

SECTION 6.—HOME AID SERVICE

(a) Administrative Developments

(1) The activities of the Home Aid Service were expanded during this financial year. The assistance rendered in homes has proved to be most acceptable, particularly in those cases where the housewife is incapacitated due to maternity or sickness or where there are a number of young children and there is sickness in the home. Most householders who have had occasion to employ a Home Aid have reported favourably on the quality of the work done. The Aids employed in the Service have again proved themselves to be most willing and adaptable workers who are capable of accepting responsibility for all household duties. The conditions of employment are better, and the status aimed at for the Service is higher than can be normally associated with private domestic work, but the general shortage of female labour nevertheless provides the Department with many difficulties in recruiting the number of Aids necessary to meet the insistent demand for the Service. Notwithstanding the recruitment of a considerable number of new Aids from the Department's immigration scheme, it has remained necessary to restrict the availability of Aids mainly to cases of an emergency nature.

(2) The establishment of Home Aid hostels in two main centres has to a certain extent overcome one of the main difficulties experienced in recruiting sufficient staff for the Service. The hostels are used extensively as training centres for girls joining the Service who require training to qualify as certificate-holders. The courses include instruction in all phases of household duties, plain cooking, care and management of children, marketing, budgeting, and selecting of household goods.

(3) Recent increases in the award rates payable to female workers in industry generally have been applied to the Home Aid Service, and these increases have in turn been reflected in the charge for the services of a Home Aid, which is now fixed at 2s. 3d. an hour. There is adequate provision for a reduction in this charge if payment in full would involve hardship, and reductions have been made in a number of deserving cases.

(b) Activities for the Twelve Months

(1) The following table summarizes the activities of the Service for the twelve months ended 31st March, 1948 :—

ACTIVITIES OF THE HOME AID SERVICE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1948

Month.	Number of Aids employed.	Details of Cases serviced during Period.			
		Maternity.	Sickness.	Other.	Total.
April, 1947	54	122	166	11	299
May, 1947	50	124	169	20	313
June, 1947	51	116	149	15	280
July, 1947	50	88	144	10	242
August, 1947	51	56	91	14	161
September, 1947	53	77	114	1	192
October, 1947	55	88	108	..	196
November, 1947	55	97	94	2	193
December, 1947	57	66	106	1	173
January, 1948	53	73	92	11	176
February, 1948	68	79	92	..	171
March, 1948	60	107	143	3	253
Totals	..	1,093	1,468	88	2,649