

### FACTORIES ACT.

The number of factories registered during the year was 315, an increase of 34 over last year's figures.

*Certificates of fitness* to work in factories were issued under section 29 to 41 boys and 32 girls.

*Overtime*.—The amount of overtime worked in factories by 276 males over the age of sixteen years was 22,824 hours; and by 193 boys under sixteen years of age, and females, 10,114 hours: making a total of 32,938 hours. These figures show a considerable falling-off in the amount of overtime worked in the various industries as compared with last year.

*Accidents*.—Twelve accidents were reported and inquired into. Six of them were machinery accidents, but none serious, consisting chiefly of cuts and bruises. No limbs were lost, and in most the time lost did not extend over a week.

*Half-holiday*.—The law relating to the weekly half-holiday is well observed. In Invercargill Borough the general half-holiday for shops and factories is observed on Wednesday afternoon. In the suburbs of Invercargill Wednesday is observed by shops and Saturday by factories. This mixing of days is rather confusing, and it would be much better to have a universal closing-day for all industries than continue under the present system, especially as the suburbs are so close to the town. There is now a movement on foot for amalgamation, and should this eventuate a more satisfactory state of affairs may be established.

*Prosecutions*.—Four charges were laid for failing to give women and boys the half-holiday, 1 for failing to keep an overtime-book, and 1 for failing to pay wages at not more than fortnightly intervals. Convictions were obtained in all but one case, which was dismissed.

### SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

There has been little trouble in carrying out the provisions of this Act. During the year there were 13 prosecutions—5 for failing to close at the proper hour, and 8 for employing assistants longer than the prescribed hours. Seven of the latter were against refreshment-room keepers. Convictions were obtained in 12 cases, and 1 was dismissed.

Returns were collected from 302 shops, an increase of 32 over last year's returns.

The amount of overtime worked in shops shows a decided falling-off as compared with last year, the number of hours worked being 1,474—viz., 1,330 by males and 144 by females—as against 2,244 hours by males and 158 by females last year.

### INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT.

A good deal of time is taken up in attending to the carrying-out of the provisions of the various awards in force in the district. The very scattered area over which some of the awards operate makes it necessary to spend days in inquiring into a single breach, especially in regard to sawmilling and gold-dredging.

During the year there were 18 prosecutions for breaches of awards, covering tailoring, sawmilling, coal-mining, saddlery, painting, and baking. In 8 cases penalties and costs were imposed, 6 were dismissed, 3 convictions were recorded with costs, and in 1 case a conviction only was recorded. The penalties and costs imposed amounted to £24 14s. 4d.

### SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There are 8 persons holding registry-office certificates in Invercargill, who have carried on their business in a very satisfactory manner.

### CASES SETTLED OUT OF COURT.

During the year the amount collected by this office on account of back wages totalled £78 1s. 10d. This covers breaches of the Factories Act, Shops and Offices Act, Typographical award, Sawmills award, Coachworkers' award, and Workmen's Wages Act.

I have, &c.,

H. B. BOWER,

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

Inspector of Factories.

## EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF AGENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR.

### WHANGAREI.

The timber and coal industries have had a good year. Fresh coalfields have been located in the district, and according to prospects promise well.

The flax trade is at present dull, and several flax-mills have recently closed down, on account of the dullness of the market.

The gum trade has of late also been dull, but is now improving.

Employment generally has, however, been plentiful, the railway extension having taken up any surplus labour, and there has also been a fair demand for farm hands and bushmen.