All of Them Looking for a Man’s Job

That’s What the Soldiers Seek, but Their Notions Vary—A Toe Dancer Scored $30,000 a Year, I Turned Farmer, and a Shoe Salesman Went in for Exporting

MOST of the men who come back from the war want to do something of more consequence than the men who fought before. Having had a hand in the biggest job ever cut out for humankind, they are inclined to look down on the ordinary task. It isn’t necessarily that they want more pay, although this is one thing they may reach for, to do something that seems to them of more importance to the war. I care even less than they do that a man who is good at a job and enjoys it should be paid $50,000 a year. Underwood & Underwood.

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"England is making a big success of this employe’s training school idea," she said. "They call such departments ‘vastule schools’ in Great Britain, and they have become a regular feature of almost every big business organization. They take the place, on a much larger scale, of the old system of apprenticing once popular in England, and, in some industries, like printing and tailoring, in this country. One noteworthy point of difference, however, between the old-time apprenticeship and the present is that while the former received nothing for his fitting themselves for their future occupations, and live decently on less than $18 a week in London, the latter is rapidly becoming an impossibility. Moreover, the men earn their weekly stipend of $18 or $20, and sometimes more, while learning the work. Such industries in New York as have given the training school a fair try are more than willing to admit this. It gives the men, too, a new interest in their work, and the work itself an added dignity. As for men in occupations where no special training is required, to expect them to work for less than $18 or $20 a week is folly, as we all know who try to get common laborer of any sort done at this time."

Mrs. Kohut spends much of her time studying the men themselves, and finding out what their natural attributes are, what their previous education and training have been, and what they really want to do. In this work she is assisted by Miss Mary Burbank. "Some of the boys just come frankly to me and ask me to pick out a job for them," Mrs. Kohut said.

"They are the easiest to handle and to place in the right sort of position. It is the man who thinks he knows what he can do, and has picked out the wrong vocation, that makes our real problem. That sort of man may not lack good judgment, but he does need some one to direct his judgment."

"This is what I mean," Mrs. Kohut went on to illustrate. "Some days ago a soldier boy of 20 told me he wanted to go into the export business. I asked him what he knew about exporting, what his previous experiences had been in the matter, and he told me he had sold shoes in a department store. And a man that can sell shoes can sell anything," he asserted.

"I liked his confidence and courage, but I certainly did doubt his judgment. He was just 20, and a little more questioning brought out the fact that he had also just married. The girl had waited for him so long that they couldn’t afford to get married, and they had got married at once. He could get his old job back at the shoe store and he didn’t want it."

"I want something bigger than that," he said. "I think my experiences in the army make me better for business work. Besides, I have had nearly two years to grow up in since I sold shoes. The missis is willing to wait until I can get into better work."

"It was hard to talk against such determination and ambition, but I could see nothing else for it. The boy was wholly untrained for any kind of work but selling shoes, and he could get his shoe job any minute he went back to the store. I told him about my own husband who was just his age, and how necessary it was for him to know what he was doing before he tried to do it. Finally he agreed to go back and take his old job, and use his evenings to fit himself for bigger work."

"I have since had the satisfaction of seeing him at his work, cheerful and seemingly happy. He is studying hard, and his wife says she is willing to go without all sorts of things to help him pull through until he has prepared himself for the work of his choice."

This is only one instance out of many that have come to Mrs. Kohut’s attention of men who want to do work too big for them until they’ve had training.

"They don’t know this until somebody points it out to them. This morning twin brothers came to me, or, rather, I went to them, and I think I was just in time. Those boys, like many others coming home from overseas, had landed in New York full of the feeling that ‘there was a whole world waiting for them.’ They got their first damper when there was nobody at the dock to meet them. From that time on their spirits dropped lower and lower, until, at the time I met them, they were just about ready to turn Bolshevik."

"They told us on the transport that we could have our pick of the fat jobs that were to be had in New York. We came back here and we can’t get anything. If we ask for work we are told that all the old men who tried to have jobs before the war have been taken back, and everybody has more men than he needs. We didn’t have any pre-war jobs. We just went to school, but we have to work now and there’s no work for us to do."

"Clearly, these were men for ‘vestibule’ school. A gentleman quickened them to decide on the kind of work they wanted to do—they had exactly the same sort of tastes and inclinations—and I sent them there to concern themselves where they can best be of use on the ground floor with the least of work they will like, and where they will be paid while they are learning enough for them to live comfortably."

Underwood & Underwood.

Mrs. Alexander Kohut, Who is Helping Discharged Soldiers Find the Jobs They Want.

services but his training and a job when his apprenticeship was over, the modern worker in the school is paid from the day he begins his training.

We are making this point clear with regard to the soldiers, sailors, and marines who are taken on as student-employees. The Re-employment Bureau of New York City, with its numerous commercial affiliations, does not list any opening which pays less than $18 a week. It has to keep in mind that the men who were soldiers, sailors, and marines while we at war must live while they are

"My work for the Re-employment Bureau was mainly in the Tens around the city, and, as an active member of the National League for Women’s Service, was instrumental in finding thousands of volunteers for other essential industries, is now turning her talents and the experience gained toward helping discharged services. In other words, instead of women for work that must be done she is finding jobs for men who must have work. She is now associated with the Re-employment Bureau of New York City for Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines at 500 Pearl Street, New York City."

Babylonian Scene from "The Wayfarer," the Pageant of Christianity Produced at the Methodist Centenary Exposition in Columbus, Ohio, with a Cast of 2,000 Persons and a Chorus of 1,000 Voicres.

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