

When you get back

We have tried to make the information given here as complete and accurate as possible, but it should be remembered that changing conditions may invalidate some of it. These articles can be regarded, therefore, only as a general guide. They do not bind *Korero* or any authority.

BOOT TRADE

Bootmaking

The normal term of apprenticeship is five years for boys under eighteen and three years for adults above this age. The trade contains as many as fifty processes, and the apprentice is trained in three or four operations, the choice of which rests with the employer, who is guided, however, by the interests and aptitudes of the apprentice.

Concessions to Servicemen.—A returned serviceman entering the trade is given a six months' training, during which his wage is subsidized to bring it up to the minimum-wage standard. At the end of this time he becomes a skilled worker in certain operations, which will entitle him to the minimum rate of pay and any increase the employer may offer.

At the present time in Auckland there is a training school where men are given a six months' intensive course in bootmaking prior to being placed in industry under direction of the Man-power authorities. This emergency training scheme can readily be adapted to meet the needs of returned servicemen.

Wages.—Under the scheme trainees are paid about £5 5s. per week, while the ordinary wage for men employed in bootmaking-factories is about 2s. 6½d. per hour, plus cost-of-living bonuses. A foreman's rate is upwards of £7 per week.

Prospects.—As there are no sitting-down jobs in the bootmaking trade for men, it is not suitable for those who are physically handicapped. Apart from this, opportunities in the trade are good.

Boot-repairing

Boot-repairing, on the other hand, would be suitable for disabled men, and training in this section of the trade is being developed in order to aid in rehabilitation. At the present time boot-repairers are in great demand, but the increased production of civilian footwear and the abolition of rationing will lessen the demand.

LEATHER-WORK

In the saddlery, harness, and collar-making branch of this trade, which is highly skilled, a five years' apprenticeship is required. When the war ends and the motor comes back on the road, saddlery will be even more limited than at present and will provide employment for few men.

Other branches of the leather trade, however, have shown a marked development recently, and these branches—apart from the making of leather belting to drive machines—require little training. Such, for example, are the branches of the trade concerned in the making of suitcases and of belts, pouches, leggings, watch-cases, and other articles required by the Army and Air Force. This work is all particularly suitable for disabled men, and training centres have already been established to give returned servicemen adequate tuition.

The Czechoslovakian refugees have opened up a new field in fancy leather goods previously imported—ladies' handbags and the like—but, while the cutting is done by men, the task of making these fancy goods is mostly done by women.

There are plenty of openings for men, however, in the tarpaulin and heavy sections of the trade.