	36.0%	—	—	39.0%

The chief feature of this region is the predominance of towns of types 3 and 5, and their considerable advance at the expense of the other types; the rarity of the 4th is also noteworthy. All types of towns hold their own somewhat better than the average, and so does the rural population.

TABLE O.—EAST MIDLAND.

Type of District	No.	Population 1911 Persons	Population 1926		Rest of Country	
			Persons	% of 1911	No.	% of 1911
3.	2	12,460	11,943	95.9	16	97.7
4.	3	10,712	10,137	94.6	18	93.4
5.	6	11,810	11,367	96.3	29	95.3
6.	5	4,143	3,563	86.0	53	90.2
7.	17	9,461	8,291	87.6	73	87.8
8.	25	7,226	6,379	88.3	125	88.3
9.	43	5,806	5,234	90.1	223	90.6
Total	101	61,618	56,914	92.4	537	93.0
All Towns	112	562,360	585,670	104.1	573	96.0
Country Districts	—	221,486	208,469	94.1	—	90.1
Urban Proportion	—	71.7%	73.8%	—	—	27.1%

This region is largely dominated by Dublin. Apart from it, the urban ratio is low and decreasing, for the rural population is holding its own better than the small towns. Every type except the 4th and 5th is suffering, at least, the average depopulation of the type, and these two escape by only very narrow margins. But the division into two classes is very plain: the first three types are all increasing their proportion of the total country town population. Types 5 and

7 are relatively numerous in this region, but the 7th tends to lose its importance.

The next table summarises, in percentages, the relationship of the 1926 population of each type of district in each region to the 1911 population.

TABLE P.—SUMMARY.

Type of District	N. W. Coast	North Central	South West	South Midland	East Midland	I. F. S.
2.	—	—	88.7	95.5	—	92.3
3.	—	103.1	94.2	100.3	95.9	98.7
4.	113.2	92.6	88.6	96.9	94.6	93.5
5.	96.5	98.7	86.8	102.0	96.3	95.5
6.	100.7	92.3	88.7	92.6	86.0	89.8
7.	96.8	88.7	82.9	88.2	87.6	87.8
8.	93.8	87.1	87.6	88.8	88.3	88.3
9.	95.9	86.6	90.3	91.2	90.1	90.5
Total	100.6	94.2	88.7	96.6	92.4	92.9
Country Districts	89.3	89.2	92.3	92.3	94.1	91.5

The following points deserve notice :

1. That in the S.W. and E. Midland regions the purely rural population is holding its own better than the aggregate of the country town population and better than most of the individual types, and that the smaller types of town tend to be assimilated to it, the resemblance becoming successively more remote as we mount to the larger types.

2. That in each case two distinctly resistant types of town appear, separated by a considerable interval of size. This phenomenon is simplest and clearest in the N.W. and N. Central regions; in the S. Midland and E. Midland regions the depression of the intervening decaying type is less marked, but (in the case of the S. Midland region) the importance of this type is insignificant; in the S.W. region one must descend to the 9th type to find the second focus of resistance, and even it is losing ground compared with the rural population. In all regions except the N.W. coast the 3rd type is one focus of resistance, and the 5th is the other, except in the S.W.; in the N.W. the two foci are the 4th and 6th types.

3. The general expansion of the country-town in the N.W. and its decay in the S.W. This can be associated with their comparative rarity in the former and plentifulness in the latter, and has been intensified by the loss of local industries, shipping, and fishing by many of the small towns in the S.W., as well as by the disturbances of 1919-23.

4. The rule "the smaller the town the worse it fared" is by no means applicable to the several regions, any more than to the aggregate of all country towns in the I.F.S.: the nearest approach to it occurs in the N. Central region. Elsewhere the loss falls most severely on the 6th and 7th types, i.e., large villages having from 1,400 to 400 inhabitants

The next table summarises the changes in the importance of the several types that took place between 1911 and 1926.

