

## CHAPTER XIII.

### REPATRIATION.

#### § 1. General.

An outline of the activities leading up to the formation of the Commonwealth Department of Repatriation was given in Official Year Book No. 15, p. 931, but limits of space preclude its repetition in the present volume. Some account was given also in the Year Book referred to, and in subsequent issues, of the policy and activities of the Department generally, while detailed information was incorporated in regard to such matters as sustenance rates and pensions to soldiers and dependants. (See Official Year Book No. 17, pp. 598 to 601). During the year ended 30th June, 1928, sustenance rates were amended to bring them into line with war pensions rates, and the scale of rates in respect to war pensions was amplified by providing for an allowance to the third or subsequent child at such a rate as will provide, together with pension in respect of that child, a sum of 15s. per fortnight. In 1931 it was prescribed that the payment of sustenance would be made only where the necessities of medical treatment prevented the soldier from following his usual occupation, while Financial Emergency legislation passed in the same year enacted that sustenance would be payable only where actually needed. Income from all sources was to be taken into account in computing sustenance, but this provision was disregarded in August, 1934. Under the Financial Emergency Act, the maximum rate of pension payable to children of incapacitated soldiers is now 12s. per fortnight.

The main activities of the Repatriation Commission at 30th June, 1934, were confined to the grant, review and assessment of war pensions, medical treatment, the renewal and repair of artificial replacements and surgical appliances, the grant and review of sustenance living allowances, and the administration of the Soldiers' Children Education Scheme.

#### § 2. War Pensions.

1. **General.**—An Act for the provision of war pensions was passed in 1914 and amended in 1915 and 1916. Its scope can be determined by the following extract from Section 3: "Upon the death or incapacity of any member of the forces whose death or incapacity results, or has resulted, from his employment in connexion with warlike operations in which His Majesty is, or has since the commencement of the present state of war been engaged, the Commonwealth shall, subject to this Act, be liable to pay to the member or his dependants or both, as the case may be, pensions in accordance with this Act." The general reduction of expenditure provided by the *Financial Emergency Act 1931* applied also to War Pensions. No reductions, however, were made in the rate of pension payment to incapacitated soldiers, the necessary economies being effected in payments to other war pensioners.

Considerable modifications of the reductions were included in the *Financial Relief Acts of 1933 and 1934*, and some classes of pensions were fully restored.

Prior to 1st July, 1932, the Commonwealth Government bore the cost of exchange in connexion with the payment of pensions to Australian soldiers domiciled overseas.

2. **Expenditure, etc.**—The number of pensioners and the amount paid in pensions were increasing annually until the passage of the *Financial Emergency Act of 1931* reduced the expenditure during the two years ended 1932–33 by approximately £1,000,000. At the close of 1933–34 the annual liability had increased slightly to £7,071,168 with 266,954 pensioners. The outstanding figures for the year ended 30th June, 1934, are as follow :—

New claims granted during year	..	..	..	..	2,792
Claims rejected during year	..	..	..	..	609
Pensions reviewed during year	..	..	..	..	49,168
Pensions cancelled or discontinued during year	..	..	..	..	4,490
Pensioners died during year	..	..	..	..	2,328
Number of pensions in force at 30th June, 1934	..	..	..	..	266,954
Annual pension liability on the 30th June, 1934	..	..	..	..	£7,071,168

At the same date special rate pension of £8 per fortnight was being paid to—

Blinded soldiers	..	..	..	..	..	132
Tubercular soldiers	..	..	..	..	..	876
Totally and permanently incapacitated soldiers	..	..	..	..	..	1,618

An analysis of the total number of new grants (2,792) during the year reveals the following :—

Members (i.e., ex-soldier pensioners)	..	..	..	..	..	409
Wives of members	..	..	..	..	..	578
Children	..	..	..	..	..	1,509
Other dependants	..	..	..	..	..	296
						<hr/> 2,792 <hr/>

3. **Pensions in Force.**—The following table shows for each class of pensioner the number receiving pensions at the 30th June, 1934 :—

PENSIONS IN FORCE, AUSTRALIA, AT 30th JUNE, 1934.

Class.	Number of Pensioners.
Orphan children	4,855
War widows	8,060
Soldiers	75,937
Children	102,154
Wives	57,359
Parents	19,143
Brothers and sisters	204
Others	142
<b>Total</b>	<b>266,954</b>

4. Number of Pensioners and Expenditure.—The following table shows the number of pensioners at 30th June, 1934, and the places where payments were made during 1933-34 :—

WAR PENSIONS.—NUMBER OF PENSIONERS, 1934.

