

### NOW MOTHERS' PENSIONS IS LIVE SUBJECT

#### Ontario is Likely to Follow the Example of the Western Provinces.

#### NOVA SCOTIA AND MANITOBA IN LINE

#### J. W. MacMillan Tells What Has So Far Been Done in Canada and Briefly Reviews the Problems to be Dealt With in This Matter.

(By J. W. MacMillan.)

It is extremely probable that during the present session of the legislature of Ontario will meet a Mothers' Allowance Bill. British Columbia and Nova Scotia are not likely to do the same. Already the three prairie provinces have such laws, Manitoba having led the way in 1914.

Like most of the social legislation in Canada it came from the United States. Since 1912, when the first law of this nature was passed in Colorado, it has spread over the entire republic, and even to Alaska. Thirty-nine states now have such laws. And of the nine who do not have them, five have been considering them. All of the states which have not such laws are in the south except Rhode Island. It is worth while to examine the details of the laws in existence. No doubt, a period of experimentation, these various laws will tend to become standardized, perhaps in one form, perhaps in several forms. In the meantime they show an amount of variation which may well puzzle the lawmakers of the provinces in Canada who turn to them for advice and information. I shall set down the broad differences which a comparison between these forty-nine statutes displays.

#### I.—Who are eligible for the allowance?

1. Any mother with a dependent child.
2. Widows only.
3. Widows and wives of prisoners, the income of the physically incapacitated.
4. In addition, deserted wives. The period of desertion required to qualify varies from three months to a year.
5. In addition, divorced wives.
6. In addition, unmarried mothers.
7. In addition, expectant mothers.

#### II.—Conditions on which aid is given.

1. The first condition is uniformly poverty. But poverty is variously defined as:—unable to support her children, dependent on her own efforts, unable without assistance to prevent her home being broken up, unable to prevent children being taken to an institution or becoming a public charge. In some states the mother may not own property. In others she is allowed such tools and implements as may aid her in increasing her income.
2. The second condition generally includes the requirement that she be physically and morally competent to care for her children. In some cases she is forbidden to work away from home. In others she may work away from home no more than one day a week.
3. III.—Residence qualifications. These are complicated between state and country requirements. In some they range all the way from one year to five.
4. IV.—Age of children. The maximum varies from thirteen to seventeen. Fourteen is the most frequent figure.
5. V.—Amount of allowance. In some cases no maximum is fixed, but the decision is left to the administrative body. In others it is two, three or three and a half dollars per week. Some states limit the amount which may be given to any household, and set this maximum at from 25 dollars a month all the way up to 60 dollars a month.
6. VI.—Administration. Here the variety is extreme. Probate Court, County Commissioners, Board of Trade Welfare, Supervisors of the Poor, State Treasurer and Board of Education have each their turn. In many states the administration is under the supervision of the State Board of Charities. In every case the administration is non-political, that is, it is not subject to review by the government of the state. In the three Canadian laws now in force the final authority remains with the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

#### There is also considerable variation in the three Canadian laws, now operating in the west. Manitoba gives to widows and to wives of men insane, or prisoners, or who are physically

unable for work. Saskatchewan gives to widows only. Alberta to widows and wives of the insane.

Manitoba requires residential qualification of two years. Alberta and Saskatchewan of one year.

Manitoba refuses to aid any mother who possesses property of a value exceeding \$200. The other provinces set no minimum.

Each of these three provinces levy on the municipalities for the amounts expended. In Alberta the cost is equally divided between the government and the municipality. In the other provinces the proportion is fixed at the will of the government.

In Saskatchewan and Alberta the administration is vested in the Superintendent of Dependent and Neglected Children. In Manitoba a special Commission has been created, and under it are committees in the municipalities where the dependent mothers reside.

It is a curious thing that the Canadian laws should retain supervisory power for the provincial government. Perhaps we may flatter ourselves that the superior purity of our national politics makes this supervision a safe thing. But undoubtedly, in any land where party politics are not of a statesmanlike character, this right of appeal to the politician is a dangerous thing.

