

social services is a necessity. The necessity to provide avenues of employment for young lads just leaving school is ever before our minds. This is one of the most tragic phases of the present depression. Men who have passed middle age have more or less formed their characters, but boys leaving school at the ages of sixteen and seventeen, with all the high hopes of boyhood before them, will be irretrievably ruined if in the next two or three years they find they are not wanted. The country must resolutely face this position. Every avenue of employment possible for boys must be opened. Every opportunity to learn any craft or trade must be made available. Then there is the special and very difficult problem arising from the stopping of railway-construction works. This is difficult, but it will be faced. It will be dealt with in a separate statement to Parliament.

In the whole task of unemployment, I am happy to say, we are receiving the co-operation of local committees and men and women throughout the country. To these again I want to return thanks. I want to acknowledge, too, my gratitude to all of my colleagues in the Ministry and to members of Parliament for the assistance they are giving. To an especial degree I want to express my appreciation of the services of my predecessor as Chairman of the Unemployment Board—Mr. S. G. Smith, M.P. May I say that to my fellow-members of the Unemployment Board—Mr. Jessep, the Deputy Chairman; Mr. Malcolm Fraser, the Commissioner of Unemployment; Mr. Bromley; and Mr. Climie—I am indebted for helpful co-operation. But, most of all, I feel that a tribute is due to the courage, the patience, the quiet determination of the unemployed themselves. One cannot have even the smallest part in dealing with the unemployment problem without being moved to admiration for the spirit shown by those on whom the burden of the depression has fallen most heavily. It is something that recalls to our minds the character of the pioneers of the country.

Faced with so large a number of our fellow-citizens seeking employment, it is imperative that all bend their energies to solving this great problem. It is a great task, but not greater than the spirit of New Zealand—not greater than the spirit which enabled the pioneers of this country to conquer the forests, the rivers, and the plains.

We must not dwell too much upon the depressing influences of the position as it is to-day, but look forward with confidence to a brighter future, bending all our energies to bringing nearer that brighter future. It is a challenge, as I said at the outset: it is also an opportunity.

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing (750 copies), £6.

By Authority: W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.—1931.

Price 6d.]