

1924.  
NEW ZEALAND

# TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PENSIONS DEPARTMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1924.

*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, 30th June, 1924.

I have the honour to furnish herewith, for the information of Parliament, the report of the Department relating to war, old-age, widows', Maori War, miners', epidemic, and sundry pensions for the year ended 31st March, 1924. A report by the Medical Administrator of Pensions on the medical branch of the Department appears as Appendix I.

The following comparative statements relate to the annual value and gross payments of all pensions administered by the Department for the past two years :—

## PENSIONS IN FORCE, AND ANNUAL VALUE.

Class of Pension.	At 31st March, 1923.		At 31st March, 1924.	
	Number.	Annual Value.	Number.	Annual Value.
		£		£
War .. .. .	26,460	1,349,857	23,166	1,213,126
Old-age .. .. .	21,181	770,295	21,468	780,664
Widows' .. .. .	3,411	195,747	3,526	209,739
Maori War .. .. .	669	32,781	589	28,861
Miners' .. .. .	544	33,826	580	36,634
Epidemic .. .. .	569	43,120	457	25,886
Boer War .. .. .	75	3,173	72	3,100
Sundry pensions and annuities .. .. .	90	7,638	93	7,891
Civil Service Act, 1908 .. .. .	88	22,954	74	19,702
Totals .. .. .	53,087	2,459,391	50,025	2,325,603

## GROSS PAYMENTS.

Class of Pension.	1922-23.	1923-24.
War .. .. .	1,489,392	1,315,560
Old-age .. .. .	755,324	767,805
Widows' .. .. .	188,021	202,818
Maori War .. .. .	34,004	30,350
Miners' .. .. .	33,447	36,084
Epidemic .. .. .	52,371	32,702
Boer War .. .. .	3,058	3,146
Sundry pensions and annuities .. .. .	7,262	8,033
Civil Service Act, 1908 .. .. .	26,937	21,145
Totals .. .. .	2,589,816	2,417,643
Cost per head of European population .. .. .	£2 0s. 9d.	£1 17s. 4d.

The following figures relate to the war and other pensions paid by the Department during the year on behalf of other Governments :—

Government.	Class of Pension.	Number at 31st March, 1924.	Annual Value.	Average Pension.	Payments, 1923-24.
			£	£	£
Great Britain .. .. .	War .. .. .	1,800	101,858	56	} 145,793
" .. .. .	Army and civil ..	533	25,125	47	
Australia .. .. .	War .. .. .	553	24,618	44	24,703
India .. .. .	Army and civil ..	86	18,746	218	29,137
South Africa .. .. .	War .. .. .	3	143	47	168
" .. .. .	Civil .. .. .	24	2,859	119	3,008
Crown colonies .. .. .	" .. .. .	23	5,623	244	5,991
Totals .. .. .	.. .. .	3,022	£178,972	..	£208,800

#### LEGISLATION.

Following upon the report of the War Pensions Commission, which investigated the whole question of war pensions in the preceding year, amending legislation was enacted on the 29th August, 1923, the main features of which were provisions for—

- (1.) The setting-up of an Appeal Board.
- (2.) The payment of economic pensions.
- (3.) Clothing-allowances of £8 and £6 per annum to upper- and lower-leg amputees.
- (4.) Increased attendant's allowance, from £1 to £3 a week.
- (5.) Increased pension for certain arm and leg amputees.

