

The evidence satisfies us that the sympathetic interest of the community in the returned soldier is tending to wane, and until it is again stimulated and organized cannot be relied upon by him as tending to offset his economic and industrial shortcomings.

(c) APPROXIMATE NUMBER.

We would state the number of these persons as about five thousand. This number is approximate only, as we know of no means existing at present whereby any approach to accuracy could be secured. We pursued the question of the approximate number of men within the scope of our order of reference on every occasion when we examined officials of the Returned Soldiers' Association or similar organizations, and we obtained the assistance of the Pensions Department in an endeavour to trace their numbers. It seems to us that the only way in which these figures can be accurately obtained would be by the inclusion of appropriate headings in the census returns of the Dominion.

(d) NATURE OF DISABILITIES.

Loss of adaptability due to age; loss of economic and industrial value due to war experiences and the abnormal conditions that existed in the Dominion after the war; physical disabilities due to war wounds; impaired health due to war service; impaired health due to causes associated with war service — *e.g.*, neurasthenia and mental breakdown; and impaired health not definitely traceable to any cause, and the wearing of artificial limbs.

QUESTION No. 2.

**Report on the Adequacy of the Sources at present available and the Sufficiency of the Methods employed for the Alleviation of the Condition of such Persons as aforesaid, whether by Pension from the Crown, by Allowance from Funds created or available for the Purpose, by Existing Statutory Facilities for Land-settlement, Establishment in Business, Financial Assistance, Special Training and Treatment, and otherwise.**

(A) ADEQUACY OF PENSIONS FROM THE CROWN.

(a) PENSIONS PAYABLE BY THE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT.

(i) *To New Zealand Veterans of the Maori War.*

The provisions for payment to these pensioners are to be found in the Pensions Act, 1926; only those who received a New Zealand War Medal for service in any Maori War are eligible. The amount is fixed at £49 per annum, payable without regard to the income or property of the pensioner. A suggestion to increase this amount was submitted to us, but we are of opinion that no case was made out in support of the claim, and we have no recommendation to make.

(ii) *To New Zealand Veterans of the South African War.*

The provisions for payment to these pensioners were originally set out in Part IX of the Defence Act, 1909, the qualifications of the pensioner being set out in that enactment. By section 13 of the Finance Act, 1919, it is provided that a pensioner under Part IX of the Defence Act, 1909, shall be entitled to a pension under the War Pensions Act, 1915, in the same manner as if his eligibility had arisen out of service in the Great European War. It was made clear to your Commissioners during the hearing that this more liberal provision was not at all widely known amongst South African War ex-service men, and the lapse of ten years since the provision was made will make it difficult if not impossible for an applicant now to prove the necessary attributability. The Pensions Act, 1926, by section 45 makes a further concession in favour of the South African veteran, where he is eligible for the old-age pension; it is that an extra old-age pension grant of £13 per annum be made to him, but so that his aggregate receipts from all sources shall not exceed the sum of £97 10s. in any year.

The evidence as to the number of South African veterans now in New Zealand fixes the total at about four thousand.