

Governments to recognize that the re-training of the disabled men at public expense was a necessary post-war problem, besides being a socially profitable investment for public funds. The Military Hospitals Commission was authorized to provide facilities for such re-training and for the issue of pay and allowances while this re-training was in progress. Arrangements were made for the opening of special schools, for the utilization of existing provincial and private institutions, and for the placing of men in industries where an intensive apprenticeship to the new trade could be carried out. As an adjunct a special employment and follow-up service was established. Large numbers of disabled men availed themselves of these facilities, the peak of the load being reached in March, 1920, when upwards of 26,000 (inclusive of minors referred to below) were undergoing training. The total who had taken training prior to March 31, 1921, was 50,996, of whom 38,994 had graduated. Of the balance, 2,990 at that date were undergoing training and 9,012 had discontinued their courses for various reasons. These men were trained in 421 distinct occupations. Follow-up statistics showed that 66.01 p.c. of the number trained in Departmental schools, 79.36 p.c. of those trained in outside schools, and 73.19 p.c. of those trained in industries, were subsequently employed in the line of work in which they were trained, or an average of 71.96 p.c.

At the commencement of the vocational training work two policies were open to the Government: (1) To take the men and train them in highly skilled trades, such as carpenters, printers, plumbers, machinists, etc., which, without previous skill in these trades to build upon, would have taken from one to three years or possibly more. (2) If the men were skilled in some occupation, to build upon that foundation, by training in some lighter occupation closely allied to it, where former experience might be made use of, or if there was no previous skill to build upon, to train in some occupation, not piece work, where a full wage could be earned in from 6 to 8 months. The second method has been adopted as a general principle. It may be added that those who received training have ranged in age from youths to men of 50 years, in education, from the illiterate to the university student, industrially, from the lowest grade labourer to the most highly skilled mechanic.

An important sub-division of the vocational courses was the training provided for minors who enlisted under the age of 18 and thus suffered a serious interruption of their apprenticeship or education. This branch of the work of the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment was commenced in the spring of 1919. The number of minors to whom courses were granted was 11,584, 8,091 of whom had graduated by March 31, 1921, while 251 were still in training and 3,242 had for various reasons discontinued their courses.

Another aspect of the training activities which have been developed is that of occupational therapy in the hospitals. It was found in the early stages of the work that time hung heavily on the hands of the convalescent, and it was determined to establish classes and war occupations which would relieve the tedium. This branch of