*Appeal Board.*—The members of this Board consist of a Chairman, the first appointee being a Judge of the Supreme Court, and two medical men, one of whom is appointed by the New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association. Sittings are held in rotation at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, the Chairman travelling to these centres and adjudicating with medical men residing there. The earlier legislation providing for a purely medical Appeal Board has been repealed. Seven hundred appeals have been lodged to date, of which number 415 have been dealt with as follows :—

Appeals dismissed—						
Assessment .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	152
Attributability .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	64
Not under Act .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	3
						219
Appeals upheld—						
Assessment .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	127
Attributability .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	30
						157
Appeals adjourned .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	24
Appeals withdrawn .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	11
Pensions made permanent .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	4
						415

The distribution of the cases dismissed and upheld in the various districts is shown hereunder :—

					Dismissed.	Upheld.
Wellington .. .. .	..	..	..	..	23	19
Dunedin .. .. .	..	..	..	..	11	17
Christchurch .. .. .	..	..	..	..	59	41
Auckland .. .. .	..	..	..	..	126	80
					219	157

*Economic Pensions.*—These consist of three classes, as follows :—

- (1.) A maximum of £1 10s. weekly to disabled soldiers.
- (2.) A maximum of 10s. weekly to widows of soldiers, with 2s. 6d. weekly for each child receiving pension.
- (3.) A maximum of £1 weekly to widowed mothers of deceased soldiers.

In each case the income of the pensioner affects the grant. Regarding class 1 (*i.e.*, economic pensions to soldiers), these have taken the place of the previously payable supplementary grants of £1 a week payable under section 4 of the 1917 Act, and the 10s. a week granted under the Finance Act, 1920, and are also payable under certain conditions to soldiers whose disablement is of such a nature as to militate against their obtaining or following remunerative employment. Soldiers pensioned for minor disabilities do not receive economic pensions.

The following shows the number of claims for economic pension received under each head between the 1st September, 1923, and the 31st March, 1924 :—

Pension.	Received.	Granted.	Declined.	Outstanding.
Soldiers' .. .. .	940	633	282	25
Widows' .. .. .	150	107	40	3
Widowed mothers' .. .. .	295	184	108	3

The number and annual values of the economic pensions granted during the same period are included in the following figures :—

Pension.	Payable prior to 1923 Act.		Granted under 1923 Act.		Total Economic Pensions.	
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.
		£		£		£
Soldiers' .. .. .	1,284	78,312	633	41,392	1,917	119,704
Wives of soldiers' .. .. .	..	..	..	1,924	..	1,924
Widows' .. .. .	59	1,976	107	3,276	166	5,252
Widowed mothers' .. .. .	..	..	184	5,408	184	5,408
	1,343	80,288	924	52,000	2,267	132,288

The following figures show the weekly rate of statutory pension payable in those cases where economic pensions were granted to soldiers :—

Weekly Rate of Statutory Pension.		Percentage of Disability.	Number of Pensioners.
£ s. d.	£ s. d.		
0 15 0	.. .. .	..	6
0 17 6	.. .. .	..	1
1 0 0	.. .. .	50	29
1 2 6 to 1 7 6 ..	.. .. .	..	38
1 10 0	.. .. .	75	96
1 12 0	.. .. .	80	44
1 12 6 to 1 14 0 ..	.. .. .	..	12
1 15 0	.. .. .	..	56
1 16 0 to 1 17 0 ..	.. .. .	90	5
2 0 0 and upwards ..	.. .. .	100	1,630
			1,917

The annual values of the increases granted under all heads of the Amendment Act of 1923 are as follows :—

	Annual Value.
	£
Sections 3 and 4: Economic pensions (soldiers and wives) .. .. .	43,316
Section 5: Economic pensions (widows) .. .. .	3,276
„ 6: Economic pensions (widowed mothers) .. .. .	5,408
„ 8: Clothing-allowances .. .. .	3,126
„ 9: Attendants' allowances .. .. .	856
„ 16: Increases to amputees .. .. .	606
	<u>£56,588</u>

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
Year 1918-19	14,749	5,292
Year 1919-20	11,493	3,990
Year 1920-21	1,081	1,878
Year 1921-22	367	891
Year 1922-23	198	635
Year 1923-24	160	550
Totals	40,952	19,688

GROSS ANNUAL VALUE OF ALL PENSIONS GRANTED TO DATE.

