

eligible fit skulkers in ease and safety, to profit by the departure of better men. Every possible loop-hole by which the shirker could have escaped seems to have been anticipated in the carefully drafted bill. Two clauses are of direct and special interest to employers. Clause 37 reads: "Every person shall be guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction by a fine not less than *twenty* pounds and not more than *one hundred* pounds who, at any time after the enrolment of any division or class of the reserve has been proclaimed and directed, employs in his service or continues in such employment for more than seven days any man who belongs to that division or class and who is not enrolled therein, unless the defendant proves that he believed on reasonable grounds that the man so employed or retained in his service did not belong to that division or class or was enrolled therein." And the next clause prohibits, under equally severe penalties, the employment of men who, though enrolled, have failed to answer the call when the ballot has included their name in the list of the monthly draft of recruits. Employers have been considered in connection with the exemption system. If the calling up of any employee will seriously prejudice their business, or the State's interests, they will have a right to be heard before the Military Service Board. The same thing applies if an employee enlists voluntarily when there might be good sound reasons why he should stay in his civilian position. Employers must be prepared to stand inconvenience and loss, if it is part of the supreme war-winning effort.

Timber Waste

As New Zealand is coming within measurable distance of the end of its timber resources, it has been suggested to the Minister of Railways by the New Zealand Builders and Contractors' Federation that railing freights upon imported timbers should be reduced, with a view to encouraging imports, thus considering our own supplies. It seems strange that timber should have to be brought to this "timber country" right across the broad Pacific, but we have to admit that the pine forest of the Pacific coast of North America are of great advantage to the New Zealand building trade. Hardwood is brought in large quantities from Australia for the Railway Department, and is of the utmost value, while the beautiful figuring of the Oregon Pine is being utilised to give distinctive effects in our domestic planning. If it is disappointing to admit that we are large importers of timber, it is just as well to know that we are even larger exporters. Over six million feet of sawn timber went out of the country in April last. Our woods have distinctive and valuable qualities which make them sought after. But how long will they last? Our milling methods are as a general rule, wasteful, and no attempt is made to use the trees which will not "cut up" to best advantage. An American authority estimates that only 44 per cent. of the tree is actually turned into boards the rest being wasted into sawdust and useless slabs. It does not pay to worry about the little pieces, though thousands of articles could be made from them if there was closer co-operation between the timber miller and the joinery factory. A paper famine prevails in the Dominion, enormous prices being paid for this product of wood pulp. Many years ago one of our Land Bills contained special provision for a paper pulp concession on the West

Coast of the South Island. The establishment of this industry would have enabled the country to utilise profitably a class of timber now entirely wasted. If such a concern had been in full swing a year ago its value to the country would have been enormous. But it does not exist.

A Great Industry

The surpassing prosperity of our primary producers has been of some assistance to the building industry. New freezing works have been erected in many parts of the country, and this branch of building still goes on. No wonder our farmers require to put more money into these indispensable aids to economical working of their stock-raising business when last year's exports of meat and by-products exceeded those for 1914 by the impressive total of £2,052,554. Values will probably go down after the war ends, but we shall have the "turn-over" just the same, with a good chance of developing a hitherto closed market, France. Among the freezing works recently completed, or being built we note a fine undertaking at Whakatane, with a capacity of 100,000 carcasses, one near Feilding, with a capacity of 40,000, others at Wanganui, Marton Junction, Westfield (Auckland), and Kaiapoi, showing that this form of development is well distributed. Nothing but the limitations of shipping will prevent next season from being another record, but if the war goes on longer than another year, a radical reorganisation of labour power will have to be made. We may live to see the time when workers engaged in activities not directly productive of food, clothing, and other supplies for fighting men, will have to "get back to the land."

"The City Beautiful"

A custom that is becoming common in America, and one which we might profitably follow in New Zealand," said Mr. B. Leyland of Auckland recently, "is the 'spring-cleaning' of cities, as well as houses." Mr. Leyland said that when he arrived in Vancouver he saw the following notice posted in street cars and in all public places:—"Clean up, paint up, plant flowers; make your city beautiful, a joy to yourselves and to the strangers within your gates." Although Vancouver was suffering from severe commercial depression at the time, he was surprised to see, two months later, on his return visit to the city, the results of the spring-cleaning, painting and flower-planting. Many other American cities visited by Mr. Leyland has also been "spring-cleaned," and he concluded by saying that after what he had seen he was convinced that wonderful results could be achieved. The extra effort once a year to make the city beautiful was not too much to ask of the residents of any centre. We are glad to say that Mr. Leyland's impression has been given wide publicity in New Zealand. It appealed to newspaper readers, probably as a new and refreshing idea, but it is really one of the things about which the Town Planner is always preaching. If every citizen would be induced to see that his fence, his untidy backyard, his depressingly ugly house, helps to create a poor impression in his own district—if all his neighbours realised the same thing of their own fences, gardens and houses—the sum-total of the general awakening would be to turn some districts perilously on the edge of slum-dom into what the usual flattering house-agent can truthfully call "desirable residential localities."