

SESSION II.
1918.
NEW ZEALAND.

TWENTIETH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PENSIONS DEPARTMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1918.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 70 of the Pensions Act, 1913.

The COMMISSIONER OF PENSIONS to the Hon. the MINISTER OF PENSIONS.

SIR,—

Pensions Department, Wellington, 31st October, 1918.

I have the honour to furnish herewith, for the information of Parliament, the report of the Department relating to old-age, widows', military (Maori War), miners', and war pensions for the year ended 31st March, 1918. The following summaries show at a glance the position at the close of the year:—

PENSIONS IN FORCE AND ANNUAL VALUE AT 31ST MARCH, 1918.

	Number of Pensions.	Statutory Pensions.	Allowances under Finance Act, 1917.	Total Pensions.	Average Pension.	
					Statutory.	Total.
		£	£	£	£	£
Old-age	19,960	481,369	259,480	740,849	24	37
Widows'	2,192	43,872	30,000	73,872	20	33
Military	1,153	41,508	11,700	53,208	36	46
Miners'	270	10,972	2,600	13,572	40	50
War	14,497	904,383	..	904,383	62	62
Totals	38,072	1,482,104	303,780	1,785,884	..	..

GROSS PAYMENTS, YEAR 1917-18.

	Statutory Pensions.	Allowances under Finance Act, 1917.	Total Pensions.
	£	£	£
Old-age	502,085	141,092	643,177
Widows'	41,986	15,966	57,952
Military	44,840	5,894	50,734
Miners'	11,968	1,307	13,275
War	515,445	..	515,445
Totals	1,116,324	164,259*	1,280,583

* Six and a half months' payments only.

Cost per head of European population, £1 3s. 2d.

WAR PENSIONS LEGISLATION.

During the year the war-pensions legislation inaugurated in 1915 and amended in 1916 was further amended by a comprehensive measure the varied provisions of which, taking effect as from the 1st January, 1918, brought about as an immediate result an increase in the annual appropriation for war pensions of a sum exceeding £70,000 per annum. Chief among these provisions were—

- (1.) An increase for all ranks of 5s. weekly in respect of total-disability pensions, associated with which is the increase of all pensions payable to wives of totally disabled soldiers to one-half of that payable to the soldier for total disablement.
- (2.) An increase of 5s. weekly for all ranks to widows of soldiers.
- (3.) A further increase of 10s. weekly for all ranks to widows with children of the pension age.
- (4.) An increase of 2s. 6d. weekly in respect of children's pensions, whether on account of total disablement or death.
- (5.) An increase in the pensions payable to widowed mothers of soldiers.
- (6.) Supplementary pensions up to £1 weekly to disabled soldiers where earning-capacity precludes the enjoyment of pre-war standard of living.
- (7.) Supplementary pensions up to 15s. weekly to widows in certain cases.
- (8.) An increase to £1 weekly in the amount payable for an attendant to a disabled soldier.
- (9.) The enactment of a schedule of minimum pensions for specific injuries.
- (10.) Extension of period after discharge to two years during which marriages may be recognized for disability pensions.
- (11.) Power to increase Imperial pensions to New Zealand rates in cases of Imperial Reservists mobilized in New Zealand, and of enlistments in New Zealand.

It is possible under these provisions for a private soldier whose pre-war earnings reached £5 a week, and his wife, to receive such an amount by way of pension, and there is at present on record a case being paid by the Department as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Total disability pension to soldier (per week)	2	0	0
Total disability pension to wife „	1	0	0
Pension for attendant „	1	0	0
Supplementary pension „	1	0	0
Total „	£5	0	0

WAR PENSIONS BOARD.

Owing to the greatly increased number of pensions claims arising from the heavy casualty lists and the more numerous drafts of returned men, the work of the War Pensions Board has become much more strenuous, the pressure being relieved towards the close of the year by the appointment, under last year's legislation, of a new member in the person of a representative of the Returned Soldiers' Association, and of a deputy to act in the absence of any member of the Board. (Since the close of the year the appointment of two additional deputies has become a necessity.)

