

which has changed little from the last to the present winter. It is possible that this winter's increase might have been greater had it not been for the increased employment found on relief and public works.

A somewhat similar seasonal variation is shown in the trade-union figures, which are percentages of unemployed to total unionists in selected groups, covering about half the total unionists in the Dominion. Estimates are published for a mid-week in each quarter since November, 1925, and are as follows :—

Percentage Unemployed in Certain Trade-unions.

Week in	1925.	1926.	1927.
February	..	5.0	9.4
May	..	6.6	9.7
August	..	8.3	..
November	5.4	6.7	..

Though the table covers a short period only, it shows trade-union unemployment heavier in winter than in summer. It indicates also a marked increase in unemployment among unionists for 1927 as compared with 1926; but this is very largely due to big increases in the building and sawmilling groups, and is not general over all the groups covered.

The next table shows the occupational distribution of applicants unplaced by Government labour bureaux at various periods :—

Government Bureaux: Applicants unplaced at Mid-week.

Industrial Group.	June, 1926.	December, 1926.	June, 1927.
Unskilled	1,299	620	1,378
Building	125	33	170
Farming, &c.	124	94	148
Mechanical	160	116	155
Transport	146	108	128
Other	393	255	303
Totals	2,247	1,226	2,282

The table shows the preponderance of unskilled labourers, who constitute more than half the total at each period; the seasonal variation between summer and winter; and indicates that the number of applicants unplaced in the various groups, excluding building, is little greater than it was a year ago.

The occupational distribution of unemployed trade-unionists, given below in percentages, shows the range of unionists covered in greater detail.

Percentages of Unemployed in Various Trade-unions.

—	May, 1926.	November, 1926.	May, 1927.
Sawmilling, &c.	7.0	10.5	25.8
Shipping	18.7	23.0	24.9
General labourers	?	?	15.2
Building, &c.	6.8	8.0	11.1
Hotel, restaurants, &c.	5.8	4.9	9.4
Metal-workers	7.0	5.6	9.3
Other manufacturers	14.0	11.3	8.4
Clothing and drapery	4.6	4.8	4.2
Food, drink, &c.	3.2	1.8	3.2
Land transport	2.0	2.2	2.9
Paper and printing	2.3	1.6	2.7
Mining	1.5	3.5	2.6
Textiles	2.1	..	0.9
Miscellaneous	10.5	11.5	8.2
Total	6.6	6.7	9.7

The details of this table throw considerable light on the unemployment situation. Unemployment is severe in the timber trades, in shipping (which excludes wharf labour) and general labour, amongst hotel, restaurant workers, &c., and metal-workers. It is fairly heavy for other manufactures, but much less than last year. For the remaining groups, excluding miscellaneous, it is about the same as a year ago, and is not severe and probably not very abnormal.

Another important aspect of unemployment is its geographical distribution throughout the Dominion. The records of the Government bureaux have until recently been confined to sixteen leading towns, for which they are as follows :—

Government Bureaux: Unplaced Applicants at Mid-week.

—	June, 1926.	December, 1926.	June, 1927.
Auckland	837	561	558
Wellington	313	253	494
Christchurch	262	178	339
Dunedin	203	116	424
Four chief towns	1,615	1,108	1,815
Twelve secondary towns	632	118	467
Total, sixteen towns	2,247	1,226	2,282

The table indicates that town unemployment this winter is distributed roughly in proportion to population, though Dunedin has more than its share. Last winter and during the summer it appears to have been more severe in the North Island, and heaviest in Auckland. For the latest period—June, 1927—it appears to be least acute in Christchurch.