

state of feelings. The wife also blames the stress of war. It is quite obvious that neither party would in any way consider that anything else was the cause, because it is natural to blame something, and also because that to which they lay the blame will bring in monetary assistance. It is difficult to know to what extent such relapses should be accepted as entitled to further treatment or pension when it is so clear that in the majority of cases the condition is constitutional and not reasonably attributable to service.

It is clearly to be understood that the preceding remarks do not refer in any sense to malingering. Pure malingering is rare, although the partial form, which consists in an exaggeration of existing symptoms, is undoubtedly common.

*Homes for Chronic Cases.*—There are a certain number of cases which require skilled nursing and more or less constant medical supervision for long periods, perhaps many years. As an example of such cases I may quote gun-shot wound or tuberculosis of the spine. The ward of a public hospital was clearly not a proper repository for such patients, nor, perhaps, would the hospital authorities be prepared to dedicate much-needed beds to boarders of such permanence. To treat these men in their own homes would be extremely unsatisfactory and expensive. One and sometimes two trained nurses would be constantly required, and in the majority of the cases the pensioner's home would be unsuitable for his case. To accommodate these cases there has been established in each centre a "Home for Chronic Cases." The accommodation of these Homes varies from twenty-three to thirty-six beds. Trained nurses and a part-time medical officer are employed at each.

It has been arranged with the Red Cross Societies in Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin, and in Christchurch with the combined patriotic bodies, that a committee of these bodies conduct the Homes and supply such "services of luxury" as has been regarded as their proper field. The ordinary maintenance of the patient is paid for by the Department, which exercises medical supervision of the Homes.

These Homes are all pleasantly situated, and the method of control renders the atmosphere really "home-like." They are greatly appreciated by the patients, and their provision has solved the problem of the disposal of these unfortunate cases in the most satisfactory manner.

*Dental.*—The Director of Dental Services, Mr. T. A. Hunter, very kindly continues to lend his valuable assistance to the Department in deciding questions of eligibility for and arranging the carrying-out of dental treatment.

The following table sets out the numbers of applications for treatment as service patients during the year ended 31st March, 1924, and the numbers actually under treatment on 31st March, 1924 :—

Medical District.	Number of Applications during the Year ended 31st March, 1924.	Receiving Treatment at 31st March, 1924.		
		In-patients.	Out-patients.	Total.
Auckland .. .. .	633	93	201	294
Wellington .. .. .	827	148*	218	366
Christchurch .. .. .	333	180†	176	356
Dunedin .. .. .	502	77	152	229
Totals .. .. .	2,295	498	747	1,245

\* Includes patients in Pukeora Sanatorium. Sanatorium, Cashmere.

† Includes patients in Hanmer Hospital and Upper

As was anticipated, the rate of decrease in patients undergoing treatment is a diminishing one, as the more chronic cases come to constitute a relatively larger proportion of the whole. Even with this expectation, however, the diminution has been disappointingly slow. During the last six months the numbers of pensioners under treatment have been practically stationary. Indeed, latterly the number of applications for treatment has increased, probably because it is considered that to be under treatment would justify a claim for the economic pension which was introduced by the legislation of last session.

Expenditure in connection with the medical treatment of war pensioners for the year ended 31st March, 1924, and which is a charge against "war expenses," is as follows :—

	£
Salaries .. .. .	6,848
Maintenance in hospital .. .. .	90,299
Out-patient treatment .. .. .	3,880
Artificial limbs and surgical appliances .. .. .	6,250
Travelling-expenses of patients .. .. .	4,711
Accommodation for patients suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis .. .. .	3,733
Expenses of Artificial-limb Factory, Wellington .. .. .	1,363
Funeral expenses .. .. .	774
Medical fees .. .. .	442
Freight and cartage .. .. .	370
Rent of offices .. .. .	167
Dental treatment .. .. .	142
Office fittings .. .. .	16
Telephone and sundry expenses .. .. .	12
	<u>£119,007</u>

30th June, 1924

D. MCGAVIN,  
Medical Administrator of Pensions.