

Section 1.—Dominion Welfare Services

The creation of the Department of National Health and Welfare (8 Geo. VI, c. 22, 1944), established for the first time a Department of the Federal Government in which matters of welfare are a primary responsibility. Prior to that time, the administration of Acts pertaining to social security and welfare was assigned to existing Departments or, as in the case of unemployment insurance, to a commission set up for the purpose. The Act of 1944 places under the Minister of National Health and Welfare the administration of any Acts, orders or regulations relating to welfare which are not by law assigned to any other Department.

Other functions of the Department more particularly relating to welfare are, in brief: the promotion of social security and social welfare of the people of Canada over which the Dominion has jurisdiction; investigation and research; the preparation and distribution of information on social and industrial conditions affecting the health and lives of the people; co-operation with provincial authorities with a view to co-ordination of efforts in providing for the social security and welfare of the people of Canada.

The Welfare Branch of the Department administers the Family Allowances Act, the Physical Fitness Act and the federal Old Age Pensions Act including pensions for the blind. The War Charities Act and the Voluntary War Relief Division, formerly administered by the Department of National War Services, were transferred to the Department of National Health and Welfare by Order in Council and have been administered by the Welfare Branch since Feb. 1, 1947.

The welfare of Indians and Eskimos is the responsibility of the Department of Mines and Resources (see Chapter XXXI). Other welfare services are administered by the Department of Labour, the Unemployment Insurance Commission and the Department of Veterans Affairs, as indicated on pp. 214-215.

Family Allowances.—The Family Allowances Act, 1944, was introduced for the purpose of equalizing opportunity for the children of Canada. The allowances are paid monthly to mothers and must be spent exclusively towards the maintenance, care, training, education and advancement of the child. If it is satisfactorily shown to the authorities that the money is not being spent for this purpose, payment can be discontinued or made to some other person or agency on behalf of the child. It is further set out in the Act that if any person is dissatisfied with a decision as to his right to be paid an allowance or as to the amount of allowance payable to him or as to any other matter arising under the Act, he may appeal against such decision to a tribunal established for that purpose.

To be eligible for allowances, children must have been born in Canada or have lived in this country for three consecutive years, except the children of men or women who have served in the Armed Forces. Children of members of the three Armed Services are eligible even though born outside the country. A further important clause in the eligibility regulations concerns education. The allowance is not payable to a child who, being above the age of six years and physically fit to attend school, fails to do so or to receive equivalent training. The allowance ceases when a child reaches the age of sixteen.

The allowances, which are tax free, are paid by cheque monthly at the following rates:—

Children under 6 years of age.	\$5
Children from 6-9 years of age, inclusive..	\$6
Children from 10-12 years of age, inclusive..	\$7
Children from 13-15 years of age, inclusive...	\$8