Anyone who has known anything of the workings of a charity department in a city knows how swiftly the predatory gangster gets after the alms-giver. Among the needy and deserving women with young children in their care will be border-line cases hard to determine, and cases where infirmity of character is suspected, and cases where the load of supporting the children might most properly be borne by relatives at once rich and mean. These are the sort of people who turn more readily to someone whom they think has a pull than to someone who is keen to play fair by the law. Surely we know this much about the proper administration of social laws, that they should be placed in competent hands and that those hands should be trusted with power.

Another curious difference between the situation in Canada and the United States is the superior generosity of the amounts paid in Canada. The average sum given to a mother in Manitoba last May was \$61 to those domiciled in cities, and \$49.16 to those living in the country. Nowhere in the United States are these amounts equalled. In fact, the general criticism is made that the sums dispensed in the United States are too low. The true meaning of such a law is that the mother is hired by the state to rear her children. They have become wards of organized society by reason of the loss of their natural provider. It is felt that the mother cannot be at once provider and trainer. The worries and woes of widows have proved that through many ages, and the minutes of the juvenile courts have come in these later days to confirm the lesson. If the woman is to mother her children she must be with them in the home. Thus the salary paid her should be large enough to allow her to remain in her home.

The administration of these laws is of supreme importance. The success which has been achieved in Manitoba is due to the assistance of trained social workers in initiating and continuing the operation of the act. As a matter of fact, the cabinet have not used the supervising power retained under the law for any purpose other than to approve the proceedings of the commission who have been intelligently guided by expert social workers all along. There are many mothers in Canada who need constant help. They need it in order that their children may be born. They need it in order that, when born, they may survive. They need it in order that, if they survive, they may grow up into good citizens. Some body that knows how to befriend such mothers when their husbands have died, is necessary. And the all-important thing is that the befriending shall be wise. They need light as well as warmth.



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### BRITAIN HOLD CONSTANTINOPLE

A memorable day for the world was Friday, March 19th, 1920. The man in khaki patrols the streets and British rule is established at the capital of the Turkish Empire. These are Moslems from India among the troops of Britain, as the Bax Britannica settles down on old Byzantium and the Turk is out of Europe forever. Britain holds the Straits and keeps the Gates.

The Goeben and Breslau are remembered today. These mighty ships were accepted as emblems of German power and the Turk prostrated himself before the image, forgetting what had sent them there for safety. Today the Turk can look at the Bosphorus and a British squadron at the Golden Horn as the emblem of another power that comes without being chased thither and comes to stay.

When Britain keeps the Gates, she keeps them Open. No ifs or buts, but free and fair for all. No promises are And, if he goes wrong while his father lives, he is twice as likely to go wrong when his father dies.

### First, Doctors — Then a Skin Specialist Then a bottle of D.D.D.

We shall publish every week for the benefit of skin sufferers in this section a few words written by Canadian people—some of them prominent—all heart-felt stories of relief from terrible suffering. A sentence or two from a letter from J. W. Corns, 25 Melbourne Ave., Toronto, a man of the standing: "I have been a sufferer for two years in eczema on the legs and ankles. I tried three or four different doctors. I went to a skin specialist. All of them, I used one dollar bottle of D.D.D.—that is all. Today I am perfectly well." If you wish to try a bottle of this Prescription that Mr. Corns found so remarkable, we will guarantee relief on the first bottle, or your money back. Stop that itch today. \$1.00 a bottle. Try D.D.D. Soap, too.

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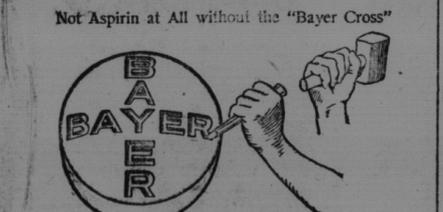
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