

Veterans' Bureau.—As the years went by, following the War of 1914-18, more and more apparent became the need for some agency charged with the duty of advising veterans regarding pension rights, assisting them in procuring evidence relevant to their claims and presenting their cases before the pension adjudicating bodies. Applicants who had been refused pension were unable in most cases to understand the reasons for such refusal and felt that, if they had proper legal assistance, they would be able to present their cases in such a way as to ensure favourable decisions. Many solicitors gave time gratuitously to this work but in these cases, as well as in the cases where services were charged for by solicitors, the result was usually unsatisfactory, because the preparation and presentation of pension cases is a highly specialized professional art requiring knowledge of one of the most difficult Acts on the Statute Books, knowledge of the interpretations placed upon the Act by the Canadian Pension Commission and, above all, long medico-legal experience. The vast majority of contentious pension cases arise out of disease or a complication of diseases rather than out of wounds, for in the case of wounds the disability is obvious and its connection with service certain and, therefore, pension is granted as a matter of course without application.

The Veterans' Bureau was established in 1930 as a Branch of the Department which is now the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of the original appointees as Pensions Advocates are still on the staff of this Branch of the Department.

The Canadian Pension Commission, as well as the Veterans' Bureau, is under the Minister of Veterans Affairs, but has its own deputy head and, apart from the incidence mentioned, the relationship between the Veterans' Bureau and the Commission is practically the same as exists between the members of the Bar and the Judiciary. The function of the Veterans' Bureau is to represent the applicant for pension and present his claim in every legitimate way to the extent of opposing Commission decisions, not only in individual cases but generally in the interpretation placed upon sections of the Pension Act.

The Veterans' Bureau maintains a Head Office staff and a District Pensions Advocate in each district throughout Canada who is responsible to the Chief Pensions Advocate. The duties of a District Pensions Advocate in regard to a particular applicant originate usually through advice to the applicant to consult him, given after an unfavourable decision upon first hearing, but the services of the District Pensions Advocate are nevertheless open to any applicant for pension whether directed to him or not. He prepares the applicant's case for second hearing or renewed hearing as the case may be, and, if the case is carried to the Appeal Board, attends upon the hearing, examines the applicant and his witnesses and argues any relevant issues before the Appeal Board. Upon request of the applicant or upon his own motion, if he is dissatisfied with the decision, he reviews the case and considers whether a motion should be made to reopen the decision of the Appeal Board. He is at all times encouraged to consult, and secure the advice of, the medico-legal experts at his Head Office. His services are free of all charge to the applicant.

Subsection 2.—War Veterans' Allowances*

The War Veterans' Allowance Act was introduced in 1930 to make provision for the maintenance of veterans of the Canadian Expeditionary Force; veterans of His Majesty's Forces or the Forces of His Majesty's Allies who were domiciled in

* Application for War Veterans' Allowances should be made to the nearest District Office of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Final decisions are made by the War Veterans' Allowance Board, Ottawa.