

Auckland District

451. In this district notified vacancies for male labour have, on an average exceeded the number of disengaged persons seeking employment by approximately 19 to 1 for the period, and the employment position has been most buoyant. In the case of female labour there has also been an extreme shortage, and the pressing demands by all industries have resulted, in a number of cases, in extraordinary offers by employers in conditions of employment in an endeavour to attract female staff. Notified vacancies for females rose rapidly from 1,195 at 30th September, 1945, to 3,107 at 31st March, 1946. Removals of man-power controls and directions, marriages, and resumption of home duties following the return to New Zealand of overseas servicemen have all contributed to swell the rapidly rising tide of shortages existent to-day throughout most industries requiring female labour in this district.

452. Almost every classified industrial group is operating in this particular district, and in almost all cases, to a greater or lesser degree, shortages of labour, both skilled and unskilled, exist. The position in some of the more important industries is now examined:—

(a) *Building*.—In the building industry the demand for skilled tradesmen in all sections of the industry has remained undiminished and shows a gradually increasing trend with 424 unsatisfied vacancies notified at 31st March, 1946, as compared with 303 at 30th September, 1945. With the proportion of vacancies at 31st March, 1946, for skilled tradesmen when compared with those for unskilled men standing at approximately 10 to 1, the demand for builders' labourers has been comparatively limited, though more would probably be required if more tradesmen were available. Shortage of timber, cement, and other building materials has, without doubt, hampered this industry and, although a brisk demand for tradesmen has remained, has necessitated the transfer of men from one job to another to an increasing extent to enable continuity of employment to be maintained.

(b) *Freezing-works*.—The customary heavy seasonal demands for labour in this industry were satisfactorily met and, although at the peak period a limited number more men could have been employed, the position was not at any stage acute. Apart from approximately 750 regular employees customarily employed and available each year during the busy season, the majority of vacancies are for unskilled men. Drought conditions resulted in larger killings during the seasonal peak (particularly of beef) on account of the desire of farmers to turn in their stock to the best advantage before shortage of feed affected it. Up to the end of March, when the season was already tapering off, no difficulty was experienced in finding employment for those displaced.

(c) *Engineering*.—The demand for all classes of skilled tradesmen (especially moulders) and for labourers fit for heavy work has remained fairly constant. At 31st March, 1946, unsatisfied vacancies were 244, with the proportion of skilled to unskilled standing at approximately 2 to 1.

In the motor trades a dearth of coach-builders and panel-beaters exists, but comparatively few vacancies are notified for motor mechanics. There has been a considerable demand for the latter work by men coming out of the Armed Forces.

(d) *Transport and Communications (i.e., Railways, tramways, bus and motor services, Post and Telegraph, &c.)*.—Unsatisfied vacancies notified by the Post and Telegraph and Railways Departments have been increasing and stood at 228 on 31st March, 1946. While skilled men are required (particularly by the Railways) the main demands have been for juveniles and unskilled labour. In the case of the motor services and tramways, notified vacancies have been declining steadily, particularly in the case of the motor services in which only 24 vacancies remained offering on 31st March, 1946, mainly for drivers.

(e) *Fertilizer-works, Brickworks, Tanneries, and other "Heavy" Industries*.—Demands for labour in these industries, though not of the same dimensions numerically, could absorb quite a number of unskilled men. Difficulties are being experienced in obtaining labour able and willing to undertake employment in these industries owing to the work offering generally being of a heavy and relatively unattractive kind.

(f) *Clothing-manufacture*.—Easily the most marked shortages of female labour have been recorded in this industry. The position was fairly acute at the end of January, when notified vacancies stood at 384. With the revocation of man-power controls on 31st January, 1946, these notified vacancies rose very sharply, reflecting the extensive exodus which took place. At 28th February, 1946, unsatisfied vacancies were recorded as 1,529, while at 31st March, 1946, the number had further increased to 1,752.

(g) *Footwear Industry*.—Vacancies for females rose during the first ten months of the period under review, but have since remained almost stationary at the higher level during the last two months of the year. Total female vacancies at 31st January, 1946, were 191, and at 31st March, 1946, were 192, of which approximately two-thirds were for skilled labour (largely female machinists). Vacancies for males have fluctuated, but the shortages recorded have not been very marked, standing at only