The policy laid down by the Board of obtaining first-hand information regarding the disabilities of soldiers has been followed throughout the year, and visits were paid to the chief centres of population in both Islands. To meet complaints regarding the delay in dealing with original claims from soldiers, two or three thousand of whom landed at one period of the year within a week, the Board instituted a system whereby the Department was authorized, immediately on receipt of a claim from a soldier whose medical papers showed that his earning-capacity was affected by a war disability, to pay a flat-rate allowance of £1 10s. a week pending the Board's decision being obtained. By this means it has been possible to have in the hands of the soldier, not later than the date of his discharge from the Forces, a provisional certificate entitling him to collect an initial instalment of £6 10s. on the 23rd day of the month in which he is discharged. One advantage of this provisional grant to the soldier is that if the pension eventually granted by the Board is greater the balance is made up, and if the grant is less no rebate is asked for.

FINANCE ACT, 1917.

Under this Act, which received the Governor-General's assent on the 15th September, 1917, increases were provided for the period of the war and twelve months thereafter, to meet the cost of living, in regard to the pensions payable under the Pensions Act of 1913 and the Miners' Phthisis Act of 1915, as follows :—

- (1.) On account of old-age pensions—5s. a week additional, making the total pension £39 per annum.
- (2.) On account of widows' pensions—£6 per annum additional for each child, making the maximum for each child £12 per annum.
- (3.) On account of military pensions—5s. a week additional where income does not exceed £200 per annum, making total pension £49 per annum.
- (4.) On account of miners' pensions—5s. a week additional all round, except when increase already available on account of receipt of old-age pension or widow's pension.

These increases commenced with instalments payable on the 23rd September, and of the estimated annual cost of the concessions—namely, £300,000—some £164,000 was paid during the remaining six and a half months of the year. The annual value of these concessions payable at the close of the year was £303,000.

WAR PENSIONS.

TOTAL CLAIMS LODGED TO DATE.

	From Soldiers.	From Dependants.	
From 1st September, 1915, to 31st March, 1916	798	681	
Year 1916-17	3,958	2,017	
Year 1917-18	8,148	3,754	
Totals	12,904	6,452	
	Officers.	Men.	Total.
Total casualties by death (including missing) to 31st March, 1918 ..	513	11,424	11,937
Total discharges from Forces to 31st March, 1918	567	14,199	14,766

GROSS ANNUAL VALUE OF ALL PENSIONS GRANTED TO DATE.

	No.	Annual Value. £	Average Pension. £
From 1st September, 1915, to 31st March, 1916	1,214	56,488	46
Year 1916-17	5,316	285,707	53
Year 1917-18	10,587	709,857	67
	17,117	£1,052,052	£61
Increase under 1917 Act .. .. .	..	70,200	..
Totals	17,117*	£1,122,252	£65

* The number of pensions granted as shown herein does not include children's pensions, the values of which, however, form part of the pensions payable to parents (or guardians), and are included in the total values above.

SUMMARY OF ANNUAL LIABILITY AT 31ST MARCH, 1918.

Class of Pension.	Number.	Annual Value.	Average Pension.
		£	£
Soldiers (permanent)	900	43,703	48
Soldiers (temporary)	8,405	572,023	68
Widows of soldiers	1,099	133,547*	121
Other dependants of deceased soldiers	3,265	109,619	33
Wives and other dependants of disabled soldiers	828	45,491†	54
Totals	14,497	904,383	62

* Including the pensions of 1,386 children.

† Including the pensions of 988 children.

Including the 2,374 children, the average of the grand total of 16,871 pensions in force on the 31st March, 1918, is £53 per annum.

