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Turnbull waited on Mr E. R. Bowler, and mutually discussed the whole position. The outcome was that an advance was made to the club of £300, secured on furnishings.

### GIFT PARCELS.

The disposal of surplus goods held by this section was placed in the capable hands of Mrs D. McFarlane and Miss H. Birss. These ladies readily undertook this onerous work, and seven large cases totalling 921 articles, were carefully grouped and sent where they would be most useful. A letter of thanks was written to Mrs McFarlane and Miss Birss in appreciation of their labour.

### N.Z. CONTINGENT ASSOCIATION.

A lengthy report of the final meeting of the N.Z. War Contingent Association came to hand during the November quarter. The meeting was held in August, and was presided over by Mr I. W. Raymond, as, owing to illness, Sir Thomas Mackenzie, president of the Association, was unavoidably absent. The report gave a clear and interesting account of the Association's work since its inception in 1914. A concluding paragraph, here quoted, amply sums up the position:—

"No idea can be gathered from a brief survey of the work of how much time has been put in. . . . The work our women-folk have done has been priceless. Many of them have returned to their homes; others are shortly following. Whatever be their lot in after life, they can never forget the stirring period 1914-19, and the part they played in connection with the Association. They certainly gave their best, and in return they can rest assured they have all along the line won the admiration and appreciation of their "Warrior" men.

### APPRECIATION.

The work of the office has been considerably lessened by the valuable assistance rendered at all times by the Government Departments, and thanks are here tendered to the officers in charge of Base Expenses, Medical Services, Lands and Survey, Post and Telegraph, Public Trustee, Police, Internal Affairs, War Funds, and Treasury. The staff also appreciate the kindly help and courteous attention at all times given by the local officers of these departments, and of the Returned Soldiers' Association. To our hon. visitors, Mrs S. Cruickshank, Miss Birss, and Ensign Campion, sincere thanks are also due. Their help has been invaluable, and has always been given with a willingness and thoroughness deserving of the greatest commendation.

### PATRIOTIC SOCIETIES.

As in past years, there has been constant correspondence between the Association and other patriotic societies. The utmost good feeling has existed right throughout, and recommendations from other societies, if within the scope of the policy of the Association, are invariably given effect to. By reason of its central position, the War Relief Association of Wellington is enabled to get into close touch with the Government Departments, and much valuable information is obtained thereby, which information is always readily passed on. When it is noted that 216 applications were received during the year from soldiers whose pre-war domicile was other than Southland, thus necessitating reference to another society, and that 222 applications from Southland soldiers were referred here by northern societies, it is readily understood the large amount of correspondence involved in dealing with these cases, and the necessity of a mutual understanding as between the committees of the various patriotic associations. Our nearest neighbour, Otago, has dealt with the greater proportion of cases referred to and from this district the best of reciprocity exists between the two offices.

### FINANCIAL.

The statement of accounts shows the position of the funds. With reference to some of the branch returns, it is necessary to state that the moneys collected from the various districts towards the copper trail appeal have not appeared in previous statements of the Association, as these moneys were forwarded to the Copper Trail Committee, and were allocated to the three funds benefiting thereby. From the Waikaka branch the sum of £250 was paid to the hon. treasurer of the Copper Trail Committee.

Several funds were disposed of during the year, the balance held being forwarded to their respective centres through the Minister of Internal Affairs. The funds thus closed were: Belgian Relief, British and Foreign Sailors, National Association of French War Orphans, Prisoners of War, Serbian Relief, Mercantile Marine, British Relief.

The balance sheet shows a credit to the soldiers and dependents' fund of £51,435 8s 8d, and to the general war fund of £4415 15s 8d. Investments total £54,271, and this with other assets added makes £56,755 15s 6d standing to the credit of the Association. The sum of £15,307 6s 10d was paid out during the year in response to claims for financial assistance. The investment, Convalescent Home £3270, may have to be realised shortly, as it is anticipated that the Home will be closed about the end of May. This investment will undoubtedly prove a very profitable one.

