

## 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 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 sustenance would be payable only where the necessities of medical treatment prevented the soldier from following his usual occupation. Since the passing of the Financial Emergency Act, sustenance is paid only where subsistence is actually needed, income from all sources being taken into account. 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, 1933, 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.

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.**—Pensions expenditure progressively increased from 1923-24, and the number of pensioners grew, year by year, from 1920-21. The effects of the Financial Emergency Act were, however, evidenced in 1932-33, by a decline in total expenditure and in the number of persons receiving benefit. At the close of that year the annual liability was £6,860,516, with 269,810 pensioners. The outstanding figures for the year ended 30th June, 1933, are as follow :—

New claims granted during year	..	..	..	..	2,693
Claims rejected during year	..	..	..	..	664
Pensions reviewed during year	..	..	..	..	48,871
Pensions cancelled or discontinued during year	..	..	..	..	6,005
Pensioners died during year	..	..	..	..	2,179
Number of pensions in force at 30th June, 1933	..	..	..	..	269,810
Annual pension liability on the 30th June, 1933	..	..	..	..	£6,860,516

At the close of the year special rate pension of £8 per fortnight was being paid to—

Blinded soldiers	..	..	..	..	..	134
Tubercular soldiers	..	..	..	..	..	935
Totally and permanently incapacitated soldiers	..	..	..	..	..	1,523

An analysis of the total number of new grants (2,693) during the year reveals the following :—

Members (i.e., ex-soldier pensioners)	..	..	..	..	..	399
Wives of members	..	..	..	..	..	552
Children	..	..	..	..	..	1,517
Other dependants	..	..	..	..	..	225
						<u>2,693</u>

3. **Pensions in Force.**—The following table shows for each class of pensioner the number receiving pensions at the 30th June, 1933 :—

PENSIONS IN FORCE, AUSTRALIA, AT 30th JUNE, 1933.

Class.	Number of Pensioners.
Orphan children	4,891
War widows	7,919
Soldiers	75,244
Children	103,803
Wives	57,629
Parents	19,979
Brothers and sisters	207
Others	138
<b>Total</b>	<b>269,810</b>

4. Number of Pensioners and Expenditure—The following table shows the number of pensioners at 30th June, 1933, and the places where payments were made during 1932-33:—

WAR PENSIONS.—NUMBER OF PENSIONERS, 1933.

Where Paid.	Incapacitated Members of the Forces.	Dependants of—		Total.	Expenditure.
		Deceased Members.	Incapacitated Members.		
					£
New South Wales ..	25,140	9,319	52,435	86,894	2,382,007
Victoria ..	25,573	9,011	56,782	91,366	2,086,389
Queensland ..	8,214	2,779	17,583	28,576	755,447
South Australia ..	4,086	2,417	9,014	15,517	421,491
Western Australia ..	7,180	2,334	15,961	25,475	629,357
Tasmania ..	3,085	1,256	8,185	12,526	320,586
<b>Total, Australia ..</b>	<b>73,278</b>	<b>27,116</b>	<b>159,960</b>	<b>260,354</b>	<b>6,595,277</b>
London ..	1,676	2,989	3,878	8,543	} 330,553
South Africa ..	47	27	76	150	
New Zealand ..	224	161	325	710	
Other Overseas ..	19	5	29	53	
<b>Total ..</b>	<b>75,244</b>	<b>30,298</b>	<b>164,268</b>	<b>269,810</b>	<b>6,925,830</b>
Payments made in Australia in respect of other countries less amounts received from other countries	..	..	..	..	28,198
<b>Total, War Pensions Trust Fund Account</b>	..	..	..	..	<b>6,954,028</b>

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, 1933:—

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(a)
1929 ..	12,857	1,044	73,436	163,013	36,182	272,631	7,734,921
1930 ..	13,650	1,257	74,578	170,437	34,270	279,285	7,919,476
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

(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 1932-33, after allowing for the amount recoverable from the Government of the United Kingdom on account of administrative cost of British pensions was £142,667, or 2.05 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, 1933 :—

(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, 1933, 15,983 applications for assistance had been received. Of these 14,680 had been approved, of which 8,461 recipients of the benefits had completed their training, 3,969 were undergoing training, 22 applications were pending, and the remainder had been refused or withdrawn.

Up to 30th June, 1933, the expenditure was £1,429,352.

(iv) *Assistance Granted.* The total expenditure incurred during the period from 8th April, 1918, to 30th June, 1933, was £19,222,833, of which £1,675,995 represented loan and £17,546,838 general expenditure. Of the total the largest amounts were absorbed by medical treatment, with £6 millions, vocational training, with £5 millions, and expenses of providing employment, £2½ millions.

(v) *Medical Treatment.* At 30th June, 1933, there were 1,386 in-patients and 15,049 out-patients receiving medical treatment. The expenditure to this date was £6,299,507.

2. **Expenditure of Department of Repatriation.**—The expenditure of the Department during the twelve months ended 30th June, 1933, was £7,832,042, and was applied as follows :—

Repatriation benefits—	£
Loans to soldiers .. .. .	8
Grants to soldiers and general expenditure (including maintenance of training schools, medical institutions, etc.) ..	495,380
Assistance to soldiers in necessitous circumstances ..	69
Allowances to dependants of soldiers not provided for under the Act .. .. .	909
Medical treatment to Home Service personnel .. ..	166
Losses .. .. .	13
	496,545
Capital expenditure—	
Office premises and furniture .. .. .	112
Hostels and other Medical Institutions .. .. .	485
Bundoora Mental Hospital, Victoria .. .. .	1,046
Minor Capital works .. .. .	227
Maintenance of Buildings, etc. .. .. .	935
	2,805
Soldiers' Children Education Scheme .. .. .	84,488
	6,954,028
War Pensions .. .. .	6,954,028
Administrative costs—	
Salaries .. .. .	146,822
Contingencies .. .. .	68,731
	215,553
Exchange on Remittances to London and New York ..	78,623
	7,832,042

The total expenditure for the previous year was £8,339,335.

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.