

FAMILY ALLOWANCES

The outstanding development in Social Security during the war years was the introduction of Family Allowances. Canada was the first country in the western hemisphere to introduce such legislation on a universal scale. Great Britain followed one year later after our Family Allowances Act became effective in July, 1945.

At the end of March this year, our records show that 1,576,459 families are in receipt of allowances covering a total of 3,602,841 children. In that month \$21,491,640 was dispersed by cheque from the regional offices.

In the twenty months family allowances has been in operation, it has been possible to assess the value of the measure in terms of betterment for the family. For many families, particularly those in receipt of marginal income, Family Allowances have made it possible for them to manage without supplementary assistance from Social Agencies. For most families in the lower income group, it has meant an increase in purchasing power which has definitely improved the standard of living. On the whole, payment of the allowances has helped to keep children at school more regularly and older children at school longer before leaving school to seek work. The extra food and clothing has been reflected in better school reports. In general, clothing seems to be the main item upon which the family allowances are being spent and it has been found that children are more adequately and warmly clothed.