RETURN SHOWING NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER SIXTEEN IN RECEIPT OF PENSIONS AS AT 31ST MARCH, 1918, GROUPED IN FAMILIES.

Number of Children in Family.	Deceased Soldiers.		Disabled Soldiers.	
	Number.	Total Children.	Number.	Total Children.
9	1	9	..	..
8	2	16	..	..
7	4	28	4	28
6	11	66	8	48
5	15	75	21	105
4	47	188	47	188
3	92	276	71	213
2	171	342	107	214
1	386	386	192	192
Totals .. .. .	..	1,386	..	988

There are 370 widows of soldiers in receipt of pensions who have no children.

SUMMARY OF PAYMENTS, 1917-18.

	£	£
Paid through Post Office (£504,274, less outstandings £27) .. .. .	..	504,274
Less payments on account of Commonwealth pensions	8,631	
Less payments on account of Canadian pensions	236	
Less payments on account of Imperial Government to dependants of munition workers	320	
	<hr/>	9,187
		<hr/>
		495,060
Paid by High Commissioner in London .. .. .	..	12,567
Other foreign payments .. .. .	..	294
Paid by Commonwealth Government .. .. .	..	2,925
Lump sums paid .. .. .	..	105
Allotments paid after casualty (subsequently charged to war pensions) .. .. .	..	4,494
		<hr/>
		<u>£515,445</u>

SUMMARY OF TOTAL ACTUAL PAYMENTS TO 31ST MARCH, 1918.

	£
From 1st September, 1915, to 31st March, 1916	13,910
Year 1916-17	180,389
Year 1917-18	515,445
	<hr/>
	<u>£709,744</u>

INCREASES UNDER AMENDMENT ACT, 1917.

Summary of yearly values of increases affecting pensions in force when Act came into force—
i.e., on 1st January, 1918:—

	£
Disablement pensions (soldiers)	21,900
Disablement pensions (wives)	2,700
Widows' pensions	25,000
Children's pensions	8,900
Widowed mothers' pensions	5,200
Permanent pensions (soldiers)	1,000
Pensions for attendants	250
Supplementary pensions (soldiers)	1,500
Supplementary pensions (widows)	500
On account of marriages after discharge	750
Section 16 (aggravated cases)	1,000
Camp cases (leave without pay)	1,500
	<hr/>
Total	<u>£70,200</u>

OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

	European.	Maori.	Total.
Pensions in force at 31st March, 1917	18,941	756	19,697
New pensions granted, 1917-18	2,037	109	2,146
Deaths during 1917-18	1,467	68	1,535
Cancellations, 1917-18	324	24	348
Net increase			<hr/>
			263
Pensions in force at 31st March, 1918	19,187	773	19,960
			<hr/>
			Year 1917-18.
Total European population at 31st March, 1918			1,104,783
Total European pensioners, 65 and over, at 31st March, 1918			16,799
Female European pensioners, 60 to 64, at 31st March, 1918			2,388
Percentage of European pensioners to total European population			1.73
New claims lodged			2,841
New claims rejected			586
Annual liability at 31st March, 1918 (statutory pension)			£481,369
Annual liability at 31st March, 1918 (including allowance under Finance Act, 1917)			£704,849
Average pension (statutory)			£24
Average pension (total)			£37
Gross expenditure for year (statutory pension)			£502,085
Gross expenditure for year (including allowance under Finance Act, 1917)			£643,177
Increase on figures of previous year			£162,947
Cost per head of European population			11s. 7d.
Credit from National Endowment			£30,148
Refunds paid to Public Account			£566

						Year 1917-18.
Number of pensioners in homes and hospitals	..	..	..	..	..	847
Amount paid to controlling authorities of these	..	..	..	..	..	£31,283
Number of pensioners in mental hospitals	..	..	..	..	..	101
Amount paid to Mental Hospitals Department on account of these	..	..	..	..	..	£2,856
Absolutely forfeited instalments	..	..	..	..	..	£2,771
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid	..	..	..	..	..	£2,813
Total claims lodged to date	..	..	..	..	..	63,472
Total claims established	..	..	..	..	..	49,538
Total deaths	..	..	..	..	..	23,267
Total cancellations	..	..	..	..	..	6,311
Grand total paid since 1898	..	..	..	..	..	£6,452,757
Total credit from National Endowment	..	..	..	..	..	£202,521

WIDOWS' PENSIONS.