	Number.	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	780,057	73
Year 1918-19	16,954	1,167,081	68
Year 1919-20	15,183	872,627	57
Year 1920-21	2,207	163,713	66
Year 1921-22	945	63,685	67
Year 1922-23	625	43,867	70
Year 1923-24	551	40,836	74
Totals	53,582	3,474,061	64

NOTE.—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 annual-values total.

SUMMARY OF ANNUAL LIABILITY AT 31ST MARCH, 1924.

Class of Pension.	Number of Pensioners.	Number of Children.	Annual Value.	Average Pension.
			£	£
Soldiers (permanent)	6,784	..	333,946	49
Soldiers (temporary)	7,731	..	407,847	53
Dependants of disabled soldiers	807	1,205	62,916	78
Widows (without children)	592	..	51,793	87
Widows (with children)	843	1,385	131,563	156
Other dependants of deceased soldiers—				
Parents	5,655	24	198,164	35
Other adult dependants	212	7	6,911	32
Guardians of children	542	753	19,986	37
Totals, &c.	23,166	3,374	1,213,126	52

## SUMMARY OF PAYMENTS.

The payments for war pensions show a decrease during the year, the figures compared with those of the previous year being as follows :—

	1922-23.	1923-24.
	£	£
Payments made in New Zealand .. .. .	1,395,447	1,219,513
Payments made in London .. .. .	60,878	59,064
Payments made in Australia .. .. .	32,130	33,625
Payments made in Canada .. .. .	116	2,229
Payments made in South Africa .. .. .	107	397
Other foreign payments .. .. .	338	732
Allotments paid after casualty .. .. .	376	..
Totals .. .. .	<u>£1,489,392</u>	<u>£1,315,560</u>

*Summary of Total Payments to the 31st March, 1924.*

	£
From 1st September, 1915, to 31st March, 1916 .. .. .	13,910
Year 1916-17 .. .. .	180,389
Year 1917-18 .. .. .	515,445
Year 1918-19 .. .. .	1,199,755
Year 1919-20 .. .. .	1,812,419
Year 1920-21 .. .. .	1,886,952
Year 1921-22 .. .. .	1,726,174
Year 1922-23 .. .. .	1,489,392
Year 1923-24 .. .. .	1,315,560
	<u>£10,139,996</u>

## PENSIONS PAYABLE OUTSIDE NEW ZEALAND AS AT THE 31st MARCH, 1924.

	Soldiers.		Wives of Soldiers.	Dependants.		Annual Liability.
	Permanent.	Temporary.	Temporary.	Widows.	Other Dependants.	
						£
Great Britain ..	118	144	12	188	712	57,009
Australia ..	83	274	11	72	180	33,047
Other countries ..	13	25	1	4	10	2,937
Totals ..	214	443	24	264	902	92,993

## OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

	European.	Maori.	Total.
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1923 .. .. .	20,135	1,046	21,181
New pensions granted, 1923-24 .. .. .	2,280	269	2,549
Deaths during 1923-24 .. .. .	1,779	91	2,262
Cancellations, 1923-24 .. .. .	379	13	
Net increase .. .. .	..	..	287
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1924 .. .. .	20,257	1,211	21,468
Year 1923-24.			
Total European population at the 31st March, 1924 .. .. .	..	..	1,293,934
Total European pensioners, sixty-five and over, at the 31st March, 1924 .. .. .	..	..	15,158
Female European pensioners, sixty to sixty-four, at the 31st March, 1924 .. .. .	..	..	5,099
Percentage of European pensioners to total European population .. .. .	..	..	1.56
New claims lodged .. .. .	..	..	3,215
New claims rejected .. .. .	..	..	636
Annual liability at the 31st March, 1924 .. .. .	..	..	£780,664
Average pension .. .. .	..	..	£36 7s.
Gross expenditure for year .. .. .	..	..	£767,805
Increase on figures of previous year .. .. .	..	..	£12,481
Cost per head of European population .. .. .	..	..	11s. 10d.
Credit from national endowment .. .. .	..	..	£33,337
Refunds paid to Public Account .. .. .	..	..	£2,253
Number of pensioners in homes and hospitals .. .. .	..	..	968
Amount paid to controlling authorities of these .. .. .	..	..	£38,682
Number of pensioners in mental hospitals .. .. .	..	..	94
Amount paid to Mental Hospitals Department on account of these .. .. .	..	..	£3,051
Unpaid instalments as at 31st March, 1924. .. .. .	..	..	£2,752
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid .. .. .	..	..	£3,909

