

The absence of figures relating to payment of New Zealand pensions in Australia is due to the non-receipt within the financial year of returns from the Commonwealth Government. These, however, have since been received.

The annual values of the pensions in force on the 31st March, 1920, are as set out hereunder :—

	Number.	Annual Value.	Average Pension.
		£	£
Permanent pensions to soldiers ....	2,130	126,510	59
Temporary pensions to soldiers ....	23,144	1,223,342	53
Temporary pensions to dependants (including 1,452 children) ....	1,517	88,473	58
Pensions to widows (including 2,313 children) ....	2,075	238,693	115
Pensions to other dependants of deceased soldiers ....	5,705	192,347	34
	<u>34,571</u>	<u>£1,869,365</u>	<u>£54</u>

With the demobilization of practically the whole of the Expeditionary Force, including hospital patients, these figures may be looked upon as the high-water mark under the existing rates of pension, and since the close of the year a reduction in the number of pensions, through death and surrender, has actually taken place for the first time since the inception of the Act.

The estimated expenditure for the current year is £1,850,000.

The pensions granted to date, and the annual value thereof, are as follow :—

	Number.	Annual Value.
		£
1915-19 ....	34,071	2,289,333
1919-20 ....	15,183	872,627
Grand total ....	<u>49,254</u>	<u>£3,161,960</u>

The total claims for pension received since the inception of the Act are as follow :—

	From Soldiers.	From Dependants.
1915-19 ....	27,653	11,744
1919-20 ....	11,493	3,990
Grand total ....	<u>39,146</u>	<u>15,734</u>

The total discharges from the Forces to the 31st March, 1920, numbered 80,802, and the deaths for the same period 16,781.

The amending legislation of last year enabled a large number of wives of totally disabled soldiers who, through marriage outside of New Zealand or more than two years after the discharge of the soldier, were not previously eligible, to obtain pensions, but the majority of these will disappear from the roll as their husbands become repatriated and thereby able to support them.

Provision was also made for bringing the pensions payable to South African veterans up to the rates payable for the Great War, but the limited number of applications lodged has shown that the dual pensions paid by the Imperial Government and New Zealand for injuries in the Boer War did not permit of any great increase.

The pensions provided in respect of the death or disablement of Police officers on the basis of the rates payable under the War Pensions Act have been availed of in a limited number of cases. The applications to date have totalled nine, of which five were rejected and four granted, the annual value of the latter totalling £331.