

I estimate that the sum of £927,000 will be required during the current year to meet the cost of the above pensions.

#### WAR PENSIONS.

The gross payments passed through the accounts during the year amounted to £515,447, made up as under :—

	£
Payments made in New Zealand .. .. .	495,060
Payments made in London .. .. .	12,567
Payments made in Australia .. .. .	2,925
Other foreign payments .. .. .	294
Allotments paid after casualty .. .. .	4,494
Lump sums .. .. .	105
Sundry .. .. .	2
<b>Total .. .. .</b>	<b>£515,447</b>

These amounts represent an increase on the figures of the previous year of £335,183.

The total claims lodged to the close of the year numbered 12,904 from soldiers, and 6,452 from dependants of deceased and disabled soldiers.

The total new pensions granted during the year numbered 10,587, and the value was £709,857. These added to the totals of the pensions granted in previous years—namely, 6,530, valued at £342,195—and the increases arising out of the Amendment Act, 1917—namely, £70,000—make a grand total of all pensions granted since the inception of the Act of 17,117; value, £1,122,052.

The annual values of the pensions in force at the close of the year were as follow :—

	Number.	Annual Value. £	Average Pension. £
Permanent pensions to soldiers .. .. .	900	43,703	48
Temporary pensions to soldiers .. .. .	8,405	572,023	68
Temporary pensions to dependants (including 988 children) .. .. .	828	45,491	54
Pensions to widows (including 1,386 children) .. .. .	1,099	133,547	121
Pensions to other dependants .. .. .	3,265	109,619	33
<b>Totals .. .. .</b>	<b>14,497</b>	<b>£904,383</b>	<b>£62</b>

I estimate that the sum of £1,500,000 will be required during the current year to meet the payments under this head.

#### DEPARTMENT OF IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT SUPPLIES.

The requisition of the principal primary products of the Dominion by the Imperial Government has been continued during the past year, and the output of butter has been included in the purchases made on behalf of the Imperial authorities.

The purchase of frozen meat commenced on the 3rd March, 1915, and from that date to the 31st March, 1918, the following shipments were made—1,900,267 quarters beef, 7,294,204 carcasses mutton, 8,970,976 carcasses lamb—the total f.o.b. value of which amounted to £22,851,823.

The prices paid for these shipments have been on the same basis as for the previous year, and the present contract for the purchase of meat continues until the expiration of three months after the war.

Amended arrangements have been completed in connection with the payment for storage, and the Imperial Government now accepts full liability for such charges from one month after the date the meat has been placed in freezing-chambers until shipment has been completed. In addition, the Imperial Government has accepted the liability for insurances after the meat has remained in store for a period of four months.

The purchase of sheep-skins commenced on the 1st February, 1917, and since that date 2,014,548 skins have been purchased and sent to fellmongers for treatment, valued at £757,323. 324,314 hides were purchased, valued at £596,762. The requisition of hides ceased on the 28th March, 1918.

The 1917–18 clip of wool was purchased by the Imperial authorities on the same conditions as for the previous year, and since the commencement of opera-