

Seasonal Industries.—Seasonal workers numbering 2,292 were employed in this district at 31st January, 1949, compared with 2,135 at 31st January, 1948. Little difficulty was experienced in obtaining sufficient labour in freezing-works for the killing season, which commenced on 29th November, 1948, a week earlier than usual. The maximum number of men employed, 1,702 in February, 1949, was slightly higher than the maximum for the previous season.

During the year a start was made in co-operating with fruitgrowers and market-gardeners in providing seasonal labour for picking crops.

Tertiary Industries.—Tertiary industries in Christchurch had vacancies for over 1,000 workers, male and female, at 31st March, 1949. The greatest demand for males was in the transport and communications group, while the shortage of female domestic workers is most pronounced. Though general hospitals in this district report no acute shortage of nurses, domestic staff to the number of 107 were required at 31st March, 1949. Mental hospitals had notified 55 vacancies for nurses, as compared with 62 at 31st March, 1948.

Ashburton District

This district is essentially a primary producing area. Nevertheless, nearly 2,400 males and about 800 females are employed in secondary and tertiary industries. Manufacturing industries employ some 780 males and 360 females.

Notified vacancies for males rose from 81 at 31st March, 1948, to a seasonal peak of 176 in January, 1949; by the 31st March, 1949, it had fallen to 77. Farming vacancies for males rose to 90 at the 31st January, 1949 (79 at 31st January, 1948), and at the 31st March, 1949, had fallen to 27.

Female vacancies reached a peak of 126 in March, 1948. By the 31st March, 1949, vacancies had fallen to 108. Apart from the substantial labour requirements in woollen-mills, there were only 8 vacancies notified for women.

Timaru District

While notified vacancies for males fell from 136 at the 31st March, 1948, to 79 at the 31st March, 1949, female vacancies rose from 89 to 113. The fall in male vacancies was not confined to any particular group, but was spread over a number of industrial activities. The increase in female vacancies occurred mainly in the pottery and glass industry, which requires an additional 30 workers. Woollen-mills also require staff. A new woollen-goods factory was established at Temuka.

During the winter months some difficulty was experienced in placing disengaged workers from seasonal industries. The number of disengaged males enrolled for employment reached a temporary peak in June, when 29 workers were registered with the Department.

During the year Timaru attained the status of a city.

Oamaru District

There has been little change in employment levels over the past year. Notified vacancies for males and females were 171 at the 31st March, 1949, and 184 twelve months earlier.

Notified vacancies for males at the 31st March, 1949, were 81, and for female workers 90.

The adjustment of the exchange-rate affected the two rabbit-exporting firms operating in this district. One closed down, and the other continued operating with a reduced staff. During the period under review a factory processing cheese (the first of its type in the South Island) was established.

The employment position has been good, and disengaged workers have been readily placed in employment.