						European.	Maori.	Total.
Pensions in force at 31st March, 1917	..	..	..	..	..	1,981	43	2,024
New pensions granted 1917-18	..	..	..	..	..	498	11	509
Cancellations during 1917-18	..	..	..	..	..	336	5	341
Net increase	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	168
Pensions in force at 31st March, 1918	..	..	..	..	..	2,143	49	2,192
Total children in receipt of pensions at 31st March, 1918	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,099

						Year 1917-18.	
New claims lodged	577
New claims rejected	72
Annual liability at close of year (statutory pension)	£43,872
Annual liability at close of year (including allowance under Finance Act, 1917)	£73,872
Average pension (statutory)	£20
Average pension (total)	£33
Gross expenditure for year (statutory pension)	£41,986
Gross expenditure for year (including allowance under Finance Act, 1917)	£57,952
Increase on figures of previous year	£19,936
Cost per head of European population	1s.
Refunds paid to Public Account	£20
Absolutely forfeited instalments	£325
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid	£444
Average of total family of pensioner	3.6
Average of family under fourteen	2.3
Total claims lodged to date	4,462
Total claims established	3,701
Total number of children benefited	9,228
Total deaths	53
Total guardians appointed	35
Total cancellations	1,491
Grand total paid to date	£215,098

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN ON WHOSE ACCOUNT PENSION GRANTED.

						Number of Pensioners.	Children under Fourteen.
1911-12	..	..	..	..	..	791	1,923
1912-13	..	..	..	..	..	657	1,604
1913-14	..	..	..	..	..	421	1,090
1914-15	..	..	..	..	..	458	1,158
1915-16	..	..	..	..	..	444	1,180
1916-17	..	..	..	..	..	421	1,075
1917-18	..	..	..	..	..	509	1,198
Totals	..	..	..	..	..	3,701	9,228

MILITARY PENSIONS.

						European.	Maori.	Total.
Pensions in force at 31st March, 1917	..	..	..	..	..	955	277	1,232
Deaths during 1917-18	..	..	..	..	..	83	20	103
New pensions granted 1917-18	..	..	..	..	..	3	21	24
Net decrease	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	79
Pensions in force at 31st March, 1918	..	..	..	..	..	875	278	1,153

	1917-18.
Number of pensioners previously in receipt of old-age pension	292
New claims lodged	26
Annual liability at close of year (statutory pension)	£41,508
Annual liability at close of year (including allowance under Finance Act, 1917)	£53,208
Average pension (statutory)	£36
Average pension (total)	£46
Gross expenditure for year	£50,734
Cost per head of European population	11d.
Increase on figures of previous year	£5,060
Pensioners in homes and hospitals	50
Amount paid to controlling authorities of these	£2,192
Absolutely forfeited instalments	£303
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid	£358
Total claims lodged to date	1,860
Total claims established	1,674
Total deaths	519
Total cancellations	2
Grand total paid to date	£225,425

MINERS' PENSIONS.

