

When you get back

TAILORING

To-day the skilled tailor who has served an apprenticeship to the trade is a rarity. Two factors contribute to this: first, the work is exacting, requiring long years of experience with much patience and skill; and second, the factory-made suit has become so much the accepted article that only the fastidious or discriminating person bothers about the difference. Experience has shown that, after five years' or more apprenticeship, the prospective tailor has learned only the rudiments of his job and frequently is not sufficiently skilled to produce a first-class article.

Ninety per cent. of those in the clothing trade are women, and the remaining 10 per cent. of men are mainly engaged in cutting, for which there is an apprenticeship of five years, and pressing, for which there is a three years' apprenticeship. In both England and America at present, however, women are engaged in these sections of the work as well, and there would seem to be little chance of many positions for men being available after the war. Cutting may take seven or eight years to learn thoroughly, and in the end pays anything from £6 to £20 per week; an under-presser earns about £5 per week.

Pressing is hard work, and strong physique is essential. Cutting is not so strenuous, but involves a great deal of standing.

HAIRDRESSING

Hairdressing provides an avenue of employment for ex-servicemen who may be unable to do heavy work. Cases have been known of men who have lost several fingers or even an arm being able to follow this trade with success.

A four years' apprenticeship is served, at the end of which the minimum wage is £5 18s. 9d. a week. Hours of work are usually from 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., and provided the man concerned takes a reasonable amount of exercise it is not the unhealthy trade that some would suppose.

The normal services provided cover hairdressing, shaving, shampooing, face and head massaging, and the sharpening and setting of razors.

At the present time there would appear to be good chances of employment for suitable men.

DENTAL MECHANICS

An apprenticeship of five years normally to be spent either with a dentist or in a laboratory. Adult apprenticeship is for a period of three years upon modified terms and conditions to be approved by the Apprenticeship Committee.

A reasonable standard of education is required, together with special aptitude for the work, which requires neatness and manipulative skill. Good physique, no respiratory defects, good eyesight, and normal hands are required.

Because of the development in cities of laboratories that specialize in prosthetic work, apprentices in provincial towns are on the whole more likely to get a comprehensive training than are those in the main centres. It is expected that the release of dental mechanics from the Forces (including those trained by the Forces) will be ample to fill available vacancies.

A B Grade dental mechanic is at present receiving £6 10s. to £8 a week. A Grade positions are worth from £7 to £8 10s. a week. Special process workers are earning about the same money as a B Grade mechanic.