Total claims lodged to date	..	..	..	..	81,963
Total claims established	..	..	..	..	64,097
Total deaths	..	..	..	..	34,169
Total cancellations	..	..	..	..	8,460
Grand total paid since 1898	..	..	..	..	£10,926,880
Total credit from national endowment	..	..	..	..	£391,782

## WIDOWS' PENSIONS.

	European.	Maori.	Total.
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1923	3,237	174	3,411
New pensions granted, 1923-24	694	36	730
Cancellations, 1923-24	580	35	615
Net increase..	..	..	115
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1924	3,351	175	3,526
Total children in receipt of pensions at the 31st March, 1924	..	..	8,036
Year 1923-24.			
New claims lodged	..	..	720
New claims rejected	..	..	105
Number of children on whose account pensions granted	..	..	1,792
Annual liability at close of year	..	..	£209,739
Average pension	..	..	£59 10s.
Gross expenditure for year	..	..	£202,818
Increase on figures of previous year	..	..	£14,797
Cost per head of European population	..	..	3s. 2d.
Refunds paid to Public Account	..	..	£272
Unpaid instalments as at 31st March, 1924	..	..	£930
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid	..	..	£1,256
Average of total family of pensioners	..	..	3.98
Average of family under fourteen years	..	..	2.45
Total claims lodged to date	..	..	9,867
Total claims established	..	..	8,313
Total number of children benefited	..	..	20,614
Total deaths	..	..	179
Total guardians appointed	..	..	101
Total cancellations	..	..	4,709
Grand total paid to date	..	..	£1,197,412

## MAORI WAR PENSIONS.

	European.	Maori.	Total.
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1923	508	161	669
Deaths during 1923-24	69	11	81
Cancellations, 1923-24	1	..	1
New pensions granted, 1923-24	1	..	1
Net decrease	..	..	80
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1924	439	150	589
Year 1923-24.			
New claims lodged	..	..	3
Number of pensioners previously in receipt of old-age pensions	..	..	104
Annual liability at close of year	..	..	£28,861
Average pension	..	..	£49
Gross expenditure for year	..	..	£30,350
Cost per head of European population	..	..	6d.
Decrease on figures of previous year	..	..	£3,654
Pensioners in homes and hospitals	..	..	54
Amount paid to controlling authorities of these	..	..	£1,497
Unpaid instalments as at 31st March, 1924	..	..	£146
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid	..	..	£151
Total claims lodged to date	..	..	1,884
Total claims established	..	..	1,696
Total deaths	..	..	1,103
Total cancellations	..	..	4
Grand total paid to date	..	..	£463,302

## MINERS' PENSIONS.

	Total.
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1923	544
New pensions granted, 1923-24	88
Deaths during 1923-24	48
Cancellations, 1923-24	4
Net increase	36
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1924	580

	Year 1923-24.
New claims lodged .. .. .	119
New claims rejected .. .. .	24
Annual liability at close of year .. .. .	£36,634
Average pension .. .. .	£63 3s.
Gross expenditure for year .. .. .	£36,084
Increase on figures of previous year .. .. .	£2,637
Cost per head of European population .. .. .	7d.
Credit to vote from gold duty .. .. .	£3,498
Unpaid instalments as at 31st March, 1924 .. .. .	£232
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid .. .. .	£343
Total claims lodged to date .. .. .	1,220
Total claims established .. .. .	1,052
Total claims rejected .. .. .	145
Total deaths .. .. .	314
Total cancellations .. .. .	158
Total amount paid to date .. .. .	£180,493
Total credit from gold duty .. .. .	£30,704
Total amount paid on account of funeral expenses .. .. .	£3,038