Pensions in force at 31st March, 1917	238
New pensions granted 1917-18	91
Deaths during 1917-18	34)
Cancellations, 1917-18	25)
Net increase	—
Pensions in force at 31st March, 1918	270
	1917-18.
New claims lodged	114
New claims rejected	30
Annual liability at close of year (statutory pension)	£10,972
Annual liability at close of year (including allowance under Finance Act, 1917)	£13,572
Average pension (statutory)	£40
Average pension (total)	£50
Gross expenditure for year (statutory pension)	£11,968
Gross expenditure for year (including allowance under Finance Act, 1917)	£13,275
Increase on figures of previous year	£5,209
Cost per head of European population	2½d.
Credit to vote from gold duty	£4,703
Absolutely forfeited instalments	£79
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid	£109
Total claims lodged to date	427
Total claims established	364
Total claims rejected	51
Total deaths	69
Total amount paid to date	£22,850
Total credit from gold duty	£11,403
Total amount paid on account of funeral expenses	£738

NUMBER OF PENSIONS AT EACH RATE GRANTED SINCE COMMENCEMENT.

	Annual Value.
	£
147 at £52 per annum	7,644
76 at £39	2,964
140 at £32 10s.	4,550
1 at £50	50
364	£15,208

AGES (IN GROUPS) OF PENSIONERS AT 31ST MARCH, 1918.

Ages.	Miners.	Widows.
32-40	5	10
41-50	20	38
51-60	31	37
61-64	16	13
65-70	35	14
Over 70	45	6
	152	118
	270	

COST OF ADMINISTRATION.

	£
Salaries	8,957
Contribution to Post Office	3,750
Fees for certificates of age	6
Honoraria of members of War Pensions Board.. .. .	185
Interpreters' fees	3
Light, firing, and water	17
Medical fees	3,577
Office requisites	140
Postage and telegrams	1,408
Printing and stationery	980
Telephones	81
Travelling-expenses	749
Contingencies	786
Allowances to officers temporarily performing higher duties	52
War bonus	463
	<hr/>
	£21,154
	<hr/>
Number of officers on staff at 31st March, 1918	93
Percentage of cost of administration to total expenditure for year (£1,280,585)	1.65

ROLL OF HONOUR.

LIST OF OFFICERS WITH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

Morgan, G. O., killed in action (Gallipoli), 11th May, 1915.	
Robertson, A. W., killed in action (France), 22nd June, 1916.	
McBride, D. J., killed in action (France), 7th June, 1917.	
Keddell, P. A., wounded (France), 2nd October, 1916.	
Fortune, G. A., wounded (France), 1918.	
Murphy, B. E.	Dunn, C.
Parfitt, A. H.	Harris, H.
Fulton, E. W.	McEldowney, E. J.
Smythe, R. P.	McKinnon, L.
Smith, H. D.	McLean, W. H.
Waters, B. F.	Boyes, J. H.
Cunningham, P.	

G. C. FACHE,
Commissioner of Pensions.

APPENDIX.

TABLE I.—NUMBER OF WAR PENSIONS IN FORCE AT EACH RATE ON 31ST MARCH, 1918.

Rate (nearest £1).	Soldiers (Permanent).	Soldiers (temporary).	Wives and Parents on Account of Disablement.	On Account of Death.	
				Widows (including Child- ren's Pensions).	Parents and other Dependants.
£ £					
301-340 .. ..	..	..	..	6	..
276-300 .. ..	..	..	..	10	..
251-275 .. ..	..	..	..	12	..
241-250 .. ..	..	..	..	1	..
231-240 .. ..	..	..	1	16	..
221-230 .. ..	..	..	..	10	..
211-220 .. ..	..	..	..	8	..
201-210 .. ..	..	1	..	37	..
191-200 .. ..	..	..	..	19	..
181-190 .. ..	..	..	3	72	..
171-180 .. ..	..	1	..	5	..
161-170 .. ..	..	1	..	37	..
151-160	5	13	11	107	..
141-150 .. ..	..	..	3	11	..
131-140	1	9	20	249	..
121-130 .. ..	..	1	1	1	..
111-120 .. ..	..	56	18	34	2
101-110	6	2,203	33	10	3
96-100 .. ..	..	3	5	..	6
90-95	8	136	13	2	2
88	5	..	..	5	..
84	2	4	9	..	..
83	41	..	..	28	..
81 .. ..	..	..	3	21	2
78	87	1,361	94	278	67
72	5	1	..	..	..
71	5	1	3	..	..
68	1	1	4	..	..
65	56	631	41	3	41
62	1	..	..	..	..
58	12	..	26	..	7
55 .. ..	..	..	3	..	1
52	234	2,316	137	18	222
48 .. ..	..	..	2	..	1
47	11	..	..	..	..
45	2	..	19	..	3
44 .. ..	..	..	..	..	3
42 .. ..	..	..	..	..	15
41 .. ..	..	..	..	..	1
40 .. ..	..	..	..	..	20
39	147	668	122	16	945
35 .. ..	..	..	2	..	..
34 .. ..	..	..	..	..	1
32	18	1	34	..	9
30 .. ..	..	..	..	..	2
26	226	984	187	81	1,849
21	2	..	..	..	..
20	1	..	..	..	8
19	14	4	22	..	26
18 .. ..	..	..	..	1	3
15 .. ..	..	..	..	..	4
13	8	7	12	1	11
12 and under ..	2	2	..	..	11
Totals	900	8,405	828	1,099	3,265

