

CHAPTER XXVI.—PUBLIC HEALTH AND RELATED INSTITUTIONS.

The subject matter of this chapter is treated under the following sectional headings: Section 1.—Administration of Public Health Activities in Canada by the Dominion and Provincial Governments; Section 2.—Institutional Statistics of Public Health and Benevolence where, besides health and hospitalization records, social statistics also receive some attention—the latter are becoming more and more necessary to the proper drafting of social legislation and the study of social problems; Sections 3 and 4 review concisely the work of the Victorian Order of Nurses and the Canadian Red Cross Society, respectively.

The rapid increase in the numbers committed to various institutions, such as hospitals for the insane, feeble-minded and epileptic; the alleged increase in juvenile crime and the extension of social work in this field; the increasing number of institutions caring for the aged and incurable, as well as for dependent, neglected, and handicapped children, have been marked features of the first part of the twentieth century.

Section 1.—Administration.

In Canada public health is administered by the Dominion and Provincial Governments through their respective health departments.

The Dominion Government deals only with such public health matters as are exclusively national, or such interprovincial public health matters as cannot be controlled effectively by the provinces. In addition, the Dominion Government makes grants to voluntary organizations which are engaged in public health work, notably: Canadian Welfare Council; Canadian National Institute for the Blind; Canadian Tuberculosis Association; Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene; Victorian Order of Nurses; Canadian Branch of St. John Ambulance Association; Canadian Red Cross Society; Canadian Social Hygiene Council; Canadian Mental Hygiene Council.

With the object of obtaining uniform legislation and procedure in the various provinces the Dominion Council of Health was created. This body consists of the Deputy Minister of the Dominion Department of Pensions and National Health as Chairman, the chief executive officer of the provincial department or board of health of each province, together with such other persons, not exceeding five, as may be appointed by the Governor in Council to hold office for three years. Of these appointed members, four represent agriculture, labour, rural women's work and social service, and child welfare, while the fifth member is a scientific adviser on public health matters. The Council meets twice a year at Ottawa, when public health problems are discussed and uniform standards and legislation adopted.

Speaking generally, the administration of local public health activities and the establishment and maintenance of institutions is in the hands of the Provincial Governments, under Sec. 92 of the British North America Act, 1867. Under their control, municipalities, societies, and individuals generally initiate charitable and humane efforts, depending on the Government to some extent for financial aid and for competent uniform inspection of methods and standards. Important, and reflecting most clearly the benefits accruing from such work, are the provisions for medical inspection of school children. These are carried out in some cases by the district or sub-district medical health officers, and in others by public health nurses