## NUMBER OF PENSIONS AT EACH RATE AT THE 31ST MARCH, 1924.

	Annual Value. £
181 at £91 per annum .. .. .	16,471
103 at £65 per annum .. .. .	6,695
296 at £45 10s. per annum .. .. .	13,468
580 .. .. .	£36,634

## EPIDEMIC PENSIONS.

	Total.
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1923 .. .. .	569
Cancellations, 1923-24 --Net decrease .. .. .	112
Pensions in force at the 31st March, 1924 .. .. .	457

	Year 1923-24.
Annual liability at close of year .. .. .	£25,886
Average pension .. .. .	£56 13s.
Gross expenditure for year .. .. .	£32,702
Decrease on figures of previous year .. .. .	£19,669
Cost per head of European population .. .. .	6d.
Unpaid instalments as at 31st March, 1924 .. .. .	£68
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid .. .. .	£121

## COST OF ADMINISTRATION.

	£
Salaries .. .. .	21,272
Temporary assistance .. .. .	7,277
Advertising .. .. .	22
Exchange and commission on money-orders, &c. .. .. .	320
Fees for certificates of age .. .. .	8
Fuel, light, power, and water .. .. .	70
Interpreters' fees .. .. .	1
Medical fees .. .. .	7,400
Office-cleaning .. .. .	32
Office fittings and requisites .. .. .	87
Contribution to Post-office for payment of pensions .. .. .	15,902
Postage, telegrams, and rent of boxes .. .. .	2,552
Printing and stationery .. .. .	1,715
Rent of offices .. .. .	633
Telephones .. .. .	63
Transfer and removal expenses .. .. .	33
Travelling-expenses of officers and pensioners .. .. .	4,997
Expenses, War Pensions Appeal Board .. .. .	922
Repairs to typewriters and office fittings .. .. .	53
Overtime .. .. .	128
Sundry payments .. .. .	10
	£63,497

Number of officers on staff at 31st March, 1924 .. .. .	157
Percentage of cost of administration to total payments for year (£2,626,443) .. .. .	2.4

## APPENDICES.

## APPENDIX I.—MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION.

THE following table sets out the nature of the disabilities for which war pensions are being granted.

In many cases a pensioner is suffering from more than one disability, but in this classification only the dominant disability is considered, so that the total number of these is the same as the total number of individuals in receipt of war pension on the 31st March, 1924.

Wounds—						Permanent.	Temporary.	Total.
Upper extremity	..	..	..	..	..	1,577	600	2,177
Lower extremity	..	..	..	..	..	1,648	858	2,506
Head and neck	..	..	..	..	..	440	289	729
Thorax	..	..	..	..	..	356	292	648
Abdomen	..	..	..	..	..	160	109	269
						4,181	2,148	6,329
Amputations—								
Upper extremity	..	..	..	..	..	430	8	438
Lower extremity	..	..	..	..	..	584	17	601
Double	..	..	..	..	..	39	..	39
						1,053	25	1,078
Special senses—								
Ocular—								
Totally blind	..	..	..	..	..	21	..	21
Loss of one eye	..	..	..	..	..	337	9	346
Other disabilities of eye	..	..	..	..	..	150	33	183
						508	42	550
Auditory	..	..	..	..	..	261	84	345
Nasal	..	..	..	..	..	2	16	18
Respiratory system—								
Pulmonary tuberculosis	..	..	..	..	..	6	1,462	1,468
Other diseases	..	..	..	..	..	23	929	952
						29	2,391	2,420
Circulatory system	..	..	..	..	..	95	358	453
Nervous system—								
Organic disease	..	..	..	..	..	27	31	58
Functional disease	..	..	..	..	..	30	827	857
						57	858	915
Insanity	..	..	..	..	..	2	28	30
Gastro-intestinal	..	..	..	..	..	43	271	314
Genito-urinary	..	..	..	..	..	43	121	164
General diseases	..	..	..	..	..	93	848	941
Fractures (not due to wounds)								
Upper extremity	..	..	..	..	..	54	28	82
Lower extremity	..	..	..	..	..	52	40	92
						106	68	174
Diseases of bone	..	..	..	..	..	14	18	32
Injuries of joints (not due to wounds)	..	..	..	..	..	204	242	446
Spinal disease	..	..	..	..	..	9	81	90
Deformities	..	..	..	..	..	38	23	61
Disease of skin	..	..	..	..	..	3	8	11
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	43	101	144
						6,784	7,731	14,515

