

SECTION IX.—EMPLOYMENT

A. TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT

(i) Administration

88. In February, 1944, the Board formally assumed direct responsibility for the administration of the Carpentry and Engineering Training Centres, until then operated by the Labour Department for the purpose of training auxiliary war workers. Some time before the taking-over of these training centres by the Board the trainees were almost entirely ex-servicemen, but in the pre-department period—*i.e.*, up till November, 1943—the Board found it convenient to use the training service offered through the Labour Department by the Dominion Auxiliary Workers' Training Council.

89. The effect of taking over the various training centres by the Board was not only to relieve the Labour Department (as distinct from the National Service Department) of any functions relating to training and placement of workers, but was also to transfer *in toto* the responsibility for the full-time training of adult workers, civilian as well as ex-servicemen, to the Rehabilitation Board. The administration of general employment matters remains the responsibility of the National Service Department as has been the position since its inception.

90. "A" Class training—*i.e.*, full-time training of fit men in rehabilitation training centres—and the results recorded to date are discussed in a separate subsection which follows.

91. In the "B" Class training field—*i.e.*, subsidized long-term training with selected private employers—the Department has been greatly assisted by the local Trade Training Advisory Committees which have been constituted for various trades in different localities as necessary. The requisite contracts of engagement have been drawn between the Board and the ex-serviceman on the one hand and the Board and the employer on the other. The progress of "B" Class training and questions arising out of this form of trade training are also dealt with below.

92. Early in the current year the administration of "C" Class training, the third form of trade training for fit men—*i.e.*, completion of apprenticeship contracts interrupted by war service—was reviewed, and the joint responsibilities of the Labour Department in the matter of reviving the original contract, and the Rehabilitation Board in the payment of subsidy and supervision of training, were clearly defined. Likewise the financial and other obligations of the employer were clarified. Progress in this class of training is discussed in the subsection devoted to it.

93. Mr. A. J. Ridler, a returned soldier of the 1914-18 war, during the year was appointed as Controller of Rehabilitation Trade Training and Employment. Mr. Ridler's experience of employment matters is contributing materially to the success of the training and placement of ex-servicemen.

(ii) "A" Class Training

94. Full-time training in Rehabilitation Trade Training Centres in the case of carpentry and footwear training, and at technical colleges in the case of engineering, including general engineering and welding, is now being imparted at one or more of seven centres—namely, Auckland, Rotorua, Napier, Petone, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. At each of these places there is a Rehabilitation Carpentry Training Centre operating, while in six other centres the establishment of a similar Centre is contemplated. Footwear-manufacturing is taught at Auckland only, and engineering courses are at present being taught at Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. The demand for footwear trainees has now lessened and the need for continuing the footwear school is at present under review.

95. If the demand for housing now and in the immediate post-war years is over-shadowed by any other demand, it is that for skilled construction workers. Since New Zealand dwellings are predominantly of wooden construction the implication as far as the call for carpenters and joiners is concerned is obvious. Other trades, especially those in the building industry, offer wide scope for training activity, but none is so clamant, or likely to become so, as the carpentry trade. For this reason the Board has in the main concentrated its "A" Class training on this trade.

96. The "A" Class training schedule envisages as a norm a theoretical plus practical training term of up to four months in the training centre, after which the trainee proceeds to a further eight months of field-work on the erection of State houses under special supervision. During his four months' training at the centre and for the first four months of his improvership in the field the trainee is paid by the Rehabilitation Board at the rate of £5 5s. gross weekly. During the second four months improvership he is paid by the Board at the rate of £5 7s. 6d. gross per week, after which he is placed with a selected employer on approved carpentry work, for which he must be paid the full journeyman's wage.

97. At the present rate of construction "A" Class field trainees graduating from the seven carpentry training centres are erecting approximately one hundred and fifty dwellings per year, and approximately five hundred selected ex-servicemen trainees are passing through the centres annually. Field trainees are employed entirely on State housing contracts, and the contract procedure is for the Housing Department to credit the Rehabilitation Board with the usual labour share of the contract price and for the Board to meet the difference between this and the necessarily higher labour and overhead costs. As their field training term draws to its end there is generally little to distinguish the man-hour output of trainees from that of trained journeymen employed on similar work, while qualitative comparisons have been very favourable to the Board's trainees. It is expected that the number of State houses erected annually by "A" Class trainees will grow considerably as more centres are opened, while the cumulative total of dwellings erected by ex-servicemen trainees during and after their training has already made a worthwhile contribution to the solution of the shortage of accommodation for ex-servicemen.

98. Not the least difficulty in developing "A" Class training facilities as extensively and speedily as the Board would desire is that of obtaining sufficient competent instructing staff at the terms offered. Noticeable already in "A" Class carpentry training this difficulty will also attend every extension of "A" Class training. Temporary difficulty in acquiring an adequate stock of tools and equipment for instructional purposes is also at present a limiting factor in this form of training.