

SECTION II, TRAINING.

The educational and vocational training of discharged soldiers is a most important feature of the operations of the Department, and great care must be exercised to consider the medical, technical, economic, and personal factors when selecting suitable trades or callings for men suffering from various disabilities.

It is necessary to provide training for—

- (a.) Partially disabled soldiers who owing to war service are unable to resume their pre-war occupations.
- (b.) Those who enlisted at a comparatively early age and who had not yet acquired a trade or calling ;
- (c.) Apprentices whose indentures had been interrupted by war service ;
- (d.) Soldiers' widows.

The arrangements made by the Department and the financial assistance provided during tuition is set out hereunder.

(1.) **SUBSIDIZED WORKERS.**—Discharged soldiers desirous of learning new trades or occupations, and who can be best trained within the environment of the trade itself, are placed in the workshops or factories of private employers under the Department's subsidized-wages scheme.

The employer undertakes to train the applicant in the particular trade or calling, and pays the trainee a wage as fixed by a wages committee consisting of a representative of the trades-union concerned, the employer, and a representative of the Repatriation Department. The difference between the employer's wage and £3 per week is made up by the Department, such subsidy being quite irrespective of any pension allowance which the trainee is receiving. The wage paid by the employer is reviewed quarterly by the wages committee, and any increase granted during the currency of the permit is paid to the trainee and does not affect the Government subsidy. A proportion of the subsidy payable (amounting to 5s. per week) is retained by the Department and is paid to the trainee on the satisfactory completion of the training.

Amongst the trades being taught the following may be mentioned: Tailoring, bootmaking, watchmaking, wire-mattress making, electrical engineering, bag and trunk making, carpentry, wire-weaving, electrical drafting, farming, photography, wicker-working, plumbing, French-polishing, vulcanizing, hairdressing, machinery salesman, drapery, wool-classing, sheet-metal working, motor-car and coach painting, cabinetmaking, sailmaking, motor mechanics, dental mechanics, &c.

Under this scheme, which is greatly assisted by the co-operation of the various trades-unions, training and employment has been arranged for a total of 1,186 men, and at the present time 1,013 are actually being trained in workshops and factories throughout the Dominion.

(2.) **SPECIAL SOLDIER CLASSES AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.**—Vocational training in new trades is also arranged in the various technical schools, and special soldier classes have been formed in the main centres. The principal subjects taught are engineering (electrical, motor, mechanical), woodwork (carpentry, cabinetmaking, &c.), commercial (book-keeping, correspondence, general office practice), and wool-classing. The instruction is of a practical nature, and the trainees receive intensive training of from six to seven hours per day. The workshops are well equipped with machinery, and the instructors are the best obtainable in their particular line. These classes are controlled by the technical schools through the Education Department, and the Repatriation Department provides the funds necessary for the extra instructors, the additional equipment, and for the trainees' sustenance. Should a trainee from one of these classes be unable (after a reasonable period of tuition) to obtain a position at the ruling rate of wage the Department will further assist him under its subsidized-wages scheme.

Sustenance to Trainees.—Sustenance is paid to technical trainees as follows:—

Attending special soldier classes thirty hours or more per week: Soldier, £2 10s. per week; wife, 10s. per week; children (not exceeding four), 3s. 6d. per week each, plus pension.

Attending ordinary technical school classes: Soldier, £2 10s. per week; wife, 10s. per week; children (not exceeding four), 3s. 6d. per week each, inclusive of pension.

Training under this particular scheme has been arranged for 557 men to date, and there are 418 attending the classes at the present time.

Soldiers desiring educational training with a view to improving their education and who are working at their trades during the day receive free tuition at technical classes in the evenings.

University Training.—Fees for the professional training of discharged soldiers, also grants for necessary text-books up to £5 5s., are paid by the Department in approved cases, and sustenance is paid on the same basis as that laid down for technical trainees. All applications are carefully considered, each case being dealt with on its merits. Preference is given to men whose course of study was interrupted by their military service, or men who show special aptitude and ability, particularly if they are disabled.

The Department's educational committees are in close touch with the University and college authorities, and review the progress of the students from time to time.

At the present time 188 men are being assisted to learn professions—divinity, medical, law, accountancy, teaching, &c.

(3.) **BOOTMAKING.**—A scheme for an instructional boot-factory submitted by the Auckland District Board was approved a few weeks ago. Suitable premises have been secured, and the machinery is now being installed at a cost to the Department of some £1,500. Additional