TABLE Q.—PROPORTION OF ORDINARY URBAN POPULATION
RESIDENT IN EACH TYPE OF TOWN IN EACH ZONE IN 1911
AND 1926 (PER CENT.)

Type of Town	N. W. Coast		N. Central		S. W. Zone		S. Midland		E. Midland	
	1911	1926	1911	1926	1911	1926	1911	1926	1911	1926
3.	—	—	18.8	20.6	22.7	23.6	45.7	47.0	20.2	21.0
4.	21.1	23.8	15.0	14.7	22.4	22.4	6.6	6.6	17.4	17.8
5.	12.0	11.4	17.4	18.3	14.4	14.0	15.4	16.3	19.2	20.0
6.	17.7	17.7	22.5	22.2	12.3	12.3	8.6	8.2	6.7	6.3
7.	20.7	19.9	9.6	9.0	9.7	9.0	9.1	8.3	15.4	14.6
8.	17.0	15.9	10.8	9.9	9.3	9.2	7.8	7.1	11.7	11.2
9.	11.4	10.8	5.8	5.3	9.2	9.4	6.8	6.4	9.4	9.2

(Type 3 here includes the two survivors of type 2).

The conclusions of this paper, then, are: That, under the conditions existing from 1911-26, the population of the Irish Free State showed a tendency to concentrate on four types of habitation and to abandon the others slowly but progressively, these four being

1. Seaports, whose size is determined partly by their area of direct supply, partly by industries located there, and partly by the necessities of the transit trade, particularly in passengers and livestock.

2. Country towns of a population between 7,500 and 4,250, and averaging about 5,400. These are in the aggregate diminishing slightly and display great diversity of movement; in each respect they are dissimilar to the first group. They are market towns and centres of local industries and the professions.

3. Country towns having from 2,500 to 1,400 inhabitants, averaging about 1,800. They display the same diversity as the second type, and are losing population somewhat faster.

4. The open country has been losing population more seriously than the last group, but yet at a slightly less rapid rate than the aggregate of other country towns (8.5% instead of 9.5%).

A final table will make plain the relationship between these several changes.

TABLE R.—CHANGES IN THE PROPORTION OF SEVERAL CLASSES OF THE
POPULATION RESIDENT IN SEVERAL TYPES OF DISTRICT, BETWEEN 1911
AND 1926, THE 1926 PROPORTION BEING EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF
THE 1911 ONE.

Type of District	Proportion resident in each of		
	Total Population	Urban Population	Country Town Population
Seaports and Resorts	110.5	104.8	—
Country Towns of the two Resistant Types	100.0	95.3	106.1
All Other Country Towns	95.8	90.4	97.4
Country Districts	96.6	—	—

The meaning to be read into this table can best be illustrated by an example. In 1911 23.7% of the total population lived in the

towns classified as seaports and resorts in this paper; in 1926 26.2% lived there, and 26.2 divided by 23.7 gives the percentage 110.5 which appears in the first line and first column of the Table.

Finally, I would remind you that this is only an exploration of certain consequences of certain causes which were in operation between 1911 and 1926. Since then, at least three new major influences have come into play. These are:

1. The development of road transport, which has influenced the differential suitability of sites for market towns and small ports.

2. The depression since 1929, which has on the one hand choked down emigration and on the other fallen particularly heavily on primary producers, including agriculturists.

3. The increasing ease and freedom of foreign travel.

Consequently, the next Census can be looked forward to with great interest, in order to detect what influence these new factors have on the internal shifting of population in the Irish Free State. If the forces at work from 1911 to 1926 were to continue unobstructed until 1936, we might then expect to find about 28% of the total population resident in the seaports and resorts, about 5% in the country towns of the two resistant types, about 9% in the other country towns, and the remaining 58% in the open country. If there be any marked difference from these expected proportions, the reasons might plausibly be looked for among the new conditions mentioned above.
