

For quite a while New Zealand printers have been concerned over the small number of apprentices coming forward each year. When war broke out, and young men left their formes, make-up benches, and printing-presses to learn how to drill and to fight, the position became more serious. But the Master Printers' Association took this new shortage philosophically.

"They'll be back, one day," they said, and did their best to carry on with steadily diminishing staffs.

Then, in ones and twos, the apprentices began to return. Some were wounded. Some were in ill health. Some were not as strong as they used to be. And there were men who went to their old bosses and said:

"Look here, how can I come back? The little I did know I've practically forgotten. The boy who was sweeping the floor when I went away now knows more than I ever did. I'll just have to try something else, that's all."

In reply, one Wellington employer said:

"If I can get you a refresher course away from here, will you return to us afterwards?"

The returned soldier thought this a good idea.

So the master printers in Wellington discussed the establishment of a printing department with the Training Centre, the Disabled Soldiers' Re-establishment League agreed to supply the instructor, Rehabilitation came forward with a subsidy for six months, and the Director of Rehabilitation gave his support. Plans settled, they began fitting up a model workroom in the Training Centre building. The master printers gave tools, plant, and equipment, a linotype (used by the now extinct *Kiwi News* in the Pacific) was bought with National Patriotic money, disabled soldiers learning carpentry at the Centre used 750 ft. of timber in building an office for the instructor and making benches, cupboards, and frames for the compositors, and a warehouse in Wellington donated two complete series of Cheltenham and Gill types, worth £200.

Once the workroom was ready, a small staff of four ex-servicemen and an instructor took over, and on June 20 the first job was done—the designing, setting up, and printing of labels for parcels sent out from the Centre. Within a fortnight hundreds of letterheads, addressed envelopes, tag labels, invoice and account forms, an advertising folder, and job sheets were printed. As they become more proficient, the men will receive small contracts from the Government Printer. At the time of writing, four compositors (they arrange the type) and two machinists (men who print the job) were employed, but the instructor hoped shortly to increase his class to six compositors and three machinists.

Disabled trainees can go in for either refresher courses or for the complete course. The curriculum is divided into two classes—beginners and advanced courses, with a maximum training period of three years. Apart from routine work and instruction, regular lectures are given by experts on printing, types, machines, and the manufacture of paper and inks. Visits to nearby printing-offices, in addition to increasing knowledge, allow trainees to meet and to grow to know their future workmates. An advisory committee (representing printers and rehabilitation officials) takes a personal interest in each man, watches his progress, and sees he has a job to go to once he is sufficiently confident and capable.

The four Middle Easterns, the airman, and the home serviceman already seemed confident and capable enough as they went about their tasks in a well-lit room, 35 ft by 27 ft., with glass windows running the full length of the northern and southern walls. The machinists were stacking the last of 750 sheets of a two-colour printing for the Disabled Servicemen's Bowling Club, while the compositors were considering the layout of the next piece of work.

Soon you'll be seeing a three-colour, circular label on all articles sold at Disabled Servicemen's Shops. It will be printed by the boys. It reads:

Made by those who helped put the
V in Victory, and now in Value.
Watch out for it.