

11 GEORGE V, A. 1920

African War, and to other Canadian Pensioners in accordance with the rates set out in the schedules to the Bill appended.

Estimated increased liability, \$25,000 per annum.

Total approximate increased liability, \$7,800,000 per annum.

III. NUMBER OF PENSIONS AND THE AMOUNT OF LIABILITY.

The total number of disability pensioners on the 31st day of March, 1920, was 69,583 and the yearly liability was \$14,305,441.05. The total number of dependent pensioners was 18,188 and the yearly liability \$11,101,463.50. The total number of pensioners of all classes was 87,771 and the yearly liability for the past year was \$25,406,904.55. Including the wives and children of disability pensioners and children of widows of deceased members of the forces, the total number benefiting from payment of pensions was 177,035.

The estimated liability under the present rates for the fiscal year, April 1, 1920, to March 31, 1921, is \$25,825,676.22. The estimated cost of the increases above proposed is nearly \$8,000,000. Total estimated liability for the present fiscal year will be, therefore, in excess of \$33,000,000.

IV. OTHER PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE PENSION LAW.

It has been represented to your Committee that in the operations of the Pension Act certain changes in wording are advisable from an administrative point of view. The changes which are proposed in this connection do not in any way affect the meaning of the various sections amended. Other more important changes, however, are also proposed which are as follows:—

(a) Change in the definition of the words "member of the forces". The change suggested involves the payment of pensions for disabilities and deaths incurred by a member of any Canadian military, naval or air force in the future at the same rates as those granted to members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, but hereafter it will be necessary to prove that the disability or death resulted directly from military or naval service.

(b) Change in the amount of the Commissioners' salaries from five to six thousand dollars per annum, the Chairman's salary being continued at seven thousand dollars.

(c) Payment of pensions to dependents even though death be due to improper conduct, provided such death has occurred on service.

(d) Payment of long service pension as well as disability pension. To carry out this proposal it will be necessary to amend both the Militia Pension Act and the Royal North West Mounted Police Act. Copies of Bills to accomplish this end are appended hereto.

(e) Change to provide that the pensions in respect of British residents domiciled in Canada previous to the war shall during the continuance of their residence in Canada be supplemented by Canada only in the cases of Warrant Officers and Officers. Following the recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee made in June, 1919, the Pension Act of that year provided that supplementary pensions should be paid by the Dominion of Canada to disabled members of the Imperial Forces who had, since the war, resumed their residence in this country, and to the widows and children resident in Canada of members of the Imperial or Allied Forces who had died during the war. The British Government, since the passing of the Pension Act, has agreed to supplement the pensions of all ranks below Warrant Officer so that the total pension will be equal to the pension which such ranks would have received had they served in the Canadian Forces.