

Health and Other Activities.—Improvement of the health of the Canadian people is one of the primary aims of the Society. Besides the health projects mentioned above, home-nursing instruction and nutrition service are important activities. Home-nursing courses are being conducted all over Canada to give women and girls elementary instruction in proper procedures of caring for the sick in their own homes. In this project, doctors, dentists, trained nurses and dietitians give their services free. The nutrition service expanded widely in 1946 with trained Red Cross dietitians servicing nearly all provinces. Attracting international interest is the first intensive long-range study ever made under controlled conditions of the effect of a school-meal program on the health and efficiency of a large group of school children, which was initiated in the autumn of 1946 by the National Nutrition Department. The purpose of this study is to obtain scientifically accurate information and to apply this information for the betterment of the health of school children not only in Canada but throughout the world.

Section 5.—The Order of St. John*

The origin of the Order of St. John goes back to the Crusades and the Knights of St. John and Malta. His Majesty the King is supreme head of the Order which has headquarters at London, England, and units in all parts of the British Empire. In Canada, the Governor General is the Prior and meetings of the Order are held at Government House. The organization in Canada is the Priory in Canada of the Grand Priory of the British Realm of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, usually referred to as the Order of St. John.

The Priory in Canada has its headquarters and national offices at St. John House, Ottawa, Ont., with branches in every province and local centres in hundreds of cities and towns throughout Canada. There are two distinct branches: the Association whose members train instructors, conduct classes and issue various certificates; and the Brigade, members of which are in uniform under a form of military discipline, receive constant supplementary training, and are available for call whenever the need arises. The Brigade strength is approximately 15,000 persons, about equally divided between the Ambulance Division (men) and the Nursing Division (women), and organized into about 325 divisions from coast to coast.

The primary purpose of the Association is to teach first aid and home nursing and other kindred subjects to citizens of Canada, irrespective of age, and to provide trained and organized personnel to help in time of disaster or national emergency. The work was started in 1895 and since then more than 1,000,000 persons have received certificates and other awards. Many thousands of these went to members of the Armed Forces to which trained instructors and textbooks have been provided in large numbers. The railways of Canada and many large industrial concerns maintain their own St. John centres.

* Including the St. John Ambulance Association and the St. John Ambulance Brigade.