TABLE II.—DISSECTION OF WAR PENSIONS CANCELLED, YEAR 1917-18.

Reason for Cancellation.	Soldiers' Pensions.	Dependants' Pensions.	
		On Account of Dis- ablement.	On Account of Death.
Pensioner dead	47	4	35
Soldier no longer incapacitated	780	318	..
Soldier re-enlisted	56	1	..
Surrendered .. .. .	..	..	8
No application for renewal	141	4	..
Renewal not required	40	2	..
Soldier alive .. .. .	..	..	8
Remarried .. .. .	..	..	8
Convictions for crime	7	..	2
Totals	1,071	329	61
		1,461	

The number of previously cancelled pensions reinstated during the year was 202.

TABLE III.—DISSECTION OF REJECTED WAR-PENSION CLAIMS (SOLDIERS'), YEAR 1917-18.

Reason for Rejection.	Oversea Cases.	New Zealand Cases.	Totals.
Not incapacitated	50	12	62
Not under Act	2	1	3
Re-enlisted	1	..	1
Withdrawn by applicant	1	1	2
Not discharged from Forces	9	..	9
Deceased since claim lodged	2	1	3
Left New Zealand	1	..	1
Incapacity not due to nor aggravated by service—			
Rheumatism	13	15	28
Phthisis	6	5	11
Asthma	4	3	7
Pleurisy	3	2	5
Goitre and throat troubles	2	1	3
Stomach and kidney troubles	6	3	9
Gastritis	1	8	9
Chronic appendicitis	1	3	4
Hernia	7	5	12
Sciatica	3	2	5
Heart	9	9	18
Spinal trouble	3	..	3
Epilepsy	4	4	8
Mental	7	6	13
Neurasthenia	4	7	11
Insomnia	1	1	2
Eyesight defective	47	5	52
Deafness and ear trouble	6	2	8
Injury to hand, arm, or shoulder	15	6	21
Flat feet	10	1	11
Injury to foot or leg	29	17	46
Amputation, toe	1	..	1
Synovitis	3	1	4
Hæmorrhoids	1	2	3
Debility	5	3	8
Defective chest-measurement	1	..	1
Bronchitis	2	4	6
Hydrocele .. .. .	..	1	1
Eczema	1	2	3
Varicose veins	11	8	19
Chronic alcoholism	1	1	2
Self-inflicted wound	1	..	1
Venereal disease	19	1	20
Accident to head	2	4	6
Over age	26	5	31
Totals	321	152	473

TABLE IV.—DISSECTION OF REJECTED WAR-PENSION CLAIMS (DEPENDANTS), YEAR 1917-18.

