

NEW LEGISLATION

The following legislation became operative from 1st October, 1945: the War Pensions Amendment Act, 1945. The main features of this Act were the provisions for increases in war veterans' allowances.

The allowance for a male or female veteran was increased from £84 10s. to £104 a year, and in the case of a married male veteran the allowance in respect of his wife was increased from £54 12s. to £104 a year. In conformity with the policy of granting family benefits under the Social Security Act, 1938, in respect of dependent children, the War Pensions Amendment Act, 1945, abolished war veterans' allowances in respect of children, and from 1st October, 1945, these allowances were paid by way of family benefit.

During the year the Department received 25,812 applications for pensions. Of these, 19,306 applications were lodged by ex-servicemen in respect of their own disabilities, the balance of 6,506 being made up of claims by dependents, applications for economic pensions, and war veterans' allowances.

The following is a summary of the disabilities from which ex-service personnel were suffering at the time of application for pension:—

| Class of Disability or Disease. | Type of Service. | | Total. | Percentage of Total. |
|--|------------------|--------------|--------|----------------------|
| | Overseas. | New Zealand. | | |
| (1) Infections and infestations | 568 | 22 | 590 | 3·06 |
| (2) Nervous system | 3,100 | 598 | 3,698 | 19·15 |
| (3) Eye, ear, and nose | 2,554 | 567 | 3,121 | 16·17 |
| (4) Circulatory and blood systems | 636 | 359 | 995 | 5·15 |
| (5) Metabolism | 149 | 60 | 209 | 1·08 |
| (6) Lungs | 994 | 339 | 1,333 | 6·90 |
| (7) Breast (non-malignant) | 5 | 2 | 7 | 0·04 |
| (8) Digestive system | 1,467 | 400 | 1,867 | 9·67 |
| (9) Generative system | 74 | 44 | 118 | 0·61 |
| (10) Gunshot wounds and accidental injuries to bones and joints and soft tissues | 4,691 | 965 | 5,656 | 29·30 |
| (11) Skin | 757 | 203 | 960 | 4·97 |
| (12) Areolar tissue | 21 | 4 | 25 | 0·13 |
| (13) Tumours and neoplastic growths | 40 | 19 | 59 | 0·30 |
| (14) Malformations | 117 | 45 | 162 | 0·84 |
| (15) Amputations | 245 | 22 | 267 | 1·40 |
| (16) Kidney and urinary tract | 190 | 49 | 239 | 1·23 |
| Totals | 15,608 | 3,698 | 19,306 | 100·00 |

The War Pensions Boards dealt with 91,039 cases during the year ended 31st March, 1946, made up as follows:—

| | |
|--|--------|
| (1) Claims for war pension on account of disablement | 16,664 |
| (2) Claims for economic pension | 2,664 |
| (3) Claims for dependants' pensions | 1,925 |
| (4) Cases submitted for renewal and review | 34,207 |
| (5) Cases submitted for reconsideration and reinstatement | 11,815 |
| (6) Cases where the question of entitlement was considered in respect of personnel discharged from the Forces on medical grounds, but who did not lodge claims for pension | 12,680 |
| (7) Claims for war veterans' allowances | 2,272 |
| (8) Sundry claims and reviews | 3,118 |
| (9) Cases adjourned for further consideration and decision | 5,694 |
| Total | 91,039 |