proposes that the present provisions should be widened to include—(*a.*) Cases in which death from the war disability did not occur within twelve months after marriage; (*b*) cases in which there was issue of the marriage.

It is admitted that the question at issue is the devising of a test for distinguishing marriages that are not genuine, and it is submitted that the above provisions will effectively meet the case.

As an alternative test, representatives of the New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association individually approve of a certificate by a doctor that the man was in sufficiently good health to marry.

10. *That the seven-year limit in subsection (2) of section 3 of the 1915 Act should be abolished.*

The reasonableness of this claim has been unanimously admitted, as the applicant for pension must prove that the soldier died or became disabled as the result of war service.

In addition to the foregoing, various other matters engaged our attention, which will be referred to in due course.

Before entering on a consideration of all the above matters we have to refer to the administration of the existing legislation. After our exhaustive inquiries we are satisfied that the important and difficult duties of the War Pensions Board are performed with efficiency and sympathetic consideration to applicants—in fact, in some respects the Board has given a benevolent and liberal construction to the legislation which it would be difficult to justify on a strict legal interpretation. The composition of the Board is thoroughly representative, and no suggestion has been made of any way in which it could be strengthened or improved. The witnesses generally expressed confidence in the Board's administration of the existing legislation; the matters in respect of which dissatisfaction was expressed were based largely on the present state of the legislation. The evidence also showed that the Director-General of Medical Services is a gentleman of the highest qualifications for his responsible office, that he is fully alive to his responsibilities and most enthusiastic and alert in discharging his duties, and merits the confidence which is reposed in him.

There are, however, some suggestions we shall make as to further dealing with claims by the War Pensions Board in cases in which it is advisable there should be a right of appeal.

Before proceeding further with our report we shall refer to what appears to be the view taken of the nature of a pension by the existing legislation. A pension has a twofold aspect—(1) Its economic side, which would regard a pension as a provision for maintenance; and (2) its other aspect, in which a pension is viewed as a compensation for physical injury, irrespective of financial loss.

These two conceptions seem associated in our present system, but the latter view would appear in some respects to be the dominating factor, as is shown by reference to section 9 of the War Pensions Amendment Act, 1916, which reads,—

"9. Section fifteen of the principal Act is hereby repealed, and the following section substituted therefor:—

"'15. (1.) In determining the rate of pension payable to a member of the Forces, or to the wife or to any child of a member of the Forces, the Board shall not take into consideration the property or income from any source of the applicant.

"'(2.) In determining the rate of pension payable to any dependant of a member of the Forces (other than his wife or children) the Board shall take into consideration the property and income from all sources of the dependant,'"—

and subsection (3) section 8 of the 1917 Amendment Act:—

"(3.) When a permanent pension has been granted it shall not afterwards be reduced on account of any change in the earning capacity of the member."

We take, therefore, as a starting-point the scale of pensions granted under the three schedules to the 1917 Act and also under subsection (3), section 5, of the 1915 Act, where these last mentioned have become permanent grants, and which relate