

SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

From what I have heard from employers and employees, this Act is, with one exception, giving general satisfaction. The exception is the one I have mentioned in former reports from another district—namely, the right employers have of having their employees, especially females, back to work at night. This, I trust, will soon be at an end.

There has been one prosecution—four cases against the same person. Fines were inflicted in each case.

LABOUR.

From what I can learn from those who are most likely to know, tradesmen of all classes have had a fairly good year. Work for the unskilled worker has been exceedingly good for the last six months. The previous half-year, I am informed, was not so good. The unsettled weather made it hard for the outside worker to make fair wages. There are no applicants for work on the register at the present time.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT.

There were two cases under this Act brought by this office during the year for breaches of the Wellington Typographical Award. Penalties were imposed in each case, and the defendant was ordered to pay up all back pay.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There are two licensed registry offices in this town, both of which are well conducted.

In conclusion, I am gratified to state that from personal observation this district is progressing in a steady manner. The buildings lately erected and those in course of erection would be a credit to a much larger town than Napier. Industries of all kinds are on a fairly large scale, and I think I can safely say that in a very few years the exports will exceed the expectations of the most sanguine.

During the few months I have been here I have found the workers, with very few exceptions, a steady and industrious class.

The Chief Inspector, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

W. G. BLAKE, Inspector.

DANNEVIRKE.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Dannevirke, 1st April, 1904.

I beg to submit my annual report for the period ending the 31st March, 1904.

FACTORIES ACT.

I am pleased to report that factory matters are in a satisfactory condition. I have received no complaints from employers, and no complaints have reached me from employees, so that I conclude there are few abuses in contravention of the law of a tangible nature, or I should have heard something of them during the period under review.

There are 66 factories and workrooms registered this year, employing 407 males and 25 females (total, 432), against 52 last year, employing 300 males and 18 females (total, 318); an increase in factories of 14, males 107, females 7 (total, 114). Nine permits have been issued to young persons to work in factories (all boys); 2 had passed Standard IV., 5 Standard V., 2 Standard VI. In each case I obtained proof of age from Registrars of Births.

Re overtime: Very little overtime has been worked here. Six women worked 60 hours' overtime under permit at dressmaking.

There are 25 sawmills employing 221 men scattered over this district; the number includes only those actually employed in the mill, and not the bushmen and others, who quite double that number.

One accident occurred. Through inexperience or carelessness, a man got his hand severely cut by a breaking-down saw, which incapacitated him for many weeks.

There have been numerous accidents to bushmen in the bush in connection with the sawmilling industry; one was fatal.

There were no prosecutions.

SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

The provisions of this Act have been fairly complied with. There has been no friction, and no complaints have reached me from those employed in shops or offices. The legal half-holiday is Wednesday, and it has been strictly observed.

There were no prosecutions.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There are two licensed registry offices in this town, both of which have been conducted in a creditable manner. No complaints have reached me from employers seeking employees, or persons obtaining or seeking employment.

LABOUR.

The sawmilling industry in this district employs a large number of men constantly, and at good wages; all have to be skilled or partly skilled before obtaining employment at this work. All the mills have been busy and running full time, giving constant employment.

All unskilled labour has been fully employed at bushfelling, road-making, scrub-cutting, grass-seeding, &c. Very few swagmen have been seen on the roads, and those have been mostly elderly men.