

of the fall in exports were that wool fell in value, while butter and cheese fell in both value and quantity. In considering the adverse trade balance it may be of interest to notice the increase in importations of motor-vehicles and tires (£865,000), petrol and kerosene (£142,000), apparel and drapery (£492,000), textiles (£300,000), tobacco and cigarettes (£300,000), and other items. (The number of motor-vehicles imported during the year was 24,333, an increase of 5,361 over the previous year.)

In the secondary industries the clothing, woollen-milling, and boot-manufacturing trades have been slack. It is stated that in the clothing trade, for example, a considerable quantity of low-grade and cheap clothing was imported during the year.

The sawmilling industry is also undergoing a period of slackness of trade. Owing to the large importations of red-cedar weatherboarding from the American Pacific ports, sawmillers say that stocks of New-Zealand-sawn timber have been accumulating at the mills to such an extent that a curtailment in the output has become necessary. It is estimated that as a result the southern mills will probably produce during the present year less than one-third of their total cutting-capacity. Over thirty mills in the Southland District alone have ceased operations, and others also have reduced the number of men employed owing to lack of orders. It is stated that the freight from the American Pacific ports to any of the New Zealand ports is less than the cost of carriage in New Zealand by rail from, say, Ohakune to Wellington, or by steamer from Greymouth to Wellington. Moreover, the American merchant has the advantages of much larger output per mill and closer growth of timber per acre. It is estimated that the importations from United States of America and Canada are enough to keep all the mills in Otago and Southland fully employed all the year round. At the present time, therefore, the outlook for the sawmilling trade shows no signs of improving, although the building trade promises to be as brisk this year as it has been for several years past.

The building trade has been very active all the year both in house-building and in the erection of large premises for factories and shops, particularly in the North Island.

Total engagements made at the Department's employment bureaux: 1925-26—3,397 (363 to public works, 3,034 to private employment); dependants, 3,533; in addition 360 persons were assisted by the advancing of railway fares or otherwise. 1924-25—3,890 (1,206 to public works, 2,684 to private employment); dependants, 4,021.

It might be mentioned that during the year 1925-26 a considerable number of labourers and others were employed on large undertakings other than the customary Government and local body road and railway works, such as hydro-electric works and reticulation in connection therewith, harbour-works, irrigation-works, and afforestation. The following large undertakings were completed during the year: Mangahao hydro-electric scheme, Oroua Power Board pole-work, Manawatu Gorge roadwork, Lake Coleridge hydro-electric scheme, Wairoa High Road electric scheme, besides miscellaneous activities of local authorities. The following works are likely to be commenced within the next few months: Irrigation at Chatto Creek (Otago); highways in various districts; tramway extensions; harbour construction, extension, &c., at Auckland, Wellington, and Oamaru; hydro-electric reticulation, &c., at Hawke's Bay.

OCCUPATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF NEW ZEALAND.

It has been the practice of the Government Statistician to publish once in every five years from the Census returns tables showing the number of people engaged in the various groups of occupations, and the following information has been obtained from the last available tables—viz., from the 1921 census. When the figures from the 1926 census are issued similar and more up-to-date information will, it is hoped, be available.

Producers of necessities of life—

Primary	117,218
Secondary, domestic, &c.	498,891
Engaged in distribution, &c.	616,109
Engaged in indirectly essential occupations such as teachers, servants of Government and local bodies, lawyers, and other professional workers	33,424
Engaged in connection with luxuries and other non-essential occupations..	7,698
Children and other dependants	423,451
	1,218,913

It would, no doubt, be of considerable interest were it possible to compare the figures for the present time with those for, say, the past twenty-five years. Such comparison would disclose, for example, whether the number or proportion of the population that is engaged in (a) the production of the necessities of life is increasing or decreasing; a similar comparison would show the proportion engaged in (b) distribution; (c) in various other occupations which, though not directly concerned with the production or distribution of the necessities of life, may nevertheless be regarded as essential occupations; and (d) those occupations that may be classed as unnecessary for the maintenance of life. The information gathered at the previous censuses does not, however, permit of such comparisons being made.