

(3.) *Public Service Classes.*

The matter of the permanent appointment to the Public Service of discharged soldiers was taken up by the Department some time ago, and in August, 1919, the Public Service Commissioner intimated that he would favourably consider the permanent appointment of any returned soldier who by examination proves himself eligible for such vacancies as may arise. Arrangements were then made to start special classes in various centres to provide the necessary instruction, and the scheme was entered into with enthusiasm by most of the discharged-soldier temporary employees of the Public Service. Since the inauguration of these classes the men have studied assiduously, and at the first examination recently held in Wellington there were only 9 per cent. of failures.

As for the actual placing of returned soldiers in Government employment, the Public Service Commissioner has at all times given preference to ex-soldiers, and in the case of very seriously disabled men, whom we have had difficulty in placing in private employment, the Secretary to the Commissioner (Mr. A. C. Turnbull) has sought out suitable niches in various Departments.

(4.) *University Training.*

The professional training of discharged soldiers has not been neglected, and the Department is always anxious to assist men (particularly disabled men) whose courses of study were interrupted by military service, or men who show special aptitude and ability for their chosen professions.

In a good many instances men work during the day, and the Department pays their fees whilst they are attending the evening lectures at the Universities. Others devote their whole time to their studies, and, at the discretion of the District Repatriation Boards, may be paid sustenance on the same basis as laid down for technical trainees. When financial assistance is likely to reach a fairly large amount, as in the medical course, a part of same is generally granted by way of loan, to be repaid by the student when he is in a position to do so. Grants up to £5 5s. are also made in approved cases for the purchase of necessary text-books, &c.

(5.) *Apprentices.*

Many young men who enlisted while serving their terms of apprenticeship are on resumption of their pre-war occupations entitled to have their wages made up by the Department to—Single men, £3 per week, plus pension; married men, £3 5s. per week, plus pension.

(6.) *Farm Training.*

In view of the importance of our primary products the Department offers every encouragement to discharged soldiers to take up farming pursuits. A very effective system of practical instruction has been arranged in connection with State farms, experimental stations, and with the assistance of private farmers. The assistance given comes under two headings:—

- (i.) Training under the subsidized-wages scheme with private farmers: Many men who subsequently desire to take up general farming on land acquired under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act prefer to gain knowledge with private farmers. The Department then subsidizes the wages paid by the farmer in order to assure the trainee an income of £2 per week and his keep over and above pension allowance, and any increase in wages granted by the employer during the training does not affect the Department's subsidy. The Department has arranged farm training for 290 men under this scheme, and 207 men are still receiving instruction.
- (ii.) Training at State farms or kindred institutions: The Agricultural Department have placed all their experimental farms at our disposal for the training of discharged soldiers, and the Director-General of Agriculture and his officers have heartily rendered the Department most valuable assistance. Short intensive courses are given, and the results achieved must be gratifying to the officers of the Agriculture Department concerned.

*Sustenance during Training.*—The sustenance allowance payable to trainees at the State farms is: Soldier, £2 10s. per week; wife, 10s. per week; children (not exceeding four), each 3s. 6d. per week, plus pension. £1 per week is deducted for the soldier's board and lodging.

(a.) *Ruakura.*—This farm is reserved for disabled soldiers, and instruction is given mainly in the lighter branches of farming, such as beekeeping, fruitgrowing, poultry-raising, pig-breeding, and horticulture. Accommodation is provided for thirty-five men, and an extra building to accommodate a further twenty-five men is now being erected at a cost of over £3,000.

(b.) *Weraroa.*—Another well-equipped State farm is at Weraroa, where accommodation is provided for twenty-six men. The instruction given there is mainly in dairy, sheep, and pig farming, and cropping, and therefore only fit men are trained. The present cubicles are now being extended to accommodate an additional number of trainees.

(c.) *Moa Seed-farm.*—With a view to providing healthy outdoor occupation for discharged soldiers in the Otago District a seed-raising farm has been established on an area of about 450 acres of suitable land near Roxburgh, in Central Otago, where the climate is ideal for the purpose. In view of the fact that the value of the seeds imported to New Zealand in 1915 was £327,590, it is believed that the farm will, in addition to providing congenial occupation for a number of returned men, prove to be a sound commercial undertaking. The farm is managed for the Repatriation Department by a special committee of experts, comprising gentlemen with an intimate knowledge of the capabilities of the land as well as experience in seed-raising. A manager with the highest qualifications has been appointed. He holds a diploma in agriculture, and has made a specialty of plant-breeding. His advice, and the lectures to be given to the soldier trainees, will be open to soldier settlers on the adjoining block, and also to any other settlers in the district, free of charge. The course of instruction will cover from four to twelve months.