

Vacancies.—The total number of vacancies for male workers at 31st March, 1949, was 1,583, compared with 2,625 at 31st March, 1948. Although notified vacancies for skilled and unskilled adults have reduced considerably, it is worthy of note that juvenile vacancies, which numbered 898 at 31st March, 1948, had fallen by no more than 14 at 31st March, 1949.

Notified vacancies for female workers fell from 2,419 at 31st March, 1948, to 1,773 at 31st March, 1949. Positions available for skilled females fell by 319 and for unskilled by 457, but the demand for juveniles rose by 120, reaching 674 at 31st March, 1949.

Generally, it appears that the shortage of labour has passed the peak in this district except for juvenile workers. This is confirmed by the fact that during the year employers showed greater discrimination in the selection of labour.

Manufacturing Industries.—The number of notified male vacancies totalled 582 at 31st March, 1949, compared with 1,485 at the end of the previous year.

The engineering and metalworking industries required 353 (including 163 skilled) workers, as compared with 720 at 31st March, 1948. This is due in part to (i) easing of the employment situation, (ii) shortages of materials, particularly steel and coke.

Despite a substantial fall in the number of vacancies offering, female labour remains in short supply in both the clothing and footwear manufacturing industries. At 31st March, 1949, the clothing industry required 482 women and girls, and the footwear industry 116, as compared with 796 and 156 respectively at the end of the previous year.

Generally, it can be said of the manufacturing industries that on one hand production has been retarded by shortages of raw materials and the continued dearth of skilled male and female labour, and on the other hand the demand for unskilled labour seems to have eased off over the past year.

Seasonal Industries. At the peak of the year which usually falls in January, over 4,000 men are engaged in seasonal industries in this district. Of these around 3,500 are employed in freezing-works, and most of the remainder in dairy factories and fruit and vegetable preserving.

No difficulty was experienced early in the season in obtaining labour, though, as usual, it was at the expense of other industries, particularly those in the Penrose and Otahuhu areas.

Some shortages occurred at the peak of the season due to high turnover at freezing-works and the prolongation of the killing season, but difficulties were not such as to prejudice production seriously.

Tertiary Industries.—It is again necessary to report difficulties in the staffing of hospitals. Vacancies for females at 31st March, 1949, numbered 583, as compared with 610 at the end of the previous year. Nurses required for mental hospitals numbered 42 (previous year, 61) and nurses for general hospitals 188 (186).

The number of notified vacancies for male workers in wholesale and retail establishments has fallen considerably, but the demand for women and girls remains about the same, being 89 at 31st March, 1949, and 92 at the end of the previous year.

Hamilton District

This district covers a very rich and important farming and industrial area. The growing trade of the district is reflected in the development of the Raglan port and the inauguration of a new shipping service between Raglan and the southern ports. The development of this new service will materially assist the needs of the Waikato for improved goods transport.

Despite supply difficulties, the labour force engaged in the building and construction industry increased by more than 300 over the past year, and at 15th October, 1948, numbered just over 3,000.