

SCOPE OF INVESTIGATION.

Your Committee has very thoroughly investigated the matter of the care and treatment at present being given to wounded soldiers, but has not, as yet, given any exhaustive study to the problem attendant upon demobilization and "liquidation of the war."

WOUNDED MEN.

It has been the policy of the Military authorities to treat in hospitals overseas the great majority of the active cases and to send back to Canada only convalescents and such as require at least six months of further medical treatment before they may again become fit.

These men are being returned on Hospital Ships, specially fitted for the care of the sick and wounded. In summer they are (save those whose ultimate destination in the Maritime Provinces) landed at Quebec, in winter at Halifax or St. John. The main discharge depot, or distribution point is at Quebec. When a shipment of wounded men reaches Canada, they are disembarked and classified as follows:—

(a) Men for immediate discharge—unfit for further overseas service but capable of resuming their previous civil occupation. (These men, having suffered no disability as a result of active service are not eligible for pension.)

(b) Men whose condition may be benefited by further medical treatment, and—

(c) Men with permanent disability already established, whose condition cannot be improved by further treatment, and whose cases should come without delay before the Board of Pension Commissioners for consideration and settlement.

Disposition is made of these classes in the following manner:—

Class (a) Men for immediate discharge without pension are returned to the Military district from which they originated and discharged. The account of the State with them is closed when they have found suitable employment.

Class (b) Men whose condition may be benefited by further medical treatment, being the subject of the major portion of this Inquiry, may be, for the moment, passed over and consideration in respect of them resumed later.

Class (c) Men who have suffered by reason of wounds or disease, their disability being the result of military service or aggravated thereby. They cannot, it is presumed, be benefited by further hospital treatment. As soon as possible after their arrival they are examined by the Medical Board at discharged depot. The Medical history and other documents of each case, together with the report of the Medical Board at the discharge depot are forwarded to Ottawa and the Pensions Board proceeds forthwith to adjudicate upon the matter of pension. Meanwhile, the disabled soldier is permitted to return to his home, if he has one, remaining on full pay and allowances until his pension has been determined and his first monthly pension cheque forwarded to him. His discharge dates from the day before his pension begins. For the purpose of enabling discharged soldiers to maintain themselves until they have secured employment in civil life, a bonus equivalent to three months full pay allowances from the date of discharge is granted where the soldier has been at least six months in the service and has gone overseas. Members of the Civil Service, however, returning to positions formerly held by them, are not eligible for this bonus. (See Order in Council C.O.N.C. 1091 and 1362.)

TREATMENT OF THE CONVALESCENT SOLDIER IN CANADA.

Class (b) Returning to the subject of the treatment of men whose condition after their return to Canada it is thought may be improved by further medical treatment, this matter naturally falls under four heads:—