

1922.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPATRIATION DEPARTMENT

(REPORT REGARDING THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS OF THE).

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

The DIRECTOR OF REPATRIATION to the Hon. the CHAIRMAN and MEMBERS of the
REPATRIATION BOARD.

SIRS,—

Wellington, 20th July, 1922.

I have the honour to submit herewith a report on the operations of the Department for the period ended 20th June, 1922.

I have, &c.,

J. R. SAMSON,

Director of Repatriation.

The Hon. the Chairman and Members, Repatriation Board.

REPORT.

THE Repatriation Department was established under the provisions of the Repatriation Act, 1918, and the controlling body is the Repatriation Board, comprising the following Ministers of the Crown : Hon. Sir William Fraser (Chairman); Hon. D. H. Guthrie (Minister of Railways, Lands, and Repatriation); Hon. W. Nosworthy (Minister of Agriculture); and the Hon. J. G. Coates (Postmaster-General and Minister of Public Works).

The first financial assistance under the Act was granted early in 1919, and after some three and a half years' operations Cabinet has now intimated that the benefits thereunder are to be discontinued as at the 31st December next, it being recognized that the work of re-establishing our discharged soldiers in civil life is nearing completion. The Department set out to help every discharged soldier requiring assistance to secure for himself a position at least as good as that relinquished by him when he enlisted, and, so far as lay in its power, to recoup him for any disability, physical or financial, suffered through war service. In order to do this it was necessary to find work for all those requiring it; to provide facilities for the educational and vocational training of partially disabled men and such as had lost opportunity; to make suitable arrangements for the after-care and systematic following-up of all serious cases, including the blind, limbless, tubercular, &c.; and to provide financial assistance for the purchase or establishment of businesses, for the acquisition of furniture to set up homes, for necessary tools and equipment required in the pursuit of vocations, for transportation to employment, and for the various other contingencies arising in connection with the absorption of the men.

Over eighty Boards and Committees were set up throughout the Dominion, composed of prominent local residents representative of the various social and industrial organizations, and the success achieved by the Repatriation Department is due in no small measure to the enthusiastic and devoted work of these Boards and Committees.

EMPLOYMENT.

The Department had placed 27,658 men in employment up to the 20th June last, and the total number awaiting employment at that date throughout the Dominion was 376. During the past two years it has been necessary to make unemployment sustenance allowances in only 131 cases of hardship, and the total amount expended in New Zealand as out-of-work pay is but £5,577, or an average payment of 1s. 4d. per demobilized soldier. It is interesting to note that the Canadian average expenditure per demobilized soldier in unemployment doles is £2 10s. per man, or thirty-six times greater than ours, and the Australian average is £10 per man—no less than 150 times greater than the New Zealand average. These figures speak for themselves, and are an eloquent tribute alike to the soldier, the employer, and the Department.

TRAINING.

The Department has arranged training for 7,483 partially disabled soldiers, apprentices, &c., and 7,062 of these have finished their training. No less than 91 per cent. of this number completed the full course laid down and were absorbed by the industries in which they had been trained, while a number of the 9 per cent. who discontinued before the completion of the course did so on account of ill health. The total amount expended by the Department upon facilities for training and for the sustenance of the men during the training-period is £388,348, an average cost of £55 for each completed trainee. Here again New Zealand can claim a record that challenges comparison both in respect to the percentage of failures (9 per cent. in New Zealand as compared with 18 per cent. and 30 per cent. in Canada and Australia respectively) and as regards the average cost per trainee (£55 in New Zealand against £190 and £150 in Canada and Australia respectively). We attribute these excellent results mainly to our scheme in New Zealand for training the men in the environment of the trade itself, as opposed to the idea of setting up expensive institutional training-classes. Special soldiers' classes certainly were utilized by the Department to a limited extent, and served a very useful purpose, but the backbone of our vocational training is undoubtedly the subsidized-wages scheme. Under it the employer undertakes to train the man, finds all the necessary equipment and material, and pays a wage, the Department being called upon to pay only a subsidy to the trainee in addition to his pension and the employer's wage. An institutional trainee, on the other hand, must be provided by the Department with equipment, material, expert instruction, and full sustenance during the training-period.

It is estimated that the average cost of a subsidized worker to the Department is £1 5s. per week, as against quite £3 10s. per week for an institutional trainee. Another excellent feature of the subsidy scheme is the fact that the majority of the employers desire to retain the services of men trained in their own workshops, and the serious problem of absorbing large numbers of men from special training-classes does not arise.