### CONCLUSION.

In concluding this report the committee can without egotism say that every possible attention has been given to the affairs of the Association during the past year, that all applications for assistance have been carefully considered and met according to the policy of the Association, and a general feeling of confidence appears to be established in the administration. It is quite clear that the committee's duties and activities are far from finished, and that the greatest possible care and sympathetic consideration will

be needed for years to come in order that the patriotic funds of Southland shall confer the greatest amount of benefit on those for whom the money was so generously subscribed. Committee work has been strenuous at all times, and particularly so during the year just ended, no less than 3123 separate claims having been dealt with. With the slackening off of numbers during the last quarter there has been a corresponding increase of cases of a complicated nature. The work is fully compensated for by the large number of letters of appreciation received and the knowledge that many have been enabled to make good owing to the assistance forthcoming from the Association.

### Chairman's Remarks.

In formally moving the adoption of the report, the President said:

In presenting for your consideration the fourth annual report and statement of accounts of the Southland War Funds Association I wish to express the satisfaction that I am sure must be felt by all our members at the conclusion of another year's beneficial work.

On the disbandment of the New Zealand Expeditionary Forces which took place since our last meeting practically every returned soldier has been repatriated. Most of the branches of this Association have ceased to exist and it is certainly a matter for thankfulness that their continuance is no longer necessary. The work carried out by these branches will long be remembered. It provided a striking example of united thought and action for the welfare of the State.

The well-being of those members who undertook the duties of military service was the one main object of a large section of the community and this found expression in the various activities of the numerous branches of this Association throughout the whole district. I wish to finally place on record the very high appreciation that is felt for the work that was done. During the past twelve months a great deal of consideration has been given to the question of uniformity of administration of patriotic funds throughout the Dominion, but no very definite conclusions have been arrived at beyond the idea we have always held in Southland that the best results are achieved by a policy of sympathetic treatment of each case on its merits. This, of course, involves more time and work, but so long as our councillors and committeemen are willing to continue their work on the same basis as in the past, I feel that we are pursuing the best course in the interests of those concerned.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the Advisory Board's recommendation is to defer any definite scheme of permanent payments until a further effort is made towards uniformity. From the cases coming before the committee it is obvious that soldiers who have been back in civil occupations for some years are in some instances only now finding it necessary to receive assistance from the funds owing to incapacities caused by war service and it is of the utmost importance that this Association should maintain a position that enables prompt aid to be forthcoming in all such cases.

Aid to well men is being attended to by the State departments responsible for such work, and is in the main apparently satisfactory. The Returned Soldiers' Association is exercising watchful care over the requirements of its members, with special attention to any anomalies that may arise in departmental administration.

Our financial position is still thoroughly satisfactory. The out payments during the year from the Soldiers' and Dependents' Fund totalled £15,307, which, of course, means that not only is our fund reduced by that amount, but our annual income from interest is about £700 less because of this expenditure. From the General War Fund our expenditure has been £1028, which includes costs of administration of all funds and the year's work. Our income has been £2,805 from interest earned and £938 from donations received. It is anticipated that there will be a shrinkage from both these sources during the coming year, as donations have practically ceased and interest is a diminishing quantity for reasons already stated. Our investments now stand as follows:—N.Z. Government (Public Trustee), £11,000 at call; Invercargill Corporation debentures—£10,000 due July, 1921; £10,000 due July, 1926; £10,000 due July, 1931; £10,000 due July, 1936.

The public Trust investment is earning interest at  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum and the Corporation debentures 5 per cent. per annum. From these figures it will be seen that ample funds are available for all anticipated requirements, even at short notice. In addition we have an investment of £3270 in the Convalescent Home. These figures, I hope, will be instructive to the casual newspaper correspondent who, while not sufficiently interested in the affairs of the Association to get the information from our office, wants to know what has become of the funds, and so forth. The published statement of accounts provides all the details surrounding these figures.

Our office continues to carry out valuable work. Apart from the cases that actually come before your committees, our secretary undertakes on behalf of soldiers and their dependents a considerable amount of enquiry and correspondence with the various public departments, or, in fact, with any person or institution if such is desired and is likely to be of benefit to those concerned.

A word of commendation is due to our painstaking and competent secretary, who has carried out his work most systematically and efficiently. No member of our Association is more concerned about the proper care of our soldiers and dependents than Mr Farrant, who is most assiduous in attending to his duties at all times. In this he has been ably assisted by the office staff.

