NON-EXPORTING INDUSTRIES.

Evidence is not lacking that even the non-exporting trades are at the present time suffering from the effect of trade depression, and the following table relating to the Building Trade shows how, during the course of the present year, unemployment has been steadily increasing:—

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES UNEMPLOYED. BUILDING, ETC.

(Ministry of Labour Statistics.)

Monthly Average.	Total Unemployed.	Percentage.
1927	114,034	11·8
1928	133,591	13·7
1929	145,700	14·7
1930:—		
January	197,609	20·0
February	194,903	19·7
March	177,705	17·9
April	160,232	16·2
May	147,548	14·9
June	147,082	14·4
July	160,727	15·8
August	166,171	16·3
September	177,869	17·5
October	200,205	19·7

Appended " G " is a table showing the rates of wages prevailing in the chief Municipalities for certain classes of labour.

Engineering shop rates range throughout the country from 54/– to 62/11 for fitters and from 39/– to 45/6 for labourers. Municipal rates for the same classes range approximately from 55/– to 85/– and 40/5 to 59/6 respectively.

It is important to keep in mind, as mentioned on page 7, that wages should not be confused with earnings.

There can be no doubt that the high wages paid in sheltered industries make a very serious contribution to the present high cost of living in this country.

One cannot suggest to what extent rent and the prices of houses would be affected by a reasonable reduction in the wages of