

A TRADE



at YOUR FINGERTIPS



There are and always will be a number of people who fill the ranks of "unskilled labour". It has its attractions, for the young man can start at what seem to him princely wages. The fact that they will never get any higher and that marriage will soon reduce their splendour does not occur to him. By the time he is married and finds out his mistake it is too late to start a long apprenticeship and his obligations are too heavy to allow it, even if that apprenticeship will mean higher wages, a more interesting job and better prospects.

Many unskilled labourers joined the Army. While overseas they have had time to think, to talk things over with tradesmen and perhaps to acquire some skills of their own. Many of them will return determined to acquire a trade. For them the Government has a plan, and it offers the same plan to the younger man who had not had the chance to start learning a job in civil life, and to the man who is dissatisfied with the job he had and feels that this time he is going to pick a better one.

This plan is put into action by the Trade Training Scheme. It overcomes, where possible, the two barriers to a man's acquiring a trade later in life. In the first place it guarantees a living wage, at present starting at L5. 5 0 a week, though there are indications that this will be raised to L5 15. 0, with further periodical increases at six

monthly intervals during training. Secondly, it provides a shortened apprenticeship, except in certain trades, such as plumbing, where shortening is not feasible. This shortening is justified partly by the intensified nature of the training, partly by the greater maturity of the trainees.

Trade training is carried on in two ways. Wherever the numbers of trainees justify it, Government Trade Training Centres are opened. The trainees are required to attend these unless it is difficult or impossible for them to do so, and where such attendance involves married men living away from home a separation allowance of 30/- a week is payable. At present Carpentry Training Centres are open in the four main cities and others are being opened at Palmerston North, New Plymouth, Wanganui and Nelson.

Painting, paperhanging and glazing, bricklaying and plastering have up till now been taught only at Petone but it is expected that this month training centres will open in these subjects in Auckland and Christchurch.

Where there are no such centres or where attendance at them is impracticable, "B" class training, *i.e.* subsidised training with a selected private employer, is available in many trades. It will be noticed that "A" class training is so far available only in trades