

Subsection 3.—Corrective and Reformatory Institutions

On June 1, 1941, there were 28 corrective and reformatory institutions in Canada with a total inmate population of 4,051; of this number 3,118 were males and 933 were females. Of the total number of institutions, 14 were for males and 14 for females. Detailed statistics of crime and delinquency (which are presented on an annual basis) as distinct from these institutional statistics are given in Chapter XXVIII.

Section 3.—The Victorian Order of Nurses

The Victorian Order of Nurses is a voluntary public-health agency, national in scope and having as its primary object the care of the sick in their own homes by visiting nurses. In 1942 there were 99 branches of the Order distributed as follows: Nova Scotia, 16; New Brunswick, 7; Quebec, 5; Ontario, 55; Manitoba, 1; Saskatchewan, 3; Alberta, 2; and British Columbia 10. The affairs of each branch are directed by a local committee, which raises the money necessary to carry on the work. However, the policies and professional standards set by the national organization are accepted by the local committees. The Board of Governors of the national organization is made up largely of representatives appointed by the branches.

Registered nurses are employed by the Order and have, in addition, post-graduate training in public-health nursing. All appointments are approved by the headquarters at Ottawa, which also assumes responsibility for the supervision of the nurses' work in the field, thus ensuring a uniform standard of service.

The practical result of nursing care and health education given to maternity patients is seen in the low maternal death rate among those under care. The rate per 1,000 live births attended by the Order during the years 1938-42, inclusive, was 1.54 compared with a rate of 3.78 for Canada as a whole in the same period.

During 1942 the 387 nurses in the field gave nursing care to 88,646 patients. Health teaching is an important function of the visiting nurse, and their entry into so many homes provides an unparalleled opportunity to make a worth-while contribution toward the upbuilding of the health of the Canadian people.

The Order provides a community service, available to everyone in the area served, regardless of race, creed or economic status. The nurses give care on a visit basis to medical, surgical and maternity patients under medical direction and care for a large group of people who would otherwise be neglected. The budget of the average man makes very little allowance for the cost of illness. The patient is expected to pay the cost of the visit, but the fee is adjusted to suit the family income and service is never refused because of inability to pay. Of the 723,145 visits made in 1942, 54 p.c. were free, 28 p.c. were paid and 18 p.c. were partly paid. The cost of the service to those unable to pay is taken care of by municipal grants and funds collected by means of campaigns.

In smaller centres where the Victorian Order nurse is the only public-health nurse the program of work is usually enlarged to include a school nursing service, child hygiene and other public-health nursing services.

While the nurses are doing their 'bit' in caring for soldiers' families and helping to keep up the morale of the people, the program has not been changed because of the War. The Victorian Order was instituted and has been maintained for over forty years with one definite purpose—home nursing service—in time of war no less than in time of peace.