

(c) *Building Industry*.—Activity was fairly brisk in this industry, and there were moderate demands for tradesmen (carpenters, joiners, painters, and plumbers). The peak demand of 12 in January was reduced to 8 in March, 1946.

(d) *Wool and Grain Stores, Flourmills*.—Wool-stores were fully manned during the seasonal period, but both grain-stores and flourmills had to work a fair amount of overtime to handle the season's grain satisfactorily.

(e) *Woollen-mills*.—The most marked shortage of female labour occurred in this industry, with notified vacancies rising from 20 in September, 1945, to 40 in March, 1946 (10 for skilled, 25 for unskilled, and 5 for juveniles). The release of numbers of married women and others intending marriage, combined with the opening-up of a women's clothing-factory, were largely responsible for the shortages. The closing-down of the night shift resulted in the termination of the services of 13 males, but alternative work was readily available to these men.

(f) *Other Industries employing Female Labour*.—Shortages of domestic staff were also shown, and the vacancies in March were: hotels and boardinghouses 11, hospitals 4, schools 5, private homes 12, with no immediate prospects of an improvement in the position. The Railway refreshment-rooms were 12 short out of a total complement of 24, and part of the dining-room was closed.

(g) *Returned Servicemen*.—No difficulties whatever have been experienced in the quick placement of any ex-servicemen registering for employment, and reports for some months have shown none still remaining unplaced.

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482. All fit men, whether skilled or unskilled, who have sought work through the Department have been readily placed. On average there have been 13 vacancies for every enrolment. Vacancies offering in localities not readily accessible have consequently proved difficult to fill. The finding of work suited to semi-fit men who, by reason of disabilities or age or ill health are unable to perform heavy manual work, has, however, been more difficult, with only limited vacancies available. An acute shortage of females has been apparent, particularly in the textile industries, with little prospect of the position being materially alleviated for some time to come. This is indicated by the fact that no more than 3 were registered at any one time as disengaged and seeking employment, as compared with notified vacancies which rose from 743 in September, 1945, to a peak of 1,519 in February, 1946, with 1,432 at the end of March, 1946.

(a) *Building Industry*.—Demands for labour have shown a gradually rising trend, and in March, 1946, notified vacancies were 156 (137 skilled, 18 unskilled, and 1 juvenile). The needs have essentially been for skilled tradesmen (particularly carpenters), with only limited demands for builders' labourers. Although some relief has resulted from discharges from the Armed Forces, housing construction, combined with a few major building construction jobs, has kept the demand for tradesmen at a high level. Shortage of housing materials and fittings (particularly fibrous plaster) has, however, had a retarding effect on the employment opportunities offering in this industry, especially for builders' labourers. The closing-down of a brickworks during the winter months, owing to a lack of drying facilities, adversely affects the regular supply of bricks in this district.

(b) *Engineering Industry*.—With a full programme of work ahead, following on the change-over from wartime to peacetime production, there have been steady demands for labour, with a fairly sharp increase in the number of notified vacancies occurring in the last two months of the period, reaching 132 at the end of March (as against 57 in October), of which 66 were for skilled men, 58 for unskilled, and 8 for juveniles. The most marked shortage has been for moulders, and to a lesser degree fitters, turners, and foundry labourers, with comparatively few seeking apprenticeships. With expansions contemplated by several firms, the labour position in this industry points to the position becoming more difficult in the near future.

(c) *Farming Industry*.—Limited demands only have been received for farm labour, rising from 8 in September, 1945, to a peak seasonal demand of 43 in November, and falling away to 13 notified vacancies for all classes of farms at the end of March, 1946. Most vacancies have been for single-men or youths, as few positions have had accommodation available for married couples, though fairly continuous inquiries from men seeking permanent farm positions have been forthcoming, and satisfactory placements have been effected. Although the shearing season presented its usual problems with runholders all seeking shearers at the same time, the work was completed within a reasonable period. For the harvesting season many volunteers were forthcoming for this work: consequently, no difficulties were experienced in meeting the few demands received from farmers.

(d) *Freezing-works*.—The works at Burnside and Balclutha were adequately manned, and though a limited number of unskilled men could have been absorbed no difficulties were experienced in handling all stock coming forward.