Reason for Rejection.	Wife.	Widow.	Mother.	Father.	Stepmother.	Grandfather.	Grandmother.	Guardian of Child.	Brother.	Sister.	Daughter over 16.	Aunt.	Uncle.	No Relationship.	Dependant living as Wife.	Totals.
Income and property	39	33	..	..	..	..	3	15	..	..	..	..	..	90
No evidence of dependency	20	45	3	1	2	10	1	39	3	4	1	7	7	143
Death of soldier not due to service	8	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Disability of soldier not due to service	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Soldier not incapacitated	81	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	85
Section 15 of 1916 Act (habits)	1	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
No contract to marry	43	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	43
Soldier not a member of New Zealand Forces	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Soldier not discharged	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Withdrawn by applicant	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Applicant deceased	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Totals	329	11	69	78	3	1	2	13	4	54	3	4	1	7	7	386

GENERAL.

TABLE V.—PENSIONS GRANTED, DEATHS, AND CANCELLATIONS IN EACH YEAR, WITH NUMBER IN FORCE AND ANNUAL VARIATION.

Year ending 31st March.	Number of Pensions granted.	Deaths.	Cancellations.	In Force at End of Year.	Increase.	Decrease.
<i>Old-age.</i>						
1899	7,487	38	6	7,443	..	..
1900	4,699	786	71	11,285	3,842	..
1901	2,227	815	292	12,406	1,120	..
1902	1,694	935	388	12,776	371	..
1903	1,391	1,064	622	12,481	..	295
1904	1,063	928	690	11,926	..	555
1905	1,210	890	476	11,770	..	156
1906	2,075	1,038	225	12,582	812	..
1907	2,031	1,097	259	13,257	675	..
1908	1,740	1,189	239	13,569	312	..
1909	2,113	1,112	174	14,396	827	..
1910	2,304	1,169	211	15,320	924	..
1911	2,399	1,423	276	16,020	700	..
1912	2,318	1,469	220	16,649	629	..
1913	2,072	1,569	643	16,509	..	140
1914	3,320	1,479	300	18,050	1,541	..
1915	3,158	1,582	274	19,352	1,302	..
1916	2,268	1,539	277	19,804	452	..
1917	1,823	1,610	320	19,697	..	107
1918	2,146	1,535	348	19,960	263	..
Totals	49,538	23,267	6,311	..	..	..
<i>Widows'.</i>						
1912	791	..	3	788	..	..
1913	657	3	129	1,313	525	..
1914	421	1	193	1,540	227	..
1915	458	2	208	1,788	248	..
1916	444	4	338	1,890	102	..
1917	421	2	285	2,024	131	..
1918	509	6	335	2,192	168	..
Totals	3,701	18	1,491	..	..	..

TABLE V.—PENSIONS GRANTED, DEATHS, AND CANCELLATIONS IN EACH YEAR, WITH NUMBER IN FORCE AND ANNUAL VARIATION—*continued.*

Year ending 31st March.	Number of Pensions granted.	Deaths.	Cancellations.	In Force at End of Year.	Increase.	Decrease.
<i>Military.</i>						
1913	577	9	..	568	..	..
1914	747	74	1	1,240	672	..
1915	256	108	..	1,388	148	..
1916	60	124	1	1,323	..	65
1917	10	101	..	1,232	..	91
1918	24	103	..	1,153	..	79
Totals	1,674	519	2	..	..	..
<i>Miners'.</i>						
1916	120	..	..	120	..	..
1917	153	35	..	238	118	..
1918	91	34	25	270	32	..
Totals	364	69	25	..	..	..
<i>War.</i>						
1916	1,214	1	22	1,191	..	..
1917	5,316	44	1,294	5,169	3,978	..
1918	10,587	86	1,173	14,497	9,328	..
Totals	17,117	131	2,489	..	..	..

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (1,150 copies), £13 10s.

By Authority: MARCUS F. MARKS, Government Printer, Wellington.—1918.

Price 6d.]

