

Section 3.—Auxiliary Health Services

Subsection 1.—The Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada

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 1947 there were 104 branches of the Order distributed as follows: Nova Scotia 16; New Brunswick 8; Quebec 5; Ontario 60; Manitoba 1; Saskatchewan 3; Alberta 3; and British Columbia 8. The affairs of each branch are directed by a local board, 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 branches. 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. During 1947 approximately 476 nurses in the field gave nursing care to 128,518 patients.

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 thus serve a large group of people who would otherwise be without skilled nursing care. 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 906,127 visits made in 1947, 52 p.c. were free, 22 p.c. were paid, 16 p.c. were paid in part and 10 p.c. were paid for by insurance companies for care to patients. The cost of the service to those unable to pay is provided for 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 school nursing service, child-health centres, assistance at immunization clinics and other public-health services.

An increasing number of Victorian Order branches are giving part-time nursing service to industrial plants where the number of employees is not large enough to require the full-time services of a nurse.

Subsection 2.—The Canadian Red Cross Society

The purpose of the Canadian Red Cross Society is to furnish volunteer aid to the sick and wounded of armies in war and to work for the improvement of health, the prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world.

The free National Blood Transfusion Service, introduced in 1947, now functions in the Provinces of British Columbia and Alberta. In the first year of operation 32,062 bottles of blood were collected, 15,473 patients received transfusions and 1,748 patients received plasma. This service is being extended across the Dominion as building materials and sites become available.

The School Meal Study, begun in February, 1947, is designed to gather scientific information about the effect on school children of a nutritionally well-balanced lunch. Some 500 children are participating in the experiment.

The Red Cross Homemaker Service has established nearly 30 branches to give trained assistance in homes where the mother is ill or where there is no means of securing adequate care for the family.