In last year's report it was stated that all the Department's special training-farms, owing to the decided falling-off in applications for farm training, had been closed with the exception of Avonhead, Moa, Ruakura, and Tauherenikau. During the last year training has been discontinued at Avonhead and the farm handed back to the Lands Department, and the Moa Seed-farm has been taken over by an association which is leasing the property and carrying on seed-raising as a commercial proposition. This leaves the Department with a training-centre at Tauherenikau, where men suffering from tubercular disease are taught poultry-raising, beekeeping, and horticulture; and at Ruakura, where similar instruction in light farming is provided for disabled soldiers incapable of carrying on their old occupations.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Business loans have been granted in 6,288 cases, at a cost of £1,134,587, and 14,865 men have received advances totalling £704,956 for furniture and tools of trade. Some 4,375 others have been financially assisted in other directions, the amount paid to or on behalf of soldiers under all headings being £2,240,998. Of this sum £1,839,540 represents advances by way of loan, and the amount collected in repayment thereof up to the 30th June, 1922, is £984,348. An additional £47,744 has been collected as interest, making a total collection of £1,032,092. Assisted soldiers, in common with all other classes of the community, are feeling the present financial stringency, and it is most creditable to be able to report that the Department has succeeded in collecting, within three years and a half of the granting of the first loan, 52 per cent. of the total advances made to date. Recently the collection from soldiers has exceeded the gross expenditure by some thousands of pounds monthly, and it is estimated that the excess of credits during the financial year 1922-23 will be not less than a quarter of a million pounds (£250,000). Many of the soldiers have been extremely successful in business, and no less than 1,609 business loans have already been entirely repaid. Furniture advances to the number of 2,392 have also been fully liquidated, and many more loans in both categories are now nearing completion. There have, naturally enough, been some failures, and the Ministerial Board has found it necessary to write off deficiencies in 129 cases, the average loss being £69.

The range of businesses in which discharged soldiers have been assisted to make a start has been very wide, including practically every branch of industry, as the following list clearly indicates:—

