

# HAIRCUT, SIR?

FEW callings in New Zealand today offer such good opportunities for profitable employment, both for the serviceman and the servicewoman, as hairdressing. Men must always have their hair cut, their faces shaved, and their razors ground. Women must always have their permanent waves, their hair sets, and their "facials". And in New Zealand today staffs are not large enough to give them the service they desire. Excessive overtime is being worked, and customers have to wait longer between haircuts or permanent waves than they would like. Any member of the services, who has made the odd *lire* cutting his comrades' hair, or in the case of WAAC's, setting the friend's hair for that service function might find it profitable to consider hairdressing as a post-war career.

There are no fewer than 1,400 barbers' shops in New Zealand with from one to five chairs and most of them are understaffed. Even before the war, staffs were not sufficient, and the position has naturally deteriorated in recent years. Many men well past retiring age are carrying on until the war is over, so that the serviceman who is interested in the trade as a career is practically assured of employment.

It takes from two years and a-half to three years to learn the trade thoroughly, including the sharpening and setting of razors in addition to the normal hairdressing side of the job. Until a man has been in the trade for this time he is not usually considered to be in a sound position to hold his own as a hairdresser or to go into business on his own account.



Trainees are placed by the Rehabilitation Department with employers under the subsidy scheme at L5 5s a week. While younger men are preferred, suitable men up to forty years can be trained in smaller businesses. Although the work entails long hours of standing, it is suitable for men with minor disabilities, and is pleasant, clean, and light. The hours of work are forty-four a week. Award rates of pay are quite good. Taking the Wellington Labour District as an example, they are as follows:—Managers, L7 8s per week; journeymen, from L5 10s 6d to L6 4s 6d; improvers, employed for a further twelve months after serving apprenticeship, L4 11s 6d; casuals, 3s 6½d an hour.

It should not be a difficult matter for an ex-serviceman to set up in business for himself if he has the necessary experience. It is considered that the average capital required for chairs, furnishings, equipment, and a small stock is approximately L500.

Prospects for women hairdressers are equally bright. The demand for labour is increasing all the time and, even with the relaxation of wartime controls, it is considered that the demand will not slacken. The work is pleasant, varied, and interesting. A pleasant personality is required, and it is advisable for girls to have strong hands and wrists. The hours of work in many salons are long, with one late night a week.