

be maintained economically in normal times. The application of scientific methods to these areas, however, may make them economic in the future, but, as pointed out in the Section dealing with agriculture, there was a considerable recession in the number of people engaged in agriculture between 1921 and 1926.

The second point is as to whether in any particular areas in New Zealand there is any definite evidence of a drift from farming. The following table, showing the number of persons engaged in agriculture in the various provinces in New Zealand, will enable some approach to be made to this problem :—

Table No. 60.—Table showing the Number of Males occupied in Agricultural Pursuits in the various Provinces as at the various Censuses from 1901 to 1936

	Auckland.	Hawke's Bay.	Taranaki.	Wellington.	Marlborough.	Nelson.	Westland.	Canterbury.	Otago.	Southland.
1901 ..	15,493	6,561	4,179	14,372	2,181	4,029	442	18,410	19,601	
1906 ..	18,978	7,330	5,152	15,925	2,432	4,175	512	19,047	19,895	
1911 ..	23,481	8,380	5,941	16,516	2,521	4,587	568	20,079	11,821	8,621
1916 ..	27,857	8,724	6,432	17,384	2,474	5,159	603	17,715	11,279	7,829
1921 ..	36,199	7,161	9,947	19,601	2,960	5,919	802	20,290	11,847	8,254
1926 ..	34,901	6,794	9,452	18,094	2,482	4,793	687	18,024	11,335	7,302
1936 ..	50,814	8,418	11,432	21,635	2,866	6,602	876	20,816	11,831	9,166

Military camps, 1916 = 1,882. 1945 census figures not available.

The outstanding feature of the table is the very large increase in the Auckland Province. This increase is accounted for principally by the development of dairying in that area, and in the early years illustrates the opening-up of the Waikato. A similar development occurs in the Taranaki Province, and, to a lesser extent, in Wellington. In the South Island, which is not so suitable for dairying, the development has been relatively small. In Marlborough the increase has been from 2,181 to 2,866 in thirty-five years; in Nelson from 4,029 to 6,602; Canterbury, which was almost completely occupied in the early years of the century, has shown very little increase, from 18,410 to 20,816. No separate figures are available for the early years in Otago, but from 1911 to 1936 there was practically no change. There was some small increase in Southland, but, taking Otago and Southland together, there has been hardly any increase over the whole of the thirty-five years under review. The table illustrates in another way the drift to the North Island, but the cause is not so much the drift from the South Island as the availability of suitable land and climate in the North Island for the development of the dairying industry. If the above arguments with regard to the lesser number of people required on farms, and the mechanization of agriculture, are kept in mind, the relative increase in the North Island is shown to be very much greater than appears from these figures. It is true that in the grain areas of Otago and Canterbury, and particularly Canterbury, the labour requirements have tended to fall because of the development of tractors and headers, and, hence, even there the labour efficiency would tend to increase. Despite these factors, however, the relative decline in the South Island is cause for some serious consideration. When figures from the 1945 census are available some major changes may be observed.