

Twenty-seven employers worked 181 women and boys under sixteen years of age 2,966 hours overtime. 577 males over sixteen years of age worked 48,400 hours.

Fifty-four certificates of fitness to work in factories were issued to persons under sixteen years of age, 21 to boys and 33 to girls.

Thirty-six accidents were reported, none of which were fatal, and few very serious. In each case the accident was investigated, due care being taken to ascertain whether all reasonable precautions were taken to avoid accident.

The factories are generally in a healthy condition, and well ventilated.

There were no prosecutions under this Act.

SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

During the period 226 shops were entered on the register.

Twenty-four employers worked 172 males and 80 females 4,716 hours overtime.

There were 6 prosecutions under this Act, in which convictions were recorded.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

Four licenses were renewed, 1 new office registered, and 1 application refused, the character of the applicant not being up to the required standard.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT.

During the year the Court of Arbitration held two sittings in Wanganui. At the first sitting 11 applications for enforcement were heard; 9 breaches were recorded, 1 case was dismissed, and 1 withdrawn.

At the second sitting of the Court we had a clean sheet, no application for enforcement having been filed. Several minor breaches were investigated by the Department, but were settled amicably out of Court.

There were two strikes during the period—the Slaughtermen and the Tramway-workers. In each instance the disputes were speedily settled to the satisfaction of the parties. These strikers did not come within the scope of the Act, there being no award or industrial agreement in force relating to them.

LABOUR.

Unskilled labourers appear to have shared in the temporary depression, but not to the same extent as artisans in the building trade. The various local bodies have had work in hand, and tramway-construction absorbed a very considerable portion of local unskilled labour. There has been no apparent distress, but evidence is not wanting that many of the local married men were experiencing rather hard times.

SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT.

During the shearing season an inspection of shearing-sheds was made, covering those stations where improvements or new accommodation had been ordered by the special Inspectors appointed for the purpose the previous year. With the exception of two occupiers, all the notices sent out in this district were found to be complied with.

There was one prosecution, and judgment was given against the Department, the Magistrate being of opinion that the loft where accommodation was provided was sufficient.* The occupier has, however, consented to come into line, and has promised to comply with the Department's request, and provide the necessary accommodation before next season. Speaking generally, I believe the shearers' accommodation in this district compares very favourably with that of any other district in the Dominion.

I have to express my thanks to employers and workers for the courtesy extended to me in the execution of my duties.

I have, &c.,

W. H. McQUARTERS,
Inspector of Factories.

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

TAIHAPE.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Taihape, 10th April, 1909.

I respectfully submit for your information a *resume* of the working of the various enactments in this district for the period ending 31st March, 1909.

Owing to the office, together with most of the records, being burnt on the night of the 1st March, 1909, shortly after my arrival in the district, material for supplying an interesting report was reduced to ashes. I can therefore only give a short report on the work of the year.

TRADES.

In the case of the bootmaking, dressmaking, and tailoring trades, business has been good during the year.

The building trades have not experienced any rushes, and the local supply of labour has been sufficient to meet all requirements.

* This case is commented on in the Chief Inspector's report.