

49 on 31st March, 1946. To some extent the further engagement of male labour is dependent on the availability of female labour, particularly machinists. It is of interest to note that a number of firms have recently established branch factories in smaller towns in the Auckland Province with a view to overcoming the acute shortage of female labour in the Auckland urban area.

(h) *Hospitals*.—There have been shortages of female labour in hospitals during the past year, rising to a peak of 305 vacancies at 31st January, 1946. By 31st March, 1946, however, this had been slightly reduced. The majority of vacancies are for domestic staff and nurse trainees.

(i) *Hotels and Restaurants*.—Here again there has been a steady shortage of female labour recorded, mainly for experienced hands, with the peak shortage of 231 notified vacancies occurring at 30th November, 1945.

(j) *Other Industries employing Female Labour*.—Most other industries where female labour is employed in the Auckland area record shortages to a greater or lesser degree—*e.g.*, rubber-manufacture, carton-making, jam-making, laundries, printing, flock and felt manufacture, &c.

(k) *Returned Servicemen*.—Owing to the wide industrial range and the volume of employment opportunities offering in this district, both for skilled and unskilled workers, no difficulties were encountered in placing ex-servicemen. A notable feature was the number who inquired regarding prospects of employment in the country districts.

Hamilton District

453. Notified vacancies in the Hamilton district exceeded, on an average, the number of disengaged persons seeking employment by approximately 62 to 1 for the period. The employment position has likewise been markedly buoyant. In the case of women there has also been a marked shortage of female labour, and no unemployment has been recorded. No difficulty has been experienced in suitably placing any persons seeking work, male or female, and even in the case of semi-fit or partially disabled men able to do only light work or work of a sedentary nature it has generally been possible to locate suitable employment within a comparatively short time. There has been a definite shortage of tradesmen in various industries, and no doubt, if more skilled men were available, it would be possible to absorb quite a number of additional unskilled workers.

454. Accommodation, both for married and single men, has been a limiting factor in various industries (particularly coal-mines, dairy factories, and farms) and has contributed materially to the inability to fill many of the vacancies. Instances have occurred where several inquirers for work in coal-mines could not be placed in existing vacancies through lack of accommodation at or near the mines.

(a) *Farming (mainly Dairying)*.—The manning of farms was substantially easier than during the previous year. This was due partly to the return of men from the Armed Forces. Drought and peat fires caused a rapid decline in dairy-production in January, 1946, and larger forwardings of stock to the freezing-works for killing resulted.

No calls upon the Department were made for shearers, and no difficulties were experienced over the harvesting period. Although the Department had arranged for a number of volunteers to be available for harvesting, only limited calls were made on these.

(b) *Dairy Factories*.—The seasonal up-swing of activities saw a limited number of unsatisfied vacancies, and in some cases lack of accommodation made these difficult to fill. Fit men with some prior experience were mainly required. At the peak period the majority of factories were working a forty-eight-hour week, reduced in January in most factories to a forty-hour week, when the effects of the drought became apparent. Falling off in supplies and, in March, the diversion of considerable quantities of milk to Auckland, forced small reductions of staff to be made.

(c) *Coal-mining*.—A steady demand for labour (particularly truckers and hewers) has been evident, the demands being particularly heavy for reasonably fit younger men. Lack of available accommodation in the mining townships, combined with some unwillingness to go underground, have been retarding factors.

(d) *Building Industry*.—Shortages of skilled tradesmen of all kinds have been recorded during the period under review. Even so, shortages of materials (mainly timber, bricks, cement, and galvanized iron) have limited demands for labour which would otherwise have been much greater.

(e) *Hydro-electric Construction Schemes at Karapiro and Maraetai*.—Skilled tradesmen have been, and continue to be, most in demand. In the latter half of the year under review there was no demand for labourers.