

It will be observed that in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin there was a greater expenditure on relief work between 1st April, 1927, and 31st March, 1928, than in the following year.

At the same time, each of these years for the four chief towns shows a considerably greater amount expended in relieving unemployment than in 1926-27. If the large sum expended in Auckland in 1926-27 is removed, it will be seen that the other three chief towns used only £21,816 to assist the unemployed. In 1927-28 Auckland City Council increased its expenditure on relief works by £1,800, whereas the other three centres increased the amounts voted for this purpose by approximately £104,035 for the year 1927-28, the individual increases being as follows: Wellington, £64,363; Christchurch, £33,097; and Dunedin, £6,575.

Reference to the attached appendix (Table XVIII) will show that in the four chief centres £77,710 less was spent on unemployment relief for the year 1928-29 than in the previous year. A considerable reduction in unemployment-relief expenditure also occurred in the case of the following local bodies:—

Borough or City.	1927-28.	1928-29.
	£	£
Hamilton	4,555	4,125
Wanganui	14,323	13,783
Mount Eden	6,597	1,974
Newmarket	3,007	1,573
Palmerston North	5,122	2,554
Nelson	3,713	1,061
Invercargill	11,523	6,784
Totals	<u>£48,840</u>	<u>£21,854</u>

On the other hand, several Borough Councils increased their expenditure on relief works during the year 1928-29. The local bodies coming within this category are as set out hereunder:—

Borough.	1927-28.	1928-29.
	£	£
Onehunga	1,029	3,470
Gisborne	4,429	4,435
Napier	5,451	6,675
New Plymouth	3,430	5,599
Lower Hutt	10,119	11,487
Timaru	2,132	6,492
Totals	<u>£26,590</u>	<u>£38,158</u>

A survey of the amounts expended by the Public Works Department and the State Forest Service in the three years under review furnishes interesting and somewhat illuminating information. Briefly stated, it is this: that as the expenditure by the local bodies from which returns were received fell away in 1928-29, there was a correspondingly large increase in the amounts used by the two Government Departments mentioned above. The table attached (XVIII) shows that in 1928-29 the Public Works Department spent £680,393 and the State Forest Service £50,250 on relief works, representing increases of £300,828 and £22,700 respectively over the previous year; also, in the same year the Lands and Survey Department expended £3,500 on relief works. As was to be expected, the slackening-off in the efforts of the larger local bodies to deal with the problem of unemployment has brought about increased activity on the part of the Government in establishing relief works.

WAGES AND OVERHEAD CHARGES.

The total amount expended by the eighteen local bodies that furnished returns for the three years was £559,542. The expenditure of the Public Work Department, the State Forest Service, and the Lands and Survey Department totalled £1,285,498 during the same period. Of the grand total of £1,845,040, wages absorbed £1,301,774, or 70·56 per cent., and a sum of £543,265, or 29·44 per cent., was required to meet overhead and other charges.

As may be expected, the returns from local bodies show that wherever teams of horses and drays, motor-lorries, road-tractors, and trucks had to be provided the overhead charges were heavy as compared with the wages paid to the relief workers. On relief works which principally took the form of clearing or grubbing gorse or other noxious weeds, forming children's playgrounds, and tree planting the amounts expended in wages were naturally larger than the overhead charges, as in most cases tools and barrows only had to be provided. In six instances the cost of materials and overhead charges exceeded the amount paid out in wages: in 1926-27 Auckland expended £7,387 and Palmerston North £867; in 1927-28 Onehunga spent £495; and in 1928-29 New Plymouth spent £172, Wanganui £2,124, and Timaru £523 more in this respect than on wages.

NUMBER OF WORKERS ENGAGED IN EACH MONTH.

On the whole, local bodies appear to have provided relief works when there was the most urgent demand for employment. In 1926-27 relief works were commenced by a number of the smaller local bodies about the beginning of June and closed down between October and December. The State