Speaking generally, the needs and requirements of our returned men are being well looked after throughout this pro-

vince. If anyone knows of any case that does not appear to be receiving proper attention it is the desire of this organisation that immediate notification should be sent to the secretary or nearest War Funds' representative, when prompt action will be taken, thus ensuring the protection for which our funds were raised.

It is satisfactory to know that the work is proving of benefit to many who are at times temporarily in necessitous circumstances. The numerous letters from those whom the Association has been able to serve are much appreciated.

In conclusion, I desire to record the very satisfactory attendance that has been maintained at all meetings during the year. Members show no disposition to relax their efforts in carrying out the work of the Association, and continue to take the keenest interest in the well-being of our soldier citizens and the dependents.

The President then briefly scanned the report, and made reference to the recent criticism through the local press of the discontinuance of the supply of cigarettes and tobacco to soldiers in hospital by the Association. He said it had never been the intention or desire of the Association to withdraw such comforts from the men. The only question involved was who were entitled to the cigarette and tobacco issue, upon which, they would notice, £204 had been spent during the year. A returned soldier, after having been repatriated, and resumed civil employment, was to all intents and purposes a civilian. If, in the course of such employment, he met with an accident that necessitated his going to hospital, was he to be there treated as a civilian or regarded as a returned soldier, and as such entitled to certain privileges? The Committee was of the opinion that he was a civilian, otherwise the Association would be faced with expense, such as tobacco issue, for many years to come. He thought it desirable to make such an explanation, and also mentioned that the expenditure on cigarettes and tobacco for returned soldiers in hospital was now being borne by the Red Cross Society, whose funds had to be spent on soldiers' comforts. That was a better arrangement, as it left the funds of the Association to be expended in other and more useful directions. Referring to the Convalescent Home, Mr Royds said that it was satisfactory that there was no necessity for the maintenance of the Home. Of course there were some people who considered that the Home should be kept in case of emergency, but until the Red Cross Society came to some definite conclusion in the matter, no action would be taken. When the Red Cross Society had finished with the Home, it would become the Association's property. When it would be the committee's duty to realise on the property to the best advantage and credit the funds with the proceeds, from which the donation was given in the first place.

Mr John Stead (Mayor) seconded the motion. He endorsed the chairman's remarks concerning the supply of cigarettes, etc., to soldiers. Mr Stead, however, mentioned the case of a soldier whose wounds, for example, might compel him to change his civil occupation. If, at his new work, he met with an accident, and had to go to hospital for treatment, he asked should he not be regarded as a returned soldier? His war injuries would be the indirect cause of his meeting with an accident.

Mr D. Cuthbertson mentioned that the Red Cross Society supplied tobacco to men in hospital suffering from war disabilities only. Regarding the Convalescent Home, a meeting to discuss the question as to whether or not it should be carried on was to be held on July 3.

The motion was carried.

### Election of Officers.

Following were elected office-bearers for the ensuing term: Mr H. W. Royds (unanimously re-elected). Vice-President: Mr John McDougall.

A meeting of the Council was then held, and the last year's committee re-elected.

Mr C. Bennetts, Gore, mentioned that the Manawatu Association was proposing to distribute its funds, and bring about a termination of their activities. He considered that an emphatic protest against such action should be sent to the Minister for Internal Affairs.

Mr J. Gilkison suggested that the protest would be better sent to the Advisory Board, which would then doubtless take action in the matter. It was decided to adopt the latter course, and also that the Manawatu Association be written to asking them to state their reasons for their proposed action.

A vote of appreciation of the work of the Emergency Committee, and a vote of thanks to the chair concluded the meeting.

Less than a century ago wives were offered by auction to the highest bidder in public places in different parts of England. Prices ranged upwards from 1s. Twenty shillings appears to have been considered a good price. There was the case of a Midland farmer who parted with his wife for 20s and a dog.

At a meeting of the Canterbury members of Parliament Committee with a deputation of the Returned Soldiers' Association recently opposition to the ingress of Chinese and Hindoos, and also of white immigrants, was expressed in amplification of the following remit: "That the satisfactory adjustment of the problem of repatriation shall be the determining factor in deciding an immigration policy, and that the general policy of a white New Zealand be adopted."

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