

We suggest that the report would be useful to any committee of this Conference which may be set up to report on matters relating to unemployment, immigration, and apprenticeship. We think, however, that it is imperative that a system of unemployment insurance should be introduced during the coming session of Parliament.

Unemployment is one of the most serious problems that faces this Conference, and if a solution cannot be found, at least measures of a far-reaching character will have to be devised to alleviate the position. This social menace breeds crime, reduces efficiency, and destroys home life. The future of the race is involved in this question, as it affects both the moral and physical well-being of our citizens.

We take it that this Conference is concerned to get at the facts, and it appears to us that one fact is that the tendency of development under the present system is towards a rapid growth of the capacity for production, which gives rise to a decline in the number of workers needed to produce a given quantity of goods. Inventive genius, research, and mechanical appliances have so enhanced productive capacity that not only is it possible to provide for the needs of all, but there is ample room for recreative leasure which, given organizers and governing authorities with imagination and will, would create a great advantage in well-being. The effect of this tendency in New Zealand is vividly illustrated by comparing occupations of New Zealand residents for the years 1901 and 1921. The following table is made up from the return of occupations, &c., being Part VIII of the "Results of the Census" for 1921 :—

				1901.	Per Cent. of Total Population.	1921.	Per Cent. of Total Population.
Professional	..	..	..	23,509	3.0	50,011	4.1
Domestic	..	..	..	34,394	4.4	43,868	3.6
Commercial	..	..	..	39,937	5.2	79,340	6.5
Transport	..	..	..	21,750	2.8	50,701	4.1
Industrial	..	..	..	101,184	13.1	140,705	11.5
Primary	..	..	..	111,921	14.5	147,127	12.1
				332,695	..	511,752	..
Independent	..	..	..	7,535	1.0	18,666	1.5
				340,230	..	530,418	..
Dependants, &c.	..	..	..	432,489	56.0	688,495	56.6
				772,719	..	1,218,913	..

The figures show an extraordinary increase in the professional and commercial groups, and a corresponding decline in the industrial and primary occupations. We are fast becoming a nation of lawyers, shopkeepers, and distributors.

The increase in the number engaged in professional work is 34.8 per cent., and in commercial transactions 26 per cent., while the decrease in those engaged in industrial and primary production respectively is 11.9 per cent. and 16 per cent. Put another way, it means that in 1901 35 persons were engaged in the commercial and professional work entailed in the manifold transactions accompanying and related to the goods produced by 100 primary and secondary producers, and that in 1921 the number engaged commercially and professionally had increased to 45 for every 100 engaged in actual production.

It appears that a large proportion of the benefits of research, inventions, and organized production is being absorbed by non-productive workers. Invention and research have raised the standard of living, but a very small percentage of the advantages have reached the working consumer. It still pays better (for the individual) to scheme or sell than to produce.

The question of immigration is one which this Conference cannot overlook, and it has to be considered in its relation to employment. It seems absurd to suggest that this country has no room for more immigrants, or that it can be developed as it should be without increasing its population by that means. Assisted immigration, however, as carried on during the past few years, has been one of the causes of bringing about the present unemployment.

The preliminary to a sound immigration policy, however, is scientific land-settlement. Scientific land-settlement is essentially dependent on permanency of occupation. The first essential of permanency of occupation is an assured payment for labour and energy expended. Land-occupation in New Zealand has no permanency. In the past it has paid individuals better to sell land than to effectively use it. We require readjustment of values, so that it will pay better to use land than to sell it. The productive capacity of the lands of New Zealand cannot be extended beneficially to all the people unless some means are taken to stop speculation in land-values. The charge for credit, the price of fertilizers, the cost of marketing are all reflected in the price of land, and while the present method continues the working farmer will always live on the margin of existence. Yet, in spite of all that has been said, we are of opinion, from study of conditions in both Great Britain and New Zealand, the prospects out here are better than at Home, and, given vision on the part of our administrators, we could provide for a larger population without injuring those already here.

Related to employment and immigration is the matter of apprenticeship. We live in times of rapidly changing industrial conditions: new methods of carrying out work are introduced almost daily; new processes which have revolutionized old trades—and, in fact, new trades—have come into existence during the past few years. Despite these conditions, it remains essential to the well-being of any community that it should contain within its ranks the proper proportion of educated and skilled mechanics, and it owes it to its own citizens that means should be provided for their own sons and