

Greymouth District

476. During the period the number of vacancies notified to the Department was approximately sixteen times as many as the number of men seeking employment. The bulk of notified vacancies are in the coal-mining and bush-sawmilling industries, which offer approximately three-quarters of all opportunities, while the majority of the remaining vacancies arise with the New Zealand Railways, gold-mining, and building and construction (road works and housing) industries. Thus opportunities offering in lighter forms of work occur only rarely, and it is sometimes difficult to locate suitable employment for those unfortunately able to perform work of a very light nature only.

477. The maximum number of females registered at any one time for employment was 3, and at 31st March, 1946, there were nil, whereas notified vacancies have averaged approximately 68. Notified vacancies, which at 30th September, 1945 were 81, have been steadily declining, until at 31st March, 1946 they were 49.

(a) *Coal-mining Industry.*—Notified vacancies have remained constant during the period at approximately 60, of which 40 were for hewers, mainly in the five State mines. Each of the State mines is prepared to absorb 5 or 6 men, who need not necessarily have had previous coal-mine experience. Accommodation, however, is a limiting factor.

(b) *Sawmilling Industry.*—Notified vacancies have remained constant in the vicinity of 100, though at 31st March, 1946, the number notified was 90, the most urgent demands being for skilled bush-felling employees. The demand for unskilled workers requiring a period of training or for those who do not measure up to the required standard of physical fitness is very limited. Young men are not now entering the bush in sufficient numbers to replace older workers or men who, through physical ailments, are leaving the industry. Lack of available accommodation, isolation, and social amenities are also hindering factors.

(c) *New Zealand Railways.*—Though the position eased somewhat, due to the return to their pre-service employment of a number of ex-servicemen, vacancies still exist for surfacemen on a number of sectors of the permanent-way and for skilled tradesmen (particularly fitters, painters, carpenters, and plumbers).

(d) *Gold-mining Industry.*—Limited vacancies only have occurred, those notified falling away to none at one stage, though standing at 10 on 31st March, 1946, mainly for quartz-miners.

(e) *Farming.*—Only limited numbers of vacancies have been notified, falling to nil on 31st March, 1946, though on dairy-farms a peak of 12 occurred on 15th December, 1945, and on sheep-farms, 7, on 31st March, 1945.

(f) *Building and Allied Trades.*—Carpenters and allied tradesmen have been fully employed, and, although vacancies rose to 13 on 15th November, 1945, these have now dropped away to nil at 31st March, 1946.

(g) *Hospitals.*—The most marked shortage of female labour has occurred in hospitals, particularly the Hokitika Mental Hospital. Notified vacancies (28) at 30th September, 1945, reached a peak of 36 on 30th November, 1945, with limited fluctuations since, and standing at 29 on 31st March, 1946, of which 18 were in the mental hospital. A limited number of females has joined the mental hospital staff, and, although the position has been held, there is still an acute shortage.

(h) *Hotels and Restaurants.*—Notified vacancies, which at 30th September, 1945, were 33, rose to 38 on 15th December, 1945, but have since fallen away to 14 on 31st March, 1946, for cooks, housemaids, waitresses, &c.

(i) *New Industries.*—It is gratifying to note the commencement of a new clothing-factory at Greymouth, giving employment to a considerable number of girls, with the prospect of additional workers being required later. Also a brickworks (employing 5 males) has just recommenced after being idle for two years.

(j) *Returned Servicemen.*—In general, the placement of all ex-servicemen who have enrolled has proceeded satisfactorily, and although difficulties occurred in a few individual cases, the numbers enrolled were reduced to 2 only on 31st March, 1946, both of whom were satisfactorily dealt with later.

Christchurch District

478. The employment situation for males has been reasonably buoyant over the period, there having been on average four notified vacancies for every one man seeking employment through the Department. The demand for skilled men has been well in excess of those enrolling, and no difficulties have occurred in placing fit men. The placement of semi-employable men, able to undertake only very light work, has, however, proved exceedingly difficult, although limited numbers of placement have been effected, and the number of such men registered for employment has been reduced from their