

(v) Vocational Guidance

139. Since the Board's last annual report was written there has been considerable development in the vocational guidance aspect of rehabilitation. The full-time Vocational Guidance Officers in the four main centres have been supplemented by part-time Honorary Education Advisers in thirty-five other centres, and they, as well as the Vocational Guidance Officers in the four centres, are not only co-operating with the rehabilitation organization in the consideration of applications for educational facilities, but are also providing in co-operation with Rehabilitation Officers valuable vocational advice to ex-servicemen.

(vi) Refresher Courses

140. During the year the Board's Education Committee set up a special sub-committee to investigate the question of post-graduate refresher courses for ex-servicemen. Arising from these investigations the Board now has in hand the provision of refresher correspondence courses, short-term full-time lecture courses, and special overseas post-graduate courses.

141. The Victoria University College has, at the suggestion of the Board, instituted a refresher course for practising barristers and/or solicitors, and this commenced with the opening of the 1944 University session. It is anticipated that similar courses in other professions may require to be introduced, and this subject is at present under consideration.

(vii) Liaison with Education Services in the Forces

142. Among Home Service Army personnel, as well as Middle East and Pacific Army and Air Force members, the A.E.R.S. (Army Educational and Rehabilitation Service) is providing educational facilities. In addition, the R.N.Z.A.F. Educational Service is providing tuition of various types to Navy and Air Force members in the Pacific, while arrangements are being made for the same service to impart tuition to personnel of all service arms in the United Kingdom.

143. As mentioned in an earlier section of this report, the A.E.R.S. representatives are conducting an education and rehabilitation census of all Army personnel, and it is hoped to extend this to Air Force and Navy members. The census forms when completed not only enable the A.E.R.S. to encourage men to pursue appropriate courses while in the Forces, but also put in the hands of the Board's Education Committee detailed information concerning each applicant for rehabilitation educational assistance. This ensures that there is no hiatus between any course commenced while in the Forces and any undertaken through the Rehabilitation Scheme. It also enables more efficient consideration of applications from ex-servicemen for educational and other assistance.

144. A working arrangement has been made with the A.E.R.S. and the R.N.Z.A.F. Educational Service by which the Rehabilitation Board does not become responsible for providing education assistance until the serviceman is either discharged from the Forces or otherwise, for all practical purposes, permanently released therefrom. Up to this stage the responsibility to provide tuition remains with the A.E.R.S. or R.N.Z.A.F. Educational Service, whichever is involved.

SECTION XI.—FARM TRAINING AND SETTLEMENT

(i) Administration

145. Following the reorganization of the Board and the establishment of the Department in 1943, a Farming Section was set up in the Head Office, and the officer in charge assumed the secretarial duties arising out of the work of the Farms Advisory Committee of the Board.

146. Towards the end of the year under review a comprehensive farm training and settlement procedure was introduced, and an important aspect of this was the constitution of some fifty-five local farming sub-committees to co-operate with the local Rehabilitation Committees in the consideration of applications and in the making of recommendations to the Executive Committee of the Board. The creation of specialist local Farming Committees has not taken away from the appropriate Rehabilitation Committee the function of recommending the degree of assistance which the ex-serviceman might be granted, but has ensured that in the grading of applicants and the decision as to what further training, if any, may be required the specialized experience and knowledge of men intimately connected with the farming industry will be obtained.

147. Although it has been operating for only a short time, the farm training and settlement procedure is working efficiently and is readily able to cope with the considerable number of applications already being received. Indications to date are that a large number of men are likely to come forward for training and/or settlement during the year 1944-45.

(ii) Application and Grading Procedure

148. The application and grading procedure now in force is summarized thus: each applicant for assistance is referred by the District Rehabilitation Officer to the local Rehabilitation Committee, which considers whether the circumstances of his case justify his establishment or re-establishment on his own account. Since training facilities are not generally granted to men who are not also to be established on their own farms all applications must first be considered from this angle. If the Rehabilitation Committee considers that the applicant merits establishment, he is referred to the appropriate Farming Sub-committee. Frequently for the convenience of applicants the Rehabilitation Committee and the Farming Sub-committee sit together. The Sub-committee, which is made up of an experienced farmer nominated by the local Rehabilitation Committee as chairman, and representatives of the State Advances Corporation and the Lands and Survey Department, then recommends the grading of the applicant "A," "B," "C," or "D." These grading letters, as explained in the Board's last report, signify:

"A" Fully experienced and qualified for immediate settlement.

"B"—Partly experienced but in need of further training before settlement would be prudent.

"C"—Inexperienced, but suitable for training with a view to ultimate settlement.

"D"—Not suitable, for one or more reasons, for settlement.