

Commission, assumed the payment out of Canadian funds for all awards arising out of the Second World War and the United Kingdom was reimbursed for such awards already paid. As at Mar. 31, 1948, 2,273 such awards had been authorized.

The Pension Act was further amended by 11-12 Geo. VI, c. 23, assented to on May 14, 1948. The principal changes were as follows:—

- (1) Basic rates of pension for disability and death were increased by approximately 25 p.c. for all ranks up to and including lieutenant. All ranks to captain now receive the same basic rate. Additional pension for wives and children of all ranks was increased;
- (2) increased allowances for helplessness were authorized; the new rates provide a minimum of \$480 per annum with a maximum of \$1,400 per annum, and are payable to all ranks;
- (3) the date line for the marriage or re-marriage of First World War pensioners was advanced from May 1, 1944, to May 1, 1948;
- (4) the disability pension schedule was amended so that all disability pensions are assessed at the nearest multiple of 5; e.g., 48 p.c. disability becomes 50 p.c.; 46 p.c. disability becomes 45 p.c.;
- (5) the expression "was wilfully and deliberately concealed" was deleted from the clause which defines the grounds on which pension entitlement may be granted for pre-enlistment disabilities which were aggravated during service;
- (6) the benefits of the Pension Act were extended to widows of deceased members of Canada's forces who served in the South African War who previously could not be awarded pension from Canadian funds unless an award had been made by United Kingdom authorities.

Veterans' Bureau.—The Veterans' Bureau was established in 1930 to assist the applicant for war disability pension and present his claim to the Canadian Pension Commission. (See 1947 Year Book, p. 1142.) The services of the Bureau are free to the applicant. Bureau Advocates assist not only ex-members of the military forces, but also those given disability pension rights under the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act. Claimants have been represented by Bureau Advocates in practically 100 p.c. of appeals.

The policy of the Canadian Pension Commission is to make a ruling as to pensions, without application by claimants, in respect to all members of the military forces who are discharged with a disabling condition. In the large majority of pension claims, therefore, the Veterans' Bureau first appears in a case on a claim by the applicant that the Pension Commission decision is wrong. The move against a Commission decision may take several forms. The applicant may apply for a renewal hearing with additional evidence. He may make several such applications. He may ask for an Appeal Board hearing with or without having had renewal hearings and with or without any additional evidence. With very limited exception, the Appeal Board ruling is a final disposition of the claim. The Appeal Board hearing is held in the applicant's district, and is made before three members of the Pension Commission who have not previously dealt with the claim and the applicant is there given an opportunity to appear personally with his representative who may be an Advocate from the Veterans' Bureau or any other person whom he may nominate. He may call witnesses to support his claim and his Advocate has the right to examine and cross-examine witnesses and present argument to the Board.

In addition to assisting applicants on entitlement claims, Bureau Advocates are charged with the duty of advising and assisting ex-service personnel or other persons entitled to claim for pension on any phase of pension law or procedure which may have a bearing on the pension claim. In all offices across Canada they are called upon daily to advise and assist in matters quite apart from war disability pensions.