

a financially profitable municipal scheme could not be at once undertaken, if the necessary borrowing powers were obtained. It is obvious that the absorption for four months each winter of so large a body of unemployed men would substantially help to solve the problem of unemployment.

4. *Decasualisation of Labour*.—Our inquiry points to the conclusion that though in a town like York, where masters and men are fairly well known to each other, the Labour Exchange may do little directly to reduce unemployment among regular workers, save by informing men of vacancies in other towns, the supremely important work of decasualising the labour market can only be effected through its agency, and if only for that reason it should be warmly supported both by masters and men. It will be remembered that by "decasualisation" is meant the concentration of all casual work available upon selected men, who thus receive practically constant work, although for different employers, instead of its distribution over an indiscriminate body of workers, all of whom remain under-employed. Obviously the policy involves the squeezing out of a number of individuals who are at present getting a certain amount of the casual work, and some method must be devised for dealing with them. We have on p. 140 *et seq.* suggested certain schemes whereby surplus labour might be absorbed, and, in so far as it is efficient and adaptable, it must be possible to absorb it, unless there is a shortage of either capital