It will be seen that pensions are classified as “permanent” and “temporary.”

When a disability reaches a condition which may reasonably be regarded as final and stationary a permanent pension is granted. This is desirable in the interests both of the pensioner and the Department. A man in receipt of a permanent pension has a feeling of security in regard to his pension, and he is not subjected to the annoyance and inconvenience of undergoing periodical medical examinations. At the same time he knows that, should the disability for which he is in receipt of pension become worse, he will be re-examined on application to the Department, his pension adjusted accordingly, and any necessary treatment given. From the point of view of the Department the administrative work and expense (often considerable) associated with the constant review of temporary pensions are avoided.

*Wounds.*—It will be noted that a considerable number (about one-third) of the disabilities classified as “wounds” are still in receipt of temporary pension. These are cases in which inflammatory processes have persisted or recurred, scars are painful, foreign bodies have required removal.



or where such conditions as injuries of nerves, ununited fractures, or involvement of joints, are still undergoing treatment with a prospect of improvement.

*Amputations.*—During the year the supply of light-metal (duralumin) artificial limbs has been arranged. Extensive inquiry in London has shown the superiority of these over the old wooden limbs. These limbs are very much lighter, which is a matter of great importance, particularly to men with an amputation above the knee, especially if their occupations entail their moving about a good deal. The limbs are also much stronger, and require repair less frequently. These repairs also most often take the form of replacement of wearing-parts, and can be effected by posting the limb to the workshop. Their life is at least twice that of wooden limbs, and probably much more. As these limbs are not yet made in New Zealand, it has been necessary to arrange for their importation from England. The only part requiring actual fitting (the bucket) is made in the Government Artificial-limb Workshop, and fitted to the limb when received. A cable code has been arranged with the manufacturers so as to avoid delay. As, however, these limbs vary little from a standard, it is anticipated that by keeping a stock of several sizes on hand the delay entailed in cabling the measurement will in most cases be avoided. In any case, however, every amputee is already provided with a duplicate limb, so that he may always have one available, and he would therefore suffer no hardship in waiting a month or two for the replacement of one limb.

Arrangements have been made to have all amputees measured, so that it will not be necessary for them to attend the factory for that purpose. This will leave only one attendance (for fitting) necessary, and it is thought that in many cases, by the taking of plaster casts, even this attendance will not be necessary.

An expert was brought from London to instruct the employees in the Government Artificial-limb Workshop in the working of the metal and in the repair of these limbs.

Amputees who have already been supplied with duralumin limbs have expressed their satisfaction with them, and apparently have no doubt of their superiority to the wooden limb.

*Pulmonary Tuberculosis.*—It is not at present clear that the incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis has been increased by the war; an endeavour is being made to ascertain if this has been the case. The concentration of patients in sanatoria has tended to emphasize the prevalence of this condition, especially among returned soldiers. Ample sanatorium accommodation is available for tuberculous ex-soldiers at Pukeora (in the North Island) and the Upper Sanatorium, Cashmere (for South Island patients). Cases not suitable for treatment at these institutions are accommodated in the Wakari Sanatorium, Dunedin, in shelters connected with the public hospital at Auckland, and at other public hospitals throughout the Dominion. Each patient on leaving the sanatorium is provided with a specially constructed tent, or an allowance wherewith to build a shelter or make approved structural alterations to his house. The object of this provision is twofold: in the first place, it ensures that the patient will continue to live under suitable conditions after his discharge; and, in the second, that he need not then come into such intimate contact with members of his family or other associates as to endanger them by infection. A certain amount of furniture is also provided with this accommodation. By regular medical examinations by chest specialists the progress of each of these cases is carefully followed.

