

principle governing the provision of training assistance is that priority is given to men with the longest overseas service; to those who have suffered most, whether by way of physical or mental war disabilities; or who have suffered by loss of opportunity in other ways.

2. Loss of opportunity is found chiefly where entry to the Armed Forces has made impracticable some definite occupational advance or placement. It is primarily a problem of youth, particularly as in the case of so many lads who went direct from school to the Forces and never entered upon their careers at the normal time, or who, having entered some form of employment, had not found their niche before taking up military service. The Rehabilitation Board recognizes its obligation to those who have suffered definite occupational hardship in this way, and makes provision in its schemes accordingly. It has to be remembered, however, that there must be some limitations in this regard and that the loss of opportunity must be both clear and related to military service. The "opportunity which might have arisen" may be too intangible as a claim for compensation by way of training, although some latitude is observed in the case of ex-servicemen who joined the Forces direct from school or college, particularly where the period of service has been substantial.

(ii) "A" Class Training

(a) General

1. This training scheme, which provides in a number of the building trades full-time intensive theoretical and practical indoor classes, followed by full-time advanced practical work under the supervision of the Board's instructors, continues to make very satisfactory progress; the overall number of ex-servicemen under training has increased from 542 in March, 1945, to 1,440 in March, 1946. The number of men who have completed training during the same period has risen from 616 to 761 only. This small increase is due to the fact that the carpentry training period was extended from one to two years, but this again has resulted in the building of a greater number of houses under the contract scheme during the year, as set out in more detail later in this report.

2. Full-time training units are now in operation at seventeen centres. The urgent and pressing need is for a reservoir of tradesmen in the building trades, and the Board has confined its activities under the "A" scheme to the training of ex-servicemen in carpentry and the ancillary building trades. Full-unit carpentry schools are located at Wellington (2), Auckland (3), Christchurch, and Dunedin, and half-units at Kaikohe, Hamilton, Rotorua, Gisborne, Napier, Hastings, Palmerston North, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Nelson, Westport, Timaru, and Invercargill. A full-unit centre provides for the training of twenty-six trainees, and a half-unit, fourteen trainees per class, with three classes per year intake at each centre. Painting, bricklaying, and plastering are also taught at the training establishments at Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. Classes in these courses vary as to complement between twelve and eighteen men.

3. The number of ex-servicemen under training as at 31st March is—carpenters, 1,256; plasterers, 54; bricklayers, 56, and painters and paperhangers, 74. Despite the relative magnitude of these numbers, the applications received from eligible ex-servicemen for "A" Class trade training far exceed the number of vacancies in the various schools. As a consequence there has been some small measure of criticism of the delay in acceptances for training. Regard must be had, however, to the fact that there are practical difficulties in setting up extra training establishments to provide for a peak period, and that the number of schools is governed by many considerations, including the provision of necessary buildings, instructors, and tools. It will be realized, in view of the numbers engaged, that the quantity of material necessary to maintain these is considerable.

4. To meet the need for the provision of additional and practicable training facilities, preparations are in train to establish additional carpentry units at Auckland and Wellington, to open new centres at Whangarei, Thames, Masterton, and Oamaru; and to increase the half-units at Hamilton and Gisborne to full-units. In addition, it is