

The Government Home Improvement Plan.—Although operative, by agreement between the Dominion Government and lending institutions, since Nov. 1, 1936, the Home Improvement Plan derives its legislative sanction from "An Act to Increase Employment by Encouraging the Repair of Rural and Urban Homes", assented to on Mar. 31, 1937. The object of the legislation is clearly indicated in its title. The method adopted is to stimulate the advance of money for home repair and improvement by a government guarantee up to 15 p.c. of the aggregate amount loaned under the Plan by each approved lending institution.

The Plan, which is administered by the Department of Finance, was first sponsored by the National Employment Commission, and the Commission, at the request of the Government, undertook to advance it by all possible methods. Voluntary co-operative committees, provincial and local, were set up in every province. Through the co-operation of Canadian industry, an extensive publicity and advertising campaign was initiated and carried on without cost to the Government. Explanatory booklets and leaflets in both languages were distributed extensively throughout the Dominion, speeches and radio broadcasts were utilized, and in a number of cities, home improvement exhibitions designed to emphasize the desirability of house repair and modernization were held. From time to time statements indicating the increase in loan totals were issued by the Department of Finance.

The Plan provides for the making of loans by chartered banks and other approved lending institutions to owners of residential property (including farm buildings) for repairs, alterations, and additions (including built-in equipment) to urban and rural dwellings. Loans may be made up to a maximum of \$2,000 on any single-family house. In the case of a multiple-family dwelling the maximum amount which can be borrowed is \$1,000, plus \$1,000 for each family unit provided for in the building when the repairs or improvements are completed. The limit of time allowed for the payment of a Home Improvement loan is three years for a loan of \$1,000 or less, and five years for a loan exceeding \$1,000. Payment may be made in equal monthly instalments or in such other instalments as are adapted to the financial circumstances of the borrower. The maximum charge must not exceed a rate of discount of 3½ p.c. for a one-year loan, repayable in equal monthly instalments. This is equivalent to an effective interest rate of 6.32 p.c.

The limit of the aggregate loans is \$50,000,000 and the limit of the Government's guarantee is therefore \$7,500,000.

Loans made under the Government Home Improvement Plan to the end of 1938, by provinces, were as follows:—

2.—Loans made under the Government Home Improvement Plan, by Provinces, 1936-38.

Province.	Numbers.			Amounts.		
	1936.	1937.	1938.	1936.	1937.	1938.
Prince Edward Island.....	31	375	203	\$ 10,837	\$ 100,943	\$ 48,425
Nova Scotia.....	328	2,533	1,972	102,362	786,789	570,747
New Brunswick.....	179	1,223	988	56,565	421,672	321,042
Quebec.....	518	4,531	4,388	286,463	2,245,178	2,243,932
Ontario.....	1,153	13,728	13,684	445,054	5,403,473	5,848,524
Manitoba.....	131	2,070	1,616	50,238	784,302	628,852
Saskatchewan.....	91	798	397	28,796	279,098	127,996
Alberta.....	281	2,319	2,048	121,863	994,133	898,354
British Columbia.....	447	3,197	2,783	146,075	1,036,285	823,551
Totals.....	3,159	30,772	28,077	1,198,253	12,051,873	11,516,422