

46. Supplementary to the monthly and bi-annual publications, the Department has released special studies on the employment factor in several industries, including footwear, clothing, motor trades, and bread-baking. In these studies an introductory analysis of the data supplied by employers has been made with a view to lining out more clearly the dimensions of the problems facing these industries and facilitating further constructive and informed examination of the problem by all concerned.

SECTION VIII.—HOME AID SERVICE

47. The Home Aid Service, which actually commenced operations in December, 1946, is now functioning in the following towns :—

Whangarei.	Wellington.
Auckland.	Nelson.
Hamilton.	Christchurch.
New Plymouth.	Oamaru.
Wanganui.	Timaru.
Napier.	Dunedin.
Hastings.	Invercargill.
Lower Hutt.	Greymouth.

48. During the comparatively short period in which it has been in operation the Home Aid Service has proved to be most acceptable in assisting to meet the very real need for help in the home, particularly in those cases where the housewife is incapacitated due to maternity or sickness or where there are a number of young children and there is sickness in the home. As a general rule, householders have reported most favourably on the work performed by the Aids, and the Aids employed in the Service have proved themselves to be most willing and most adaptable and capable of accepting complete responsibility for all household duties.

49. The status aimed at for the Service is higher, and the conditions of employment are better than normally associated with private domestic work. In view of the general shortage of female labour, however, the Department has been unable as yet to recruit the number of Aids that would be necessary to provide assistance in the home on any large scale. In the meantime, therefore, it is necessary to restrict the Service mainly to cases of an emergency nature.

50. Judging from the demand for assistance from the Home Aid Service since its inception, it is apparent that the Service must be considerably expanded, particularly in the main centres and the larger secondary towns, if the Department is to be in a position to meet all reasonably urgent cases.

51. One of the difficulties that has been experienced in recruiting sufficient girls for the Service in the main centres where the demand is greatest has been the lack of accommodation. With the recent establishment of Home Aid hostels and training centres in Auckland and Wellington, however, it is hoped that this difficulty will largely be overcome, and that additional girls will thus be encouraged to join the Service in these centres.

52. In addition to the hostels which have already been established in Auckland and Wellington it is proposed to establish hostels in Christchurch and Dunedin to accommodate Aids who are unable to obtain board and lodging. The hostels will also be used as training centres for girls who wish to join the Service and who require training to qualify. The practical course of training includes :—

- Housewifery in all phases.
- Cookery and nutrition.
- Care and management of children.
- Marketing, budgeting, and selecting of household goods.

53. The charge for the service of a Home Aid is 2s. per hour—£4 per week of forty hours—but provision is made for a reduction in this charge if payment in full would involve hardship. Reductions in the standard charge have been made in a number of deserving cases.