Where Paid.	Incapacitated Members of the Forces.	Dependants of—		Total.	Expenditure.
		Deceased Members.	Incapacitated Members.		
					£
New South Wales ..	25,109	9,227	51,749	86,085	2,427,115
Victoria ..	25,517	8,927	56,201	90,645	2,134,218
Queensland ..	8,204	2,732	17,450	28,386	780,673
South Australia ..	4,058	2,369	8,925	15,352	427,365
Western Australia ..	7,094	2,283	15,563	24,940	627,403
Tasmania ..	3,097	1,216	8,142	12,455	335,304
Total, Australia ..	73,079	26,754	158,030	257,863	6,732,078
London ..	1,667	2,776	3,739	8,182	} 316,514
South Africa ..	46	26	75	147	
New Zealand ..	226	160	325	711	
Other Overseas ..	19	3	29	51	
Total ..	75,037	29,719	162,198	266,954	7,048,592
Payments made in Australia in respect of other countries less amounts received from other countries ..	..	..	..	..	Dr. 21,619
Total, War Pensions Trust Fund Account ..	..	..	..	..	7,026,973

5. Summary.—The subjoined table shows the numbers of pensions granted, claims rejected, and pensions in force, together with the amount paid in pensions for the year ended 30th June, 1921, and for each of the five years ended 30th June, 1934 :—

PENSIONS.—SUMMARY, AUSTRALIA.

Year ended 30th June—	Pensions Granted.	Claims Rejected.	Pensions in Force.				Amount paid in Pensions.
			Incapacitated Members of the Forces.	Dependants of Incapacitated Members.	Dependants of Deceased Members.	Total.	
1921 ..	25,983	3,388	79,491	93,995	49,051	222,537	£ 7,386,842 <sup>(a)</sup>
1930 ..	13,650	1,257	74,578	170,437	34,270	279,285	7,919,470
1931 ..	11,555	920	75,316	172,389	35,617	283,322	7,996,180
1932 ..	5,592	776	75,646	166,846	31,619	274,111	7,440,188
1933 ..	2,693	664	75,244	164,268	30,298	269,810	6,925,830
1934 ..	2,792	609	75,037	162,198	29,719	266,954	7,048,592

(a) Includes payments made from Trust Fund, War Pensions Account, on behalf of other countries less recoveries.

6. Cost of Administration.—The cost of administration in 1933-34, after allowing for the amount recoverable from the Government of the United Kingdom on account of administrative cost of British pensions was £149,404, or 2.12 per cent. on the total amount paid in pensions.

### § 3. Miscellaneous.

1. **Summary of Other Departmental Activities.**—The following is a summary of the work of the Department from 8th April, 1918, to 30th June, 1934 :—

(i) *Employment.* Number of applications, 255,368 ; number of positions filled, 133,212.

(ii) *Vocational Training.* Number of men completed training, 27,696 ; number in training, nil.

(iii) *Soldiers' Children Education Scheme.* From the inauguration of the scheme in February, 1921, up to 30th June, 1934, 17,075 applications for assistance had been received. Of these 15,706 had been approved, of which 9,399 recipients of the benefits had completed their training, 3,809 were undergoing training, 47 applications were pending, and the remainder had been refused or withdrawn.

Up to 30th June, 1934, the expenditure was £1,510,034.

(iv) *Assistance Granted.* The total expenditure incurred during the period from 8th April, 1918, to 30th June, 1934, was £19,733,586, of which £1,676,002 represented loan and £18,057,584 general expenditure. Of the total the largest amounts were absorbed by medical treatment, with £6½ millions, vocational training with £5 millions, and expenses of providing employment, £2½ millions.

(v) *Medical Treatment.* At 30th June, 1934, there were 1,400 in-patients and 15,744 out-patients receiving medical treatment. The expenditure to this date was £6,663,274.

2. **Expenditure of Department of Repatriation.**—The expenditure of the Department during the twelve months ended 30th June, 1934, was £7,947,106, distributed as follows :—

Repatriation benefits—	£
Loans to soldiers .. .. .	7
Grants to soldiers and general expenditure (including maintenance of training schools, medical institutions, etc.) ..	510,747
Assistance to soldiers in necessitous circumstances ..	63
Allowances to dependants of soldiers not provided for under the Act .. .. .	808
Medical treatment to Home Service personnel .. ..	78
	511,703
Capital expenditure—New works .. .. .	13,839
Soldiers' Children Education Scheme .. .. .	80,734
	7,048,592
War Pensions .. .. .	7,048,592
Administrative costs—	
Salaries .. .. .	163,854
Contingencies .. .. .	54,811
	218,665
Exchange on Remittances to London and New York .. ..	73,573
	7,947,106
Total .. .. .	

The total expenditure for the previous year was £7,832,042.

3. **Losses of Soldier Settlement.**—Reference to losses incurred in connexion with settlement of returned soldiers and sailors will be found in Chapter V.—Land Tenure and Settlement.