*Functional Nervous Disease (Neurasthenia and Hysteria).*—It will be noted that there are 857 of these cases in receipt of pension; their proportion to all other pensioners is 1:16.

The treatment and pensioning of these cases present the most difficult problems with which the medical administration has to deal. The genesis of many of these cases is similar to those which have become familiar where compensation is sought under the Workers' Compensation Act. An intense desire, often (perhaps generally) subconscious, to secure financial consideration for their disabilities leads to the development of a train of nervous symptoms which are generally not difficult to recognize. Under the Workers' Compensation Act, however, when the case is settled, these symptoms disappear, often with dramatic rapidity. Unfortunately, in the case of pensioners the course is different. The worse the patient becomes the greater is his pension up to a certain limit. To maintain the pension at the maximum the disability has also to maintain a certain standard. It is difficult to conceive conditions better calculated to perpetuate functional nervous disease, especially when it is remembered that in the very nature of their condition these patients are defective in self-reliance and especially susceptible to suggestion.

That in a considerable proportion of these pensioners the nervous system was originally less able to resist the disturbing effect of external impressions than normally appears clear from the fact that many of these cases developed in camp in New Zealand, on transports, in England, at the overseas base in France, or, commonly, very shortly after reaching the front.

An extremely common cause of the persistence of these conditions is the indiscriminating solicitude of well-meaning associations and individuals. It is this cultivation of the nervous disorder by such individuals (perhaps not always disinterested) which renders the obvious course of the grant of a final gratuity futile. This course, if it were possible, would complete the analogy with cases under the Workers' Compensation Act and achieve its happy results.

It is to be pointed out that the symptoms complained of by these patients are often concentrated on a particular organ, especially if some organic disability has actually previously affected it; for instance, such symptoms not uncommonly group themselves in the abdominal region when the individual has suffered a previous attack of dysentery, which may have been quite slight and transient.

If it has been necessary to retain patients in hospital for some considerable time such symptoms not uncommonly develop shortly before or after discharge ("hospitalization").

These patients are treated at the neurological centre at Hanmer Springs, which is admirably suited to the purpose. The patients generally leave the institution greatly improved, with increased self-reliance. Unfortunately, they constantly relapse whenever exposed to any anxiety or strain such as may arise in their domestic or business life. The returned soldier is just as likely to suffer in this way as the person who did not go to the war (and in some cases more so, not because of the strain to which he has been subjected at the war, but because on his return to New Zealand he has dropped behind a little in the struggle for existence). The clerk takes up land; he has no knowledge of farming; his farm fails; he and his family are in grave financial difficulties, and he immediately develops neurasthenic symptoms. His failure he attributes not to his lack of knowledge, but to the fact that his health was ruined at the war, and his proof to himself and his family of this is the present state of neurasthenia. Domestic troubles are just as common. The civilian patient will admit these domestic troubles. The service patient blames the war and his condition for his altered

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.

APPENDIX II.—TABLES.

TABLE I.—NUMBER OF WAR PENSIONS IN FORCE AT EACH RATE ON THE 31ST MARCH, 1924.

