

On the basis of this information, together with an estimate of the rate of net inflow into the building and constructional labour force and the number of off-seasonal workers to be employed for part of the year, a rough estimate has been made of the number of *man-years* available in each of the next two years. The results of this estimate are as follows:—

	1945-46.	1946-47.	1947-48
Estimated man-years available to the industry	47,400	54,100	58,450
Percentage increase over previous year	14	8

As shown in this table, an overall increase in man-years can probably be anticipated of 14 per cent. in 1946-47 as compared with 1945-46, and of 8 per cent. in the ensuing year.

Turning now to the question of *supplies of the principal materials*, it has been ascertained from the State Forest Service that there are good prospects of at least 14 per cent. more *timber* being available to the building and constructional industries in the coming year, owing mainly to a reduction in the demand for boxmaking timber (the food requirements of the Allied Forces in the Pacific having diminished).

The immediate outlook for *cement* is not encouraging. For the time being production is hampered not by a shortage of plant-capacity, but by coal and shipping difficulties. There are definite prospects that the coastal shipping position will have improved to some extent during the coming year, though it is not clear that the increase will be sufficient to meet requirements. Accumulated maintenance and demands for replacements of structures in permanent materials, the heavy hydro-electric programme, and the use of concrete where unavoidable in house building, industrial, and commercial buildings, will place a heavy load on the industry, and it is likely that unusual steps will have to be taken to ensure that there will not be a shortage of this critical commodity.

Steel supplies have been a critical factor in the building and constructional industries for some years owing to the diversion of steel to war needs, the shortage of dollars, and, more recently, the protracted strike in the Australian steel industry. This commodity will therefore cause much difficulty for some time yet. With larger shipments of structural and reinforcing steel expected to come to hand from Australia, however, the outlook is for an easing of the position over the next few months. This item does not therefore seem likely to prevent a 14 per cent. increase (or more) in the physical volume of construction.

In the foregoing paragraphs the volume of construction has been referred to in physical rather than in financial terms. This is because:—

- (a) There is at present a greater financial demand to carry out constructional work than the physical capacity of the industry will permit. In other words, finance is not at present a limiting factor:
- (b) From the point of view of full-employment policy it is essential to measure the programme in terms of the size of the labour force it will employ: