37·6 per cent. in September, 1932, probably on account of increased private employment on seasonal work and also the transfer of a number of men to the repair of earthquake damage on the east coast :—

SCHEME 5.—NUMBERS OF MEN EMPLOYED ON VARIOUS CLASSES OF WORK.

Classes of Work.	December, 1931.		March, 1932.		June, 1932.		September, 1932.	
	Number of Men.	Percentage of Total.	Number of Men.	Percentage of Total.	Number of Men.	Percentage of Total.	Number of Men.	Percentage of Total
Reproductive work—								
Land-drainage	2,700	6·7	3,250	8·5	3,760	8·0	3,150	6·3
General land-development (including vegetable-growing)	1,390	3·5	3,650	9·5	6,460	13·8	7,360	14·7
Protection against river and sea erosion ..	985	2·4	1,160	3·0	1,700	3·6	1,920	3·8
Improvement of backblock roads	1,900	4·7	1,760	4·6	2,180	4·7	1,860	3·7
Afforestation	800	2·0	285	0·7	675	1·4	985	2·0
Reclamation (including prevention of sand-drift)	555	1·4	335	0·9	950	2·0	1,130	2·3
Other reproductive work (including gold prospecting)	1,470	3·6	1,760	4·6	2,475	5·3	2,395	4·8
Totals (reproductive)	9,800	24·3	12,200	31·8	18,200	38·8	18,800	37·6
Non-reproductive work—								
Formation and improvement of streets, roads, &c.	19,300	47·9	16,885	44·0	18,385	39·3	19,620	39·2
Improvement of domains, parks, and reserves ..	5,630	14·0	4,015	10·4	4,870	10·4	4,890	9·8
Improvement of school and hospital grounds ..	3,270	8·1	2,990	7·8	2,940	6·3	3,495	7·0
Other classes of work	2,300	5·7	2,310	6·0	2,455	5·2	3,245	6·4
Totals (non-reproductive)	30,500	75·7	26,200	68·2	28,650	61·2	31,250	62·4
Grand totals	40,300	100·0	38,400	100·0	46,850	100·0	50,050	100·0

It has already been explained that for administration purposes men working under Scheme No. 5 are retained on the "live" register, owing to the fact that placements under that scheme fluctuate from week to week; but the numbers on relief work, as compared with the total registered unemployed, have remained fairly constant during the period under review.

At the end of 1931 there were just over 40,000 men working on the scheme, and this number dropped to 37,500 in February, 1932. After this date the figures rose gradually to 38,400 in March, 46,850 in June, and reached the peak figure of 50,450 in August, 1932. During September, 1932, there were 50,050 men working on the scheme.

FARM SUBSIDY SCHEMES.

Scheme No. 4A.

The Board's report for 1931 dealt with the operation of this scheme up to 31st July, 1931, at which date operations had been suspended to the extent that all new engagements had to be completed by 31st August, while those previously arranged were subject to revision and cancellation after that date, unless the men were definitely additional to labour which would otherwise be employed, and, further, were engaged only on developmental work. This action was designed to prevent the employment of subsidized labour on ordinary seasonal work, which would have had to be done in any case, and consequently there were comparatively few men working on the scheme in September. A much-needed respite was also given the Unemployment Fund, which, as already explained, was at this time barely able to cope with the demands placed upon it. At 31st August, 1931, the Board was committed to a total expenditure of £68,500 for subsidies under Scheme No. 4A, this sum representing some 7,700 individual engagements of unemployed men.

Considerable numbers of men previously working on a subsidized basis were retained by their employers for seasonal work, and those whose employers under the scheme were unable to retain them were obliged to re-register and seek relief under other schemes.

During September, 1931, the position was reconsidered, with the result that the scheme was resumed, as from 1st October, 1931, for developmental work only, and on the strict understanding that labour engaged thereunder must not displace any man regularly employed by the farmer, nor prevent men from being employed in the ordinary course of farming activities. With the close of seasonal work in February, 1932, the restriction in respect of developmental work was relaxed to permit of almost any work being done so long as the latter conditions were observed. In the following August, with the recommencement of seasonal farming activities, placements were again limited to developmental work during the season. On this occasion the scheme was not actually suspended.

It will thus be seen that the Board has regulated the operation of Scheme No. 4A to meet seasonal conditions in the farming industry. This policy, strengthened by the close check kept by local committees, operated effectively in discouragement of any serious abuse of the privileges given for carrying out work with relief labour.

This scheme represents the best and quickest method yet tried of placing men in reproductive work for fairly long periods at a cost to the Fund relatively less than that incurred by granting relief under Scheme No. 5; but it has been necessary to introduce every possible safeguard to prevent the operations of the scheme from interfering with ordinary demands for farm labour. The success of the scheme owes much to Local Unemployment Committees viewing the problem from a national standpoint, and on their sound judgment in collaboration with certifying officers, in deciding which farmers may be permitted to employ subsidized labour. It is impossible for a central authority, such