

From these figures it is estimated that applicants and their dependants provided for from the Employment Promotion Fund at the above date were as follows :—

Single men	..	..	..	..	..	6,274
Married men	..	..	..	..	..	9,146
Women	..	..	..	..	..	9,146
Children	..	..	..	..	..	13,841
						38,407

The incidence of unemployment falls more heavily upon married men, and that the evils arising from lack of work are thus more widespread is well indicated by the above summary of the conjugal classifications of the unemployed.

EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION FUND.

Details of the receipts and payments for the year ended 31st March, 1938, are contained in the audited statement as per Table V of the Appendices hereto, while a summarized comparison of the figures for last year with those of previous years is set out in Table I.

The year commenced with a cash balance of £253,000. The revenue received during the year amounted to £5,145,101 as against £4,260,545 for the previous year, an increase of £884,556. The sum of £448,854 was received from the registration levy, £3,027,490 from wages-tax, £1,628,675 from the special charge on "other income," and £40,082 from penalties for late payment of the levy, interest, and other miscellaneous receipts. Reference to the previous year's report shows that the yield from employment tax for 1937-38 was estimated at £5,180,000. The estimate thus differed by less than 1 per cent. from the revenue collected.

No better indication can be obtained of the prosperity existing in the country to-day than by an examination of the revenue received from employment taxation.

Compared with the previous year, the revenue from taxation has increased by £880,000, which represents an increase of 20·83 per cent. The increase in the revenue from wages-tax was £436,650, or 16·85 per cent., and represents an increase during the year ended 31st March, 1938, in the amount of salaries and wages paid to persons liable for the tax of £13,100,000.

The increase in the revenue from the special charge on "other income" is £435,100 over the collections for the financial year ended 31st March, 1937. In the latter year, however, credit notes to the extent of £36,866 (issued in the previous year to persons who had paid the whole year's tax at the rate of 10d. in the pound) were used for the payment of tax, and if this sum is added to the actual collections for the financial year 1936-37 the true increase in the revenue from the special charge on "other income" will be £398,237, or 32·36 per cent. This sum represents an increase during the year ended 31st March, 1937, in the incomes liable for this charge of £12,000,000.

Salaries and wages for the year ended 31st March, 1937, increased by £12,000,000, so that over the last two years wage-earners who pay employment tax have benefited to the extent of over £25,000,000.

Incomes of persons liable for the charge on "other income" received an increase of £12,000,000 in the year ended 31st March, 1937, over the previous year. Until returns for the year ended 31st March, 1938, have been fully analysed it is not possible to say by how much incomes during the last financial year have further increased, but the tax received up to the present from this source indicates that incomes apart from salaries and wages have shown a further increase of some millions.

The payments from the Fund during the year amounted to £4,239,456, a decrease of £174,555 as compared with the previous year. Expenditure on Scheme 5 and sustenance both show substantial reductions, while the expenditure on the promotion of full time employment is considerably greater than last year. This reflects the policy of the Government in the transfer of men to full time employment on useful works of a national or local character in preference to the payment of sustenance.

The balance remaining in the Fund at the end of the year was £1,158,890. The revenue for the current financial year is estimated at £5,377,000, an increase of £232,000 over last year's collections. It is therefore anticipated that approximately £6,536,000 will be available for expenditure during the current financial year, and that this amount will be more than is necessary for immediate relief requirements. There will thus be increased resources available for implementing the policy of providing full-time employment for all physically fit men out of work. Any surplus cash-balance at 31st March, 1939, after meeting outstanding commitments will, no doubt, be taken into account in the social-security scheme.

REVIEW OF BENEFITS TO UNEMPLOYED.

As well as providing many additional men with full-time work at standard rates of pay (referred to under Scheme No. 13, full-time employment), the following measures have been introduced since the 28th August, 1937, for the further improvement of the conditions affecting relief recipients :—

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR RELIEF, 1937-38.

The usual payment at Christmas of a bonus to all relief recipients who were in receipt of sustenance or of work-relief where the wages covered part-time employment only was sustained for 1937, an expenditure of £45,730 being made in this respect, as against £56,981 for 1936. Single men were paid a bonus of £1 each and married men £2 each, provided they actually received relief assistance in the week ended the 4th December, 1937, or, if they registered after this date and prior to Christmas, provided they had received relief at any time in the three months preceding the 4th December, 1937. Men employed part-time on relief works, men on the gold-prospecting scheme, clerical workers, and men on special full-time works were also given two weeks' holiday on full pay for the weeks ended 1st and 8th January, 1938. Special full-time works were closed down for two weeks and sustenance was paid for that period, together with the Christmas bonus, to workers under these schemes. In the majority of cases the concessions thus granted exceeded the holiday pay to which the men might have been entitled under awards or industrial agreements.