

(c) *Hotels*.—Vacancies in hotels have fluctuated somewhat during the period, though at 30th September, 1945, there were 12 notified and at 31st March, 1946, 15, with a maximum on 15th February, 1946, of 22.

(f) *Seasonal Activities*.—Raspberry and hop picking, work with tobacco-growers and in orchards (picking of apples, peaches, pears, &c.), each in turn resulted in demands for labour, both male and female, which were satisfactorily met, largely through volunteer labour from the Nelson district, as well as from other parts of New Zealand. The seasonal activity also included work in packing and grading sheds, the jam and canning factory, the transport and handling of the crop, and, from March onwards, work in the Internal Marketing Department's dehydration factory at Motueka. Altogether, a wide range of opportunities was thus presented. Seasonal work in the local freezing-works and wool-stores, involving only limited calls for men, did not occasion any difficulties. No demands for dairy-factory workers were forthcoming.

(g) *Returned Servicemen*.—Placement of ex-servicemen has proceeded satisfactorily, a pleasing feature being the high percentage of placements secured in permanent positions or in positions offering good prospects of becoming permanent, although concentrated efforts were necessary at times to locate suitable positions. Absence of work of a clerical nature or on farms offering suitable accommodation for married men gave difficulties in individual cases.

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474. Notified vacancies for males exceeded the number of disengaged fit men seeking employment through the Department on average by 14 to 1 during the period. There is no purely seasonal employment in the district, and notified vacancies showed a steady rise from 32 in November, 1945, to 67 in March, 1946. The vacancies are, however, principally in the coal-mining and sawmilling industries, which call for fit men, and opportunities for men who are fit for light work only are very limited.

475. No females have been registered as unemployed, while demands for female labour have risen from 8 in September, 1945, to 24 in March, 1946, principally for the hospitals, hotels, and restaurants.

(a) *Coal-mining Industry*.—Notified vacancies which at 15th October, 1945, were 15, have been steadily on the increase to 38 on 31st March, 1946 (mainly for truckers and, to a limited extent, for shiftmen). In at least one mine, miners have had to be taken off the coal-face and placed on trucking duties, with an inevitable drop in coal-production. Sustained efforts have been made to fill as many of the vacancies as possible, but this has proved difficult as the work is most strenuous, calling for men in first-class physical condition. Few are attracted from other districts, and only limited numbers from local sources become available to the industry. At the same time a number of men have left the mines for health reasons. The most serious shortages have occurred at the Denniston and Millerton Collieries, although a limited number of local youths have been absorbed. Lack of local accommodation, even for single men, combined with transport difficulties from Westport, have been retarding factors.

(b) *Sawmilling Industry*.—Shortages of experienced men (particularly bushmen and tailors-out) have remained fairly steady at approximately sixteen, which is the number of notified vacancies at 31st March, 1946.

(c) *Flax (Phormium Tenax) Milling*.—There has been a shortage of flax-cutters, and it has been difficult to ensure a continuous supply of leaf for processing at the State flaxmill. The prolonged spells of wet weather experienced in the district makes the contract flax-cutters' livelihood somewhat precarious.

(d) *Hospitals and Hotels*.—The various institutions of the Buller Hospital have suffered the most noticeable shortages of female labour; peak notified vacancies occurred on 30th November, 1945 (12), since when the position has remained fairly constant, and at 31st March, 1946, vacancies were 10 (3 trained maternity nurses, 3 probationers, and 4 domestic staff). Hotels have also experienced shortages, though overall vacancies notified have not been high (9 at 31st March, 1946).

(e) *Hosiery-factory*.—It is pleasing to record the establishment of a branch of a Christchurch firm for the manufacture of half-hose. This factory has filled a long-felt need in Westport, where employment opportunities for girls have been limited.

(f) *Limestone Deposits at Cape Foulwind*.—The possibilities of exploiting the large deposits of high-grade limestone and marl in this area for the purpose of establishing a cement-works are at present being investigated. Should this become a reality, it would open up further avenues of employment for workers in the Buller district.

(g) *Returned Servicemen*.—The suitable placement of ex-servicemen enrolling for employment has proceeded satisfactorily, and all except 2, whose cases were both under action, had been placed at 31st March, 1946.