

Blenheim District

472. Notified vacancies for males have exceeded, on an average, the numbers of those disengaged and seeking employment through the Department by approximately 36 to 1 over the period, and few difficulties have been encountered in satisfactorily placing in employment any disengaged male labour registering with the Department. In the case of females there has been no unemployment. On the other hand, the shortage of female labour is evidenced by the fact that notified vacancies, with a maximum of 80 and a minimum of 40, averaged 62 as unsatisfied during the period. This shortage has no doubt been influenced by the comparatively recent opening up in this centre of 4 new factories employing approximately 60 women.

(a) *Farming and Orchards.*—Notified vacancies for all classes of farming work have been limited the maximum being 18 at 15th October, 1945 (mainly on sheep-farms). At 31st January, 1946, these had fallen away to 2 only, and consequently it may be assumed that farmers in this district are satisfactorily supplied with ample permanent labour. There were ample volunteers for harvesting work, but only very limited demands were received for this class of labour.

Limited demands for apple-pickers were received commencing in February, and, although there still remained a very few demands outstanding by the end of March, the harvesting of the apple crop was proceeding satisfactorily at this stage.

(b) *Freezing-works.*—The Picton works were fully manned, with no difficulties appearing. Activities were fully maintained up to end of March, though limited releases from then on were to be expected.

(c) *Hospitals.*—On 30th November, 1945, the hospitals were fully staffed and, as a result, in a better position than at any time during the previous four years. By 28th February, 1946, however, there were 19 notified vacancies, and with the revocation of the declaration of essentiality a difficult situation arose from defections of both domestic and nursing staffs. As a result, notified vacancies rose to 45 on 31st March, 1946, at which date the hospitals were being maintained only with the aid of volunteer workers.

(d) *Other Industries.*—In other industries shortages have not been acute. At 31st March, 1946, there were 11 vacancies for males in the building industry, 9 for surfacemen with the Railways, and 10 for females in clothing-factories. Notified vacancies for female staff in hotels and various guest-houses remained at about 10 over the summer period.

(e) *Returned Servicemen.*—Generally most ex-servicemen have returned to their pre-service occupations, and for the most part no great desire to enter new fields of employment has been apparent. At 31st March, 1946, no ex-servicemen were registered as disengaged and seeking employment.

Nelson District

473. For each disengaged male seeking employment through the Department during the period there were, on average, 4 vacancies notified, although in the last three months, particularly in the city area, opportunities of permanent employment offering even for fully-fit men (except for tradesmen) have been limited, vacancies notified fluctuating between 20 and 30 only in January, February, and March. Nevertheless, the employment position remained fairly satisfactory, due to the wide range of seasonal work then available, the comparatively few men enrolled for employment being confined to semi-fit men. No females were registered as unemployed, and there has been an average of approximately 50 notified vacancies, mainly in the mental hospital, hotels, and restaurants. Each season this district, which offers a wide range of seasonal activity and has a pleasant climate, attracts large numbers of male and female workers from other parts of New Zealand.

(a) *Farming.*—There have been few notified vacancies from farmers since November, 1945, and the majority were in outlying districts and lacked suitable accommodation for married men. Forty returned servicemen were satisfactorily placed as trainees on small farms in the district.

(b) *Building Industry.*—Notified vacancies for tradesmen (particularly carpenters) ranged from 10 in October last to 17 in March, 1946. There has been much building activity, and shortages of supplies have been of temporary duration only.

(c) *Sawmilling and Forestry Industries.*—Notified vacancies in the sawmilling industry, which at 30th September, 1945, were 15, were reduced by March, 1946, to nil, due mainly to increased accommodation facilities having been provided. Vacancies with the Forestry Department under baching conditions have been largely filled.

(d) *Hospitals.*—The overall notified vacancies rose from 22 at 30th September, 1945, to 36 at 31st March, 1946, 32 vacancies being in the mental hospital. Recruitments to the hospital have been insufficient to balance the wastages due to marriages.