

from relative committees financed from the Employment Promotion Fund, for any of the "casual" placements, &c. Upon this basis the "savings" to the Employment Fund totalled £542,457 up to 31st July, 1937.

It is not only for the benefit of relief workers that the State Placement Service is operated. The weekly summarized index of labour available at the twenty-four offices of the service contains a list of over 550 trades, professions, and occupations, and the placement of representatives of the "white collar" callings (the most difficult of all) have been considerable; accountants, auditors, architects, artists, barristers, clergymen, chemists, company-managers, draughtsmen, engineers, harbourmasters, journalists, masseurs, master mariners, musicians, ships' officers, a plantation manager, school-teachers, students, a librarian, a pathologist and others figure on this "labour available" list, but it does not necessarily imply that they are unemployed, but may merely indicate that they are not satisfied with their present positions, which may be, through force of circumstances, very different from their proper calling.

One of the most important factors which makes the service invaluable to employers is its achievement of mobility of labour to the greatest practicable degree. A return, comprising 550-odd different occupations, is circulated to each placement officer, who on a given day each week is aware of the *exact surplus of labour* and of the occupations in which such labour was available a few days earlier at every other placement office. The Invercargill office is, therefore, not only able to advise any local employer that a suitable man is available in, say, Auckland, but is able to arrange for that man to be transferred to Invercargill at short notice.

One phase of the Service work that cannot be too strongly stressed is that which deals with the search for employment suitable for men who have lost the partial or full use of a limb, or those who are deaf, deaf and dumb, or whose sight is defective, &c. Many employers have shown practical sympathy when cases of this kind have been brought to their notice, and the service records prove that when these men settle down to the work they are able to undertake they usually give every satisfaction.

These disabled men deserve every consideration, as, generally speaking, they are denied the forms of recreation, social amenities, and friendship available to normal people. Refusal of the right of employment must not be added to their existing handicap of physical disabilities. The fact that the Service has found satisfactory work for one-armed men, men with one leg, men who are deaf or near blind, others who are deaf and dumb, and several crippled through infantile paralysis, is sufficient proof that though such men are sorely handicapped they still have an occupational value. Officers of the Service have been able to do some practical welfare work in this field which has been productive of very good results. A man with a wooden leg sadly out of repair would most probably be somewhat self-conscious if sent to interview a prospective employer, and his chances of selection would thereby be lessened. The Placement Service special officer realized the difficulty, and the case was submitted for consideration to various social organizations. A new leg was provided and a one-legged man, who had long regarded as hopeless his chances of employment, was placed in entirely suitable work. Other directions in which the Service assistance is extended is in its efforts to arrange for free medical examination of men who are dubious of accepting private work because of genuine doubts regarding their health. Unable to bear the cost of an examination they remain prey to morbid thoughts, and the doctor's report often completely dissipates this dangerous complex. Similarly, free medicine is arranged for, where practicable, in those cases where the circumstances warrant such action. The incentive to still further endeavour on behalf of those men unable fully to help themselves is the belief that, except in the most palpably hopeless cases, most of the men suffering from some form of physical disability are able to carry out some kind of useful work.

It was not surprising to find that after a prolonged period of involuntary unemployment many individuals had become apathetic. Their continuous search for work had been unsuccessful, and they had almost come to regard relief assistance as the only means of livelihood. Some were without hope and utterly despondent. Men who had been skilled tradesmen had entirely lost faith in their ability to regain a position in their proper sphere and had, in many cases, sold their tools for food. Their introduction to the State Placement Service was in the first case brought about through the rules attaching to relief assistance. Even then they had little hope that any tangible benefit could come to them through the service. Very many instances can be quoted of the astonishing change that came over these men when private work was eventually found for them. Their value as national assets rose in proportion to the development or renewal of the "will to work" and the encouragement of self-effort naturally greatly enhanced by the receipt of a regular and satisfactory pay envelope. The figures published by the Service include the cases of many hundreds of these men who have regained the summit after slipping far down the hillside of despair.

CONCLUSION.

A general and quite erroneous impression existent is that the Employment Division of the Labour Department is concerned purely with the acceptance of registrations and the disbursement of relief either by way of sustenance or work relief, but this is far from a true conception of the activities of the Division, which are now of a very far-reaching and divergent nature, as will be apparent from the following résumé:—

The main activities of the Division fall under the following general headings:—

- (a) The payment of relief to unemployed persons.
- (b) The promotion of work and industries for the absorption of surplus labour.
- (c) The State Placement Service for bringing possible employers and employees into close contact with one another.