Accountants	12	Fancy-goods businesses	19	Newspaper-proprietors	8
Advertising	2	Farming (general)	656	Newspaper-vendors	2
Agencies	11	Farming (poultry)	86	Opticians	2
Architects	9	Fat and skin dealers	4	Oxy-acetylene	1
Artificial-limb manufacturers ..	5	Fibrous-plaster businesses ..	3	Paperhangers and painters ..	41
Asphalting	1	Fishing businesses	202	Patent-medicine manufacturing ..	1
Auctioneers	15	Flax-mill business	1	Perambulator-makers	2
Bacon-factories	2	Forwarding agents	20	Photographers	28
Bakers	74	Fruit and confectionery	159	Physical culturist	1
Barristers and solicitors	36	Fruitgrowing	27	Piano-importers	8
Basketmakers	6	Fruit-canning	1	Picture-frame makers	4
Bedstead-maker	1	Foundries	3	Picture-theatres	13
Beef-farming	68	Furniture dealers and manu- facturers	54	Pig-farmers	6
Billiard-saloons	30	Gardening (market)	7	Plasterers	2
Blacksmiths	78	Gardening (nursery)	12	Plumbers	54
Boardinghouse and private- hotel keepers	27	Gas and range fitters	2	Pork-butchers	2
Boatbuilders	2	Glass-bevelling	1	Printing	28
Boat-hiring	1	Golf materials	1	Quarries	2
Booksellers and stationers	41	Grain-merchants	7	Rabbiting	6
Boot-importers	30	Greengrocers	3	Radiologist	1
Boot-manufacturers	35	Gristing-mill	1	Restaurants	56
Boot-repairers	33	Grocery and general store ..	308	Saddlers	23
Boring plants	2	Hairdressers and tobacconists ..	94	Sauce-manufacturers	2
Bottle-merchants	2	Hardware	21	Sawmilling	64
Boxmaker	1	Hat-manufacturers	4	Schools (private)	2
Brassfinishers	2	Hauling business	12	Scoria business	3
Builders	94	Hawking business	6	Scows	3
Butchers	80	Heat-appliance agents	2	Sculptors	3
Button-manufacturer	1	Horse-trainers	5	Seedsman	1
Buyer, island trade	1	Hospitals (private)	22	Sewing-machine agents	2
Cab-proprietor	1	Indent agents	36	Shipwrights	2
Cabinetmaking	43	Insurance agents	10	Sharebrokers	2
Canteen	1	Interpreter (Native)	1	Shirtmakers	3
Carriers (horse)	240	Ironmongers	4	Skating-rink	1
Carriers (motor)	352	Jam-manufacturer	1	Soap-manufacturer	1
Chaff-cutting	60	Labour agent	1	Sporting outfitters	2
Chairmaking	7	Land agents	33	Stock-dealer	1
Cheesemaking	49	Laundries	4	Strawberry-growing	3
Chemists	36	Leather-merchants	5	Stud-horse proprietor	1
Chimney-sweeps	2	Lighting business	1	Surveyors	15
Chiropodists	2	Lime-manufacturers	2	Swing and hammock maker ..	1
Coach-building	17	Livery and bait stables	11	Tailors	40
Coach-painting	6	Log-hauling	6	Tanner and furrier	1
Coal and firewood merchants ..	94	Luggage agents	6	Taxidermist	1
Commercial artist	1	Machinery agents	4	Tea-merchants	5
Commercial journal	1	Mail-order business	6	Tentmaker	1
Concrete-construction	2	Mail-service	27	Threshing businesses	28
Contractors	208	Manufacturers' agents	27	Tiling and slating	5
Cool storage (fruit)	2	Marble-bar	1	Timber-merchants	5
Correspondence schools	3	Marine dealers	4	Tinware-manufacturers	4
Customhouse agents	4	Masseurs	8	Typewriter-repairers	3
Cycle businesses	19	Mercery and soft goods	35	Umbrella-makers	2
Dairy business and milk-ven- dors	82	Merchants (general)	19	Upholsterers	3
Dealers	6	Messengers (express)	2	Undertakers	2
Drapers	28	Millinery	3	Vacuum cleaners	2
Dentists	36	Mineral waters and cordials manufacturing	15	Veterinary surgeons	3
Draughtsmen	2	Mining	6	Vulcanizing businesses	22
Drovers	3	Monumental masons	2	Watchmakers and jewellers ..	25
Doctors	42	Motor-bus service	17	Well-boring businesses	5
Duck-farmer	1	Motor garage and repairs	180	Whaling	1
Dwellings	36	Motor-cars (taxi)	214	Wood-turning	1
Dyers and cleaners	8	Motor-launch service	32	Wool-dealers	6
Engineering businesses	93	Music-teachers	7	Wool-press manufacturer	1
				Wool-weaver	1

ADMINISTRATION EXPENDITURE.

From the inception of the Department a strict supervision has been exercised by the Ministerial Board over administration expenses, and since the departmental charts indicated a falling-off in the volume of the work all Board fees have been discontinued, the honoraria of local secretaries reduced or stopped, paid offices of the Department in the larger centres closed, and the secretaries placed on an allowance, out of which they are required to provide rent, clerical assistance, telephone, &c. Special classes and farms were also closed, and the total departmental staff reduced from 111 in June, 1921, to 63 in June, 1922, the work being now practically concentrated in the four centres, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. As a result of these measures the administration expenses of the Department have been reduced by over 50 per cent. Up to the 30th June, 1922, the total administration expenditure amounted to £160,937, or 6½ per cent. of the gross expenditure, the other 93½ per cent. representing direct advances to soldiers. It will be noted that this percentage is based on expenditure only, and does not give the Department credit for the cost of collecting over £1,000,000 in very small amounts.

SUMMARY OF ASSISTANCE RENDERED AS AT 20TH JUNE, 1922.

The following table shows the number of men assisted under the various headings, and the amount expended :—

Nature of Assistance.							Number assisted.	Amount.
Loans—								£
Business							6,288	1,134,587
Furniture, tools, &c. .. .							14,865	704,956
Grants—								
Training sustenance, &c. .. .							7,483	388,348
Transportation .. .							3,252	7,530
Unemployment sustenance .. .							1,123	5,577
Placed in employment .. .							27,658	..
Totals .. .							60,669	£2,240,998

BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND STAFF.

In conclusion, I would again acknowledge the excellent work that has been done by the patriotic workers on the various Boards and Committees, and would thank also the members of the staff in the different branches for their hearty co-operation.

Wellington, 20th July, 1922.

J. R. SAMSON,
Director of Repatriation.

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