

possible the export of the more perishable food products such as butter, cheese, and meat. These developments, coupled with the improvement of internal transport by the construction of railways and of relatively good macadamized roads, led to the development of large new areas of land, particularly in the Waikato, and to the more intensive cultivation in the Canterbury, Otago, Manawatu, and Taranaki districts. As a net result, farming population increased in considerable numbers. Owing to the relative absence of mechanized appliances on the farms, there was a fairly strong demand for agricultural labour. Industries in the urban areas were largely of the localized service type necessary for the maintenance of the existing rural population.

The third period began at approximately 1920. The availability of the internal-combustion engine had revolutionary effects not only in terms of internal transport, but also in terms of farming methods. This fact, coupled with the development of hydro-electricity, made it possible for dairy-farms in particular to be very highly mechanized. When with this fact is coupled the development of artificial fertilizers and better farm-management techniques, some explanation is forthcoming for the very large increase in production, particularly in the dairying field, although in the frozen-meat field the development was only slightly less important. The per-man production in agriculture to-day is very much greater than in the previous period. There is no suggestion, even yet, that we have reached an end of the progress possible in this direction. The net consequence is that the demand for agricultural labour has relatively fallen. Since in the early days farmers' sons provided a good proportion of the farm labour necessary, it is obvious that with the mechanization of rural industry many of these sons themselves are to-day unable to find employment directly in rural pursuits. The mechanization of agriculture has created a very considerable demand for employment in those industries associated with the servicing of mechanized appliances, whether it be in the field of the internal-combustion engine or in the field of electricity. In a very real sense such industries are secondary to the primary industries, and in a realistic examination of the position of the agricultural population in New Zealand some allowance should be made for those employed in such direct secondary industries.

B. LAND HOLDINGS

The general trend of the evidence before the Committee was that there was little scope for further land settlement in New Zealand. Before commenting on the wisdom of accepting this conclusion it is proposed to outline the course of land settlement and development, both as it affects area and population.

The total area of the Dominion, excluding Cook Islands and other Pacific Islands annexed in 1901, but including the Kermadec and other outlying islands, is 66,390,657 acres, of which 42,978,309 acres were occupied in 1944. This latter figure includes reserves and Native land leased, but excludes land within borough boundaries, holdings of less than 1 acre in extent, and Native land held on the communal system.

A picture of the development of land settlement in New Zealand can be seen from a picture of the area of land occupied over a period of years. The following table shows the total area of land occupied (with the exceptions noted in the previous paragraph) at various dates:—

Table No. 67.—Table showing Total Area in Acres of Occupied Land in New Zealand at various Dates since 1878

Date.	Acres.	Date.	Acres.
1878	12,579,072	1911	40,238,126
1881	15,206,897	1916	41,262,193
1886	17,077,074	1921	43,473,079
1891	19,397,529	1925	43,632,372
1896	33,312,212	1930	43,368,653
1901	34,911,573	1935	43,104,559
1906	37,167,460	1941	42,888,337