

(4) As a need to train shearers was still reported at the commencement of the 1948-49 season it was decided to continue the scheme subject to some amendments to the rates of remuneration and subsidy. The rate of wages to learners was brought into line with the latest Shearers award—i.e., 3s. 8½d. per hour—and the subsidy rate to farmers and contractors was correspondingly increased to £3 12s. per man-week.

(5) The results achieved during the 1948-49 season compared unfavourably, however, with the previous year. A total of only 20 men were trained in farmers' sheds, while 21 subsidized learners attended technical-college classes. The poorer response to the scheme was attributed mainly to the lack of interest by farmers and contractors. Many more young men volunteered for tuition than could be placed. At the same time, reports from districts indicated that little or no shortage of shearers was experienced during the season.

(6) The increase in the number of shearers available was due to several factors, the principal ones including the greater financial incentive to ex-shearers to return to the industry, the influx of a small number of Australian shearers, and the beneficial effect of the subsidized training scheme from the previous year. The primary objective of the scheme appears to have been achieved in that the shortage of shearers for the time being has been alleviated. The future of the scheme will be decided by the Department, the New Zealand Wool Board, and other parties concerned before the commencement of the next season.

(d) Employment Promotion

(1) The necessity for winter employment promotion schemes during the year has been slight. Special schemes were limited to the districts of Wanganui and Timaru.

(2) As usual, forecasts of probable winter employment problems were made by District Officers of this Department. In conjunction with the Ministry of Works, preparations were made to absorb any surplus labour which might become available at the end of the summer season in the few districts where forecasts indicated a need. In only two districts was it necessary to provide specially for winter employment on public works for surplus labour. In two districts a threatened surplus did not eventuate.

(3) In New Plymouth the provision of public-works employment was avoided by the absorption of all surplus labour by the Post and Telegraph Department on its new cable-laying project. In Gisborne plans had been made to provide employment for 200 men who were expected to be without work during the winter of last year. Repair work on the damage done by the severe floods in the district, however, absorbed most of these men, and surplus labour did not become available for the planned public-works schemes.

(4) The Wanganui district was faced with the problem of finding winter employment for some 80 men, and a public-works scheme was opened up to absorb this labour.

(5) In Timaru, as in recent years, the Department faced an employment problem last winter, and special schemes providing employment for the surplus labour were undertaken by local bodies in the district with the aid of subsidies provided by the Department.

(6) The only other employment promotion scheme operating during the past year was Scheme 13. This scheme has been in operation for many years and is used mainly to retain a relatively small number in all-the-year-round employment. These men are for various reasons fit for light work only and are located in districts where the range of employment opportunities for this is limited, and whence, due to domestic circumstances of the individuals concerned, it would be impracticable to transfer them to employment in other districts.

(7) The men on this scheme are allocated to various local bodies for miscellaneous types of work, their wages being subsidized to bring their earnings up to the award rate for the type of work performed. The men continue to be regarded as registered for