

1913.
NEW ZEALAND.

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
PENSIONS DEPARTMENT,
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1913.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 69 of the Old-age Pensions Act, 1908.

The COMMISSIONER OF PENSIONS to the Hon the MINISTER OF PENSIONS.

SIR,—

Pensions Department, Wellington, 30th June, 1913.

I have the honour to submit herewith, for the information of Parliament, a report on the working of the Old-age, Widows', and Military Pensions Acts for the year ended 31st March, 1913.

In accordance with the decision of the Government, as outlined by the Financial Statement delivered on the 6th August, 1912, the administration of the various Pensions Acts was again centered during the year in a separate Department, the re-creation of which, on the 14th November, 1912, was coincident with the resignation of the late Commissioner, Mr. D. Robertson, to undertake the duties attaching to the office of Public Service Commissioner. The happy associations of the staff with the Post and Telegraph Department, which had existed for the preceding three years and a half, were thus terminated, though a direct connection with that important Department of State is maintained by the continuance of the payment of pensions at the various post-offices throughout the Dominion.

The pension legislation was further added to during the year by—(1) A Military Pensions Act, and (2) an amendment of the Widows' Pensions Act.

The Military Pensions Act, which repealed an Act similarly intituled passed in the previous year, provides for an annual pension of £36—an increase of £10 on the maximum old-age pension—to veterans of the Maori War who have been awarded the New Zealand War Medal, and who can comply with qualifications which are not so exacting as those required for an old-age pension. The annual liability under this Act, a leading feature of which is that which vests the granting of pensions in the Commissioner, has, after six months' working, already reached £22,000, and claims are still coming in at the rate of six per week. Unlike the old-age and widows' pensions, which require to be applied for through a Registrar of Pensions and determined by a Stipendiary Magistrate, the military pension is obtained by applying direct to the Commissioner in Wellington, or to the nearest representative of the Defence Department, whose report is furnished to the Commissioner. The following particulars, which relate to the number of inquiries made from all sources regarding this class of pension and to the number of signed applications lodged to date, may be found of interest:—

Total inquiries recorded ...	1,062
Signed applications lodged ...	893
Pensions granted ...	667
Claims refused ...	118
Claims not gone on with ...	6
Claims adjourned for production of medal ...	82
Claims being investigated ...	20

Sixty-four of the completed claims have been lodged by Maoris, 24 of which have so far been granted.