396. By 1937 most branches of industry had passed their pre-depression levels of output and employment. Coal-mining was an exception, and in 1939 there were still 1,000 fewer men employed than in 1930. Employment in manufacturing industries rose from 96,401 in 1936–37 to 108,722 in 1939–40.

397. The labour force in the farming industry probably remained fairly stable between 1936 and 1939, with a tendency to decline as farming became increasingly mechanized.

398. With the general rise in prosperity it may be assumed that employment in the tertiary industries would rise also, the number engaged in public administration probably showing the most marked increase. During the depression the numbers engaged in transport and communication fell off, employment on railways showing a marked fall. Though total numbers engaged in 1936 were slightly higher than in 1926 the proportion of the working population so engaged was lower.

399. Building and construction probably showed the most notable rise over the period, especially public-works construction. By 1939 there were 22,000 men engaged on public works and another 15,000 in building. With the addition of all other types of constructional workers, the total must have reached almost 60,000, compared with 45,000 in 1936. Much of the constructional activity, however, was necessary to overtake arrears accumulated during the depression. The following table shows the average numbers employed on building and public-works construction between 1935–36 and 1939–40 :—

——	Building.	Public Works.	Total.
1935–36	8,346	9,764	18,110
1936–37	9,721	17,311	27,032
1937–38	11,471	19,818	31,289
1938–39	14,040	22,660	36,700
1939–40	15,853	21,605	37,458

Figures taken from 1942 edition of the Year-Book

400. Just as in the early stages of the depression the decline in the constructional industries had a very severe effect on the whole field of employment, so, conversely, in the period before the war the activity in the constructional industries had a stimulating effect on the whole economy.

401. Unemployment Levels, 1936–1939.—The 1936 census showed the number of unemployed as 37,636, of whom 35,774 were males and 1,862 females, with a further 17,869 persons being classified as partially unemployed.

402. The following table shows the total numbers registered but ineligible for relief, on relief work, on sustenance, and working full time in industry with assistance from the Employment Promotion Fund over the period 1936–39. The figures are taken from the 1939 report on the Employment Division of the Labour Department :—

——	Registered but not eligible.	Scheme No. 5	Sustenance.	Working Full Time in Industry.	Total.
March, 1936	1,872	15,704	14,443	22,510	54,529
September, 1936	2,209	13,955	25,744	7,511	49,419
March, 1937	2,341	6,621	18,945	6,619	34,526
September, 1937	2,229	4,714	18,110	11,397	36,450
March, 1938	1,086	2,735	10,874	15,204	29,899
September, 1938	771	743	8,061	29,057	38,632
March, 1939	649	77	7,256	24,087	32,069