

PREFACE

1. The 31st March, 1949, brought to a close another busy period for the Rehabilitation Board. Applications for all forms of assistance remained at a remarkably high level; in fact, business and furniture loan applications exceeded those of the previous year.

2. Applications for housing assistance remain unabated, and during the year 5,065 loans were granted totalling £6,060,529. To date 25,259 housing loans have been granted and 10,256 State rental houses allocated, making a grand total of 35,515 ex-servicemen who have received much-needed assistance in this direction.

3. The continued interest in land-settlement as a means of rehabilitation is illustrated by the steady rate of applications which have been maintained during the year. Despite the fact that 939 new applications were received during the year the number of men awaiting settlement was substantially reduced. When full account is taken of the problems associated with this field of rehabilitation, the fact that to the 31st March, 1949, 6,253 men have been settled on the land with rehabilitation assistance can be regarded as a satisfactory achievement. Nevertheless, the Board continues its efforts to accelerate the rate of settlement.

4. The establishment in business of all those who desire and are qualified to operate their own shops, factories, or other commercial organizations continues at an undiminished rate.

5. In the trade-training field 3,895 men completed their training during the year and were placed in industry. During the same period 1,779 men commenced training.

6. There has been a noticeable decrease in the number of new applications for educational assistance, but this has been offset by the increase in renewals of bursaries granted in previous years.

7. It is difficult to estimate with accuracy the future demand for any particular form of rehabilitation assistance, and, although much has been done in the field of housing, business, and land-settlement, much still remains to be done. Applications for financial assistance and other types of rehabilitation assistance continue at a consistently high level, and the indications are that the levelling-off process will be very gradual.

8. The Rehabilitation Board continues to interest itself in the post-settlement problems of ex-servicemen, whether or not they were assisted in their initial establishment by the Board. Although these cases frequently present a wide variety of problems, the Board has been able in most instances to assist in providing a satisfactory solution.