

fewer than the corresponding number for nine months 1st January to 30th September, 1939; placements, at 38,405, exceed those for the first nine months of 1939 by over 2,000; and vacancies notified reach the high figure of 46,370 (figures relating to vacancies notified are not available for the previous period). Therefore during the year ended 31st March, 1941, the Service was notified of approximately 8,000 vacancies which it could not fill.

Dealing with particular industries, it is evident that the farming, engineering, and manufacturing groups have been very active.

In the case of dairy-farming (Group 2B), 4,617 placements were effected during the period but 7,526 vacancies were notified, which would appear to suggest—allowing for lapsed and duplicated vacancies—that a shortage of experienced dairy-farm workers remains. While this suggestion is believed to be accurate, it would also appear that the actual position has at times past been obscured by demands which were cancelled when applicants became available.

In the engineering groups (mainly 13A, 13B, and 13C) there is an excess of stated vacancies over placements amounting to several hundreds, while the enrolments recorded are, in the experience of the Placement Service, low for these groups. The shortage of labour in these groups is dealt with more fully in the section of this report relating to shortage of skilled labour.

Most manufacturing groups reveal an excess of vacancies over placements, and again enrolments are comparatively low. (See Groups 17A and B and 22A and B in particular of Table III.)

Building and construction (Group 24) shows vacancies at 4,805, placements at 3,734, and enrolments (including all building tradesmen as well as builders' labourers) at 6,316. Elsewhere comment will be made on the position in the building industry, but it can be said here that the ratio of placements to vacancies notified has risen greatly as against previous years. Thus the shortage of this type of labour in the industry is tending to become less considerable.

Figures covering national and local-body public works reveal the contraction in these forms of activity with which all are familiar in a general way. To illustrate: 7,106 enrolments from national public works and 4,499 from local-body public works were recorded during the period, but the placements effected in the same period stood at only 3,167 and 447 respectively. Vacancies notified were also much fewer than the enrolments effected.

The figures relating to Group 35 (commerce—dealing in commodities) suggest some falling away in this activity. This is illustrated by enrolments 6,276, vacancies notified 3,379, and placements effected 3,324. Thus the Service was able to fill nearly all the vacancies notified, but there were many other workers—nearly 3,000—for whom employment other than commercial, from which they had enrolled, had to be found. This might indicate progressive economizing in the staffs of commercial establishments and the weeding-out of forms of commercial activity which could not survive the changed circumstances arising out of the war.

PROVISION OF RURAL LABOUR.

The emphasis placed by the Government in the early stages of hostilities upon expanding the Dominion's exports of primary products to Great Britain resulted in a Dominion-wide and sustained farm-placement drive. During the period 1st July, 1940, to 31st March, 1941, which corresponds with the farming season just passed, this drive, which was initiated at the former date, had already effected 5,265 placements by the Service in regular farm employment—3,981 of the vacancies were filled with experienced or semi-experienced farm workers and the balance of 1,284 with inexperienced men.

The drive to man the Dominion's farm-lands was pursued, having regard to three major points: (a) the release from State undertakings of all non-essential workers who were suitable for farm-work—irrespective of whether or not they were experienced at farm-work—and their placement in regular farm employment; (b) substantial increase in the subsidy rates paid under the farm-labour training Scheme No. 4F and the encouragement of placements of unemployment beneficiaries—city and provincial alike—under the scheme; (c) the introduction of special measures to relieve the widespread and acute shortage of rural accommodation.

In July of last year special interviewing officers were appointed for the purpose of interviewing manual workers on State undertakings. These included the bulk of the employees of the Public Works, Lands and Survey, Forestry, and other Departments. At the time of interview particulars of the employees' previous work histories were obtained, their suitability for farm-work was assessed, and their willingness or otherwise to undertake such employment was ascertained. The magnitude of the contact and interviewing work involved in this survey of State employees is indicated by the fact that approximately 9,660 men had been interviewed by 31st March of the current year. As the results of the survey became available, men suitable for farm and other private employment were offered the positions available—offers being made in the first instance to those who had signified their willingness to take private employment, and later to those who were suitable for the employment offering, notwithstanding that they had not all volunteered for farm-work. In the period 1st July, 1940, to 31st March, 1941, 1,725 State employees who were not regarded as key workers were transferred to private employment, and 363 of these were placed in regular farm positions. The results of this survey of State employees as far as increasing the supply of farm labour was concerned were not, however, truly represented by actual farm placements of State employees. As the height of the season brought the problem of farm-labour shortage more prominently to the fore it was necessary to terminate many State undertakings on which some thousands of workers had previously been employed. These, as their job contracts were terminated, either enrolled with the Placement Service and were placed in farm or other employment, or made their own arrangements to obtain work. Thus the rural labour force of the Dominion was, as a result, probably augmented by workers several times the number actually transferred direct from State to farm employment.