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.
£    £					
261-300 .. ..	1	1	..	3	..
234-260 .. ..	28	2	1	25	..
201-233 .. ..	15	3	5	59	..
191-200 .. ..	..	8	..	33	..
181-190 .. ..	74	521	12	105	1
171-180 .. ..	7	..	..	5	..
161-170 .. ..	36	45	1	66	1
151-160 .. ..	19	44	30	165	..
141-150 .. ..	18	33	1	18	..
131-140 .. ..	23	13	8	60	..
121-130 .. ..	62	148	50	330	12
111-120 .. ..	35	26	11	59	10
101-110 .. ..	77	206	130	24	11
91-100 .. ..	223	106	29	8	41
81- 90 .. ..	387	2	14	66	9
71- 80 .. ..	352	344	168	452	178
61- 70 .. ..	266	220	29	2	82
51- 60 .. ..	1,092	879	144	87	504
41- 50 .. ..	248	182	18	..	51
31- 40 .. ..	1,243	1,105	63	41	1,566
21- 30 .. ..	1,911	3,487	73	360	3,312
6- 20 .. ..	667	356	20	9	89
Totals .. ..	6,784	7,731	807	1,977	5,867

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

Year ended 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	..
1919 .. ..	..	..	2,235	2,013	310	19,872	..	88
1920 .. ..	..	..	2,289	1,798	370	19,993	121	..
1921 .. ..	..	..	2,152	1,880	428	19,837	..	156
1922 .. ..	..	..	2,553	1,578	321	20,491	654	..
1923 .. ..	..	..	2,781	1,763	328	21,181	690	..
1924 .. ..	..	..	2,549	1,870	392	21,468	287	..
Totals .. ..	..	..	64,097	34,169	8,460	..	..	..

TABLE II.—PENSIONS GRANTED, DEATHS, AND CANCELLATIONS IN EACH YEAR, ETC.—*continued.*

Year ended 31st March.				Number of Pensions granted.	Deaths.	Cancellations.	In Force at End of Year.	Increase.	Decrease.
<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	134	..
1918	..	..	..	509	6	335	2,192	168	..
1919	..	..	..	1,349	11	319	3,211	1,019	..
1920	..	..	..	767	18	516	3,444	233	..
1921	..	..	..	627	8	642	3,421	..	23
1922	..	..	..	523	3	598	3,343	..	78
1923	..	..	..	616	12	536	3,411	68	..
1924	..	..	..	730	8	607	3,526	115	..
Totals	..	..	..	8,313	78	4,709	..	..	..
<i>Maori War.</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
1919	..	..	..	12	125	..	1,040	..	113
1920	..	..	..	5	106	..	939	..	101
1921	..	..	..	2	130	..	811	..	128
1922	..	..	..	1	72	..	740	..	71
1923	..	..	..	1	71	1	669	..	71
1924	..	..	..	1	80	1	589	..	80
Totals	..	..	..	1,696	1,103	4	..	..	..
<i>Miners'.</i>									
1916	..	..	..	120	..	..	120	..	..
1917	..	..	..	153	35	..	238	118	..
1918	..	..	..	91	34	25	270	32	..
1919	..	..	..	82	41	71	240	..	30
1920	..	..	..	237	23	39	415	175	..
1921	..	..	..	107	43	5	474	59	..
1922	..	..	..	78	38	8	506	32	..
1923	..	..	..	96	52	6	544	38	..
1924	..	..	..	88	48	4	580	36	..
Totals	..	..	..	1,052	314	158	..	..	..
<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	..
1919	..	..	..	16,954	531	3,493	27,427	12,930	..
1920	..	..	..	15,183	291	7,748	34,571	7,144	..
1921	..	..	..	2,207	358	4,656	31,764	..	2,807
1922	..	..	..	945	369	3,249	29,091	..	2,673
1923	..	..	..	625	358	2,898	26,460	..	2,631
1924	..	..	..	551	361	3,345	23,166	..	3,294
Totals	..	..	..	53,582	2,399	27,878	..	..	..
<i>Epidemic.</i>									
Number of pensions taken over from Public Health Department on 1st April, 1920				939	..	..	..	..	..
1921	..	..	..	27	..	117	849	..	90
1922	..	..	..	6	..	172	683	..	166
1923	..	..	..	..	..	114	569	..	114
1924	..	..	..	..	..	112	457	..	112
Totals	..	..	..	972	..	515	..	..	..

G. C. FACHE,  
Commissioner of Pensions.

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