

Section 4.—Government Annuities.

In the early years of the 20th century, there arose throughout the civilized world a distinct movement in favour of ameliorating the living conditions of the less well-off members of society. One form which this movement took in the United Kingdom was that of old age pensions, granted by the State as a gift to its poorer citizens, whose earnings were very generally insufficient to permit of a margin of saving. In Canada, where wages were higher and a margin of saving was possible, the movement at first took the form of providing, by establishing Government annuities, an absolutely safe investment for such savings, which had only too often been lost through the inexperience of their owners, leaving the latter a burden upon the charity of relatives or of the public.* The cost of administering these annuities is borne by the Dominion Government.

Under the Government Annuities Act (c. 7, R.S.C., 1927, amended by c. 33, R.S.C., 1931), His Majesty the King, represented by the Minister (at present the Minister of Labour), may sell to persons over the age of 5 years, domiciled or resident in Canada, immediate or deferred annuities of not less than \$10 nor more than \$1,200 (1) for the life of the annuitant, (2) for a term of years certain, not exceeding 20 years, or for the life of the annuitant, whichever period shall be the longer, or (3) to any two persons domiciled in Canada during their joint lives, and with or without continuation to the survivor. The property and interest of any annuitant in any contract for an annuity is neither transferable nor attachable. The purchaser may contract that, in the event of the death of the annuitant before the date fixed for the annuity to begin, all money paid shall be refunded to the purchaser or his legal representatives with interest at the rate of 4 p.c., compounded yearly.

From Sept. 1, 1908, the date of the inception of the Annuities Branch, up to and inclusive of Mar. 31, 1936, the total number of annuity contracts issued was 29,093. Of these contracts, 2,844 have been cancelled, leaving in force on Mar. 31, 1936, 26,249 contracts. The total amount of purchase money received during the same period was \$77,943,871. Table 22 gives the details of annuities contracted for and purchase money received from 1909 to 1936, by years.

* A Dominion-Provincial non-contributory scheme of old age pensions, providing for the payment, to persons 70 years or over, of pensions not exceeding \$20 per month, contributed by the Dominion and the provinces which become parties to the scheme, was enacted by Chapter 35 of the Dominion Statutes of 1927. For further particulars, see pp. 764-765.

22.—Government Annuities Contracted for, and Purchase Money Received, fiscal years ended Mar. 31, 1909-36.

Fiscal Year.	Contracts.	Purchase Money Received.	Fiscal Year.	Contracts.	Purchase Money Received.
	No.	\$		No.	\$
1909 ¹	66	50,391	1923.....	339	1,028,353
1910.....	566	434,491	1924.....	409	1,458,819
1911.....	1,069	393,441	1925.....	486	1,656,822
1912.....	1,032	441,601	1926.....	668	1,938,921
1913.....	373	417,136	1927.....	503	1,894,885
1914.....	318	390,887	1928.....	1,223	3,843,088
1915.....	264	314,765	1929.....	1,328	4,272,419
1916.....	325	441,696	1930.....	1,257	3,156,475
1917.....	285	432,272	1931.....	1,772	3,612,234
1918.....	187	332,792	1932.....	1,726	4,194,384
1919.....	147	322,154	1933.....	1,375	3,547,345
1920.....	204	498,719	1934.....	2,412	7,071,439
1921.....	195	531,800	1935.....	3,930	13,376,400
1922.....	277	748,160	1936.....	6,357	21,281,981
			Totals.....	29,093	77,943,871

¹ Seven months.