

by the Unemployment Board; this, however, being kept in trust and supplemented by contributions from the boy to the extent of 20 per cent. of his cash wages from the farmer. Apart from utilizing such portion of this trust-money as may be necessary for special training courses, the fund will be allowed to accumulate until the trainee is fit for establishment on his own property. It is hoped the fund will be augmented by contributions from private sources.

While a scheme of this nature is purely experimental it is at least a definite attempt at vocational training in connection with the Dominion's primary industry. Mere placement of boys on farms may result in permanent employment as farm labourers; but without the encouragement afforded by some objective such placements are unlikely to provide new farmers of a calibre able to make a success of farming under modern conditions.

The same argument is applicable to other industries, and although the Unemployment Act does not specifically direct the Board to make provision for the employment of youths the Board has accepted an implied authority and has, within the scope of available finances, and with the valuable co-operation of voluntary organizations, done its very best to relieve immediate distress amongst unemployed adolescents.

Generally, the present position is well typified by the following extract from a recent report of the Secretary of the Wellington Boys' Employment Committee, in which he records the decision of that Committee to continue its efforts with vocational training classes:—

“ . . . although the emergency aspect of juvenile unemployment is passing there is still urgent need for a vocational centre where employers may look with confidence for the juvenile assistance they require, and where boys of every type may come for vocational guidance and for placement in suitable employment. Attention would thus be given to placing a boy not merely in a job, but in a position for which he is more especially suited, and in connection with which there may be reasonable prospects for his future . . . ”

BUILDING SUBSIDY SCHEMES.

The House-building Subsidy Scheme, the introduction of which was referred to in the previous annual report, has been very largely availed of, and the resultant increased employment in the building and related trades has been very noticeable and gratifying. Moreover, the continued steady construction of new dwellings is assisting materially to relieve the present acuteness of the general housing shortage in the Dominion.

Since its inception the scope of Scheme No. 12 has been widened, and it now embraces the erection of churches, Sunday schools, public halls, libraries, and other buildings for organizations operating on a non-profit-earning basis. A subsidy of not exceeding 10 per cent. of the capital cost is available for such buildings in approved cases. Up to the 31st July, 1935, 5,776 applications had been received under Scheme No. 12, and of these, 5,210 were approved, involving the expenditure of almost £3,400,000, and the employment for varying periods of 22,000 men. At that date 191 applications were still under consideration, while 375 have been declined on the grounds that the works either did not come within the scope of the scheme or else would be proceeded with in any case.

On the 1st April, 1935, the Board introduced a further Scheme, known as B 1, covering alterations and additions to, and the painting of houses, residential flats, and such other buildings as referred to in the paragraph above. This scheme was introduced with the object of giving further stimulus to the building and related trades during the winter months, a time when there is usually evident a definite slackening of activity in these trades. Under this scheme a scale rate of subsidies is applied to minor works costing under £100, and for works costing in excess of that sum a subsidy of 8 per cent. is payable. The result so far has been very encouraging, and up to the present 1,563 applications have been received. Of these, 1,293 have been approved, and this will result in an expenditure of £113,000 and the employment for varying lengths of time of some 3,000 men. Applications totalling 231 have so far been declined, chiefly on the grounds that, in the opinion of the Board, the work would proceed in any case without assistance.

Of the total cost of the works approved to date under both schemes it is estimated that £3,080,179 represents the amount that will be spent directly and indirectly in wages. Out of the applications approved, 4,341 are in respect of new dwellings, and as a result of the construction of these houses 4,641 baths, 1,151 electric ranges, and 1,229 gas-stoves, all of New Zealand manufacture, will be installed. The manufacture of these articles has been the cause of much increased activity in the industries concerned.

The frequent surveys of the position in regard to unemployment in the building and related trades reveal that the numbers of such tradesmen unemployed are steadily decreasing, even in the winter months, and it is confidently expected that in the spring there will be a further increase in building operations, with consequent additional increase in employment.

As a further example of its efforts to stimulate industrial activity, the Unemployment Board has found it possible to enlist the co-operation of the Executive Commission of Agriculture. As a result of this co-operation Scheme B 2 has been introduced, providing for a subsidy on the cost of the erection of new dairy factories and milking-sheds on dairy-farms supplying to manufacturing dairies, as well as on the cost of improvements to, and the alteration of, such existing buildings. Provision is also made for subsidizing the installation, or improvement, of drainage systems and water-supplies, concreting of yards, and construction of milk and cream stands for these factories and farms.