

1927.

## NEW ZEALAND

## DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

(REPORT OF THE).

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

## REPORT.

The SECRETARY, Department of Labour, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF LABOUR.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Wellington, 11th July, 1927.

I have the honour to present herewith the thirty-sixth annual report of this Department, for the information of His Excellency the Governor-General, and to be laid before Parliament, in compliance with the Labour Department Act, 1908, and the Factories Act, 1921–22. The report covers the financial year 1st April, 1926, to 31st March, 1927.

I have, &amp;c.,

F. W. ROWLEY,

The Hon. the Minister of Labour.

Secretary of Labour.

## CONDITIONS OF TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT.

THE number of applications at the Department's employment bureaux rose from 517 on the 5th April, 1926, to 2,247 on the 21st June; the number fell to 1,226 in December, when it again rose steadily to 1,828 at the end of March, 1927. These figures show that there was a considerable degree of unemployment during the summer months. No doubt this feature was due to the fall in exports—in both prices and volume—having caused a general slackening of trade and employment. By the middle of June of this year the applications rose in number to 2,322, and there is no prospect of much improvement until the winter passes. The Government (chiefly the Department of Public Works), local bodies, and private employers have provided a considerable amount of employment.

Unemployment continues to be most noticeable in the ranks of the unskilled workers, and of the total unemployed this group has comprised more than one-half. At the middle of June this year the number of such men was 1,261; the remainder comprised (1) clerks, 65; (2) drivers, 98; (3) hotel-workers and cooks, 73; (4) farm hands, 107; (5) shop-assistants, storemen, &c., 71; (6) painters and decorators, 52; (7) carpenters and joiners, 104; (8) gardeners, 36; (9) motor mechanics, 24; (10) engineers, 71; and others in miscellaneous occupations in smaller numbers. During the year the value of building permits exceeded that of the previous year by £849,859, and the building trade, particularly in the construction of large premises for city businesses, shows every sign of being as active in the coming year as during the past four or five years. It is said that the unemployment in this trade is due to the falling-off in the building of houses, in which carpentry comprises a large part of the work.

In the secondary industries the clothing, bootmaking, and saddlery trades have been slack. The decline in output in sawmilling has continued throughout the year. The decrease in the imports of motor-vehicles and their accessories accounts for slackness in the motor industry.