

391. The laggards in recovery were the building and construction industries, some branches of engineering, and the industries supplying building materials—*e.g.*, cement, bricks, and tiles, &c.

392. The following are the half-yearly figures of registered unemployed as shown by the Unemployment Board's annual reports—

September, 1929	..	..	..	..	2,466
March, 1930	..	..	..	..	3,130
September, 1930	..	..	..	..	6,025
March, 1931	..	..	..	..	38,028
September, 1931	..	..	..	..	54,590
March, 1932	..	..	..	..	54,520
September, 1932	..	..	..	..	73,650
March, 1933	..	..	..	..	66,652
September, 1933	..	..	..	..	79,435
March, 1934	..	..	..	..	65,387
September, 1934	..	..	..	..	64,761
March, 1935	..	..	..	..	53,498
September, 1935	..	..	..	..	60,344
March, 1936	..	..	..	..	54,529

393. The administrative measures adopted to deal with the unemployment problem during this period have been dealt with at length in the annual reports of the Unemployment Board. The Unemployment Board never at any time expressed any particular concern about unemployment amongst women, and all available figures suggest that the problem was not serious. The number of women in factory employment showed a slight drop in 1931–32, but the 1929–30 level was passed in 1933–34. Most women were, of course, employed in the light consumers goods industries, professional offices, domestic services, and the distributive trades, which were not so severely hit. But such an enormous increase in male unemployment probably affected adversely the demand for female labour, the most likely result being that more girls remained at home. These girls would not appear in the unemployment statistics, but normally they would have entered the labour market.

394. Recovery and Social Security, 1936–1939.—The census returns of March, 1936, give a picture of the industrial break-up of the population at that time. These figures probably reflect the preceding depression conditions rather more than the succeeding pre-war conditions. In the following table the census figures for 1926 and 1936 are given—

	1926.		1936.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Primary production	138,550	3,526	168,598	6,515
Industrial	113,372	20,616	129,146	27,712
Transport and communication	56,441	2,283	60,022	2,328
Commerce and finance	64,295	19,493	75,827	24,039
Public administration and professional	34,307	23,948	37,050	27,686
Domestic and personal service	8,084	36,416	12,263	44,482
Unspecified	23,626	7,040	22,615	6,165
	438,675	113,322	505,521	138,927

395. In 1936 some 144,000 males were engaged in farming and 45,000 in various types of constructional work. Farming showed an increase over the 1926 figures; but constructional employment had not fully recovered to the 1926 level. There was a rise in the number of women employed in all industry, although this was no more than proportionate to the increase in female population. A more rapid increase in the employment of women came just before the second World War.