

(3) THE NUMBER OF APPRENTICES

The number of apprentices whose contracts are suspended while they serve in the Armed Forces has decreased by almost two-thirds of the number in the previous year, without, however, increasing the total number of apprentices. While there were actually 12,167 apprentices working at the trade at 31st March, 1947 (see Table IX), compared with 11,301 twelve months before, the total number of registered apprentices shows a decline over the same period from 13,360 (2,059 being in the Armed Forces at 31st March, 1946) to 12,890 (there being 723 in the Forces at 31st March, 1947). The number of new contracts registered during the year ending on 31st March, 1947, was 3,116, which, compared with 3,133 for the previous year, indicates a slightly declining recruitment to this type of work. The number of new apprentices is still high, however, compared with previous years, and has only been surpassed twice since 1935.

The building trades account for 870 of the new registrations, which, except for last year, is the highest figure in the last ten years. The distribution of the new apprenticeship contracts by trade and district is shown in Table X.

SECTION 8.—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT, 1922

(1) THE COMPENSATION COURT

The Compensation Court heard and determined 48 cases during the year ended 31st March, 1947. The fact that the Judge of the Court was occupied as Chairman of the Waterfront Control Commission from 26th June, 1946, to 14th February, 1947, accounts for the reduction in the number of cases.

SECTION 9.—AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ACT, 1936

(1) REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Various changes in the rates of wages payable for agricultural work were made during the year, the "Farms and Stations" Extension Order being the only one unchanged. The prevailing rates are set out below. Large increases were gained by workers in market gardens in districts other than Auckland, and the various previous orders for this type of work (with the exception of that for Auckland) have been consolidated into one (1947/31). The new rates therein, £5 17s. 6d. a week for adult males and £3 15s. a week for adult females, contrast sharply with £4 and £2 4s. a week respectively under the old orders, which, however, were made in 1938. Rates of wages in all branches of agricultural work have now been brought into conformity with the provisions of the Minimum Wage Act, 1945. Details are :—

Class.	Rate for Adult Worker.	Date from which payable.	Authorizing Measure.	Reference in Statutory Regulations Series.
Dairy-farms ..	£4 10s. per week (plus board and lodging)	1/8/46	The Agricultural Workers Wage Fixation Order 1946	1946/183
Farms and stations	£4 5s. per week (plus board and lodging)	1/4/46	The Agricultural Workers Extension Order 1942, Amendment No. 2	1946/35
Orchards ..	Male, £5 12s. 6d. per week, 2s. 9d. per hour; female, £4 per week, 1s. 10½d. per hour	13/1/47	The Agricultural Workers (Orchardists) Extension Order 1947	1947/32
Tobacco ..	Male, 2s. 9d. per hour; female, 1s. 9d. per hour	1/12/46	The Agricultural Workers (Tobacco-growers) Extension Order 1947	1947/30
Market gardens (elsewhere than in Auckland district)	Male, £5 17s. 6d. per week, 2s. 9d. per hour; female, £3 15s. per week	1/9/46	The Agricultural Workers Extension Order 1947	1947/31