

total cases before the Court, 4 were dismissed, in 2 cases the Inspector was non-suited, 4 were withdrawn, in 6 cases breaches were recorded, and in 48 convictions were obtained; 44 cases were settled without the aid of the Court, and a total of £65 17s. 4d. back wages was collected and paid to the respective workers.

SHEARERS' AND AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT.

Speaking generally, the provisions of this Act are fairly well adhered to by the various station-owners and farmers, and it is pleasing to be able to report that in an agricultural district such as this, in only one case was it necessary to evoke the aid of the Court to compel an employer to comply with the Act. This person was ordered to carry out the improvements, and pay costs £1 13s.

EMPLOYMENT BUREAU.

During the year 107 persons were assisted to employment.

The results achieved under this heading have not been as satisfactory as one would expect. The facilities afforded employers to obtain suitable labour are not taken advantage of to much extent.

The scarcity of farm labour does not appear to be very keenly felt in this district, as only within the last month this office has had applications for employment from several milkers, ploughmen, &c., but could not place them. The approach of winter will no doubt bring with it the usual slackness for unskilled labour, but it is to be hoped that with the commencement of several public contracts, and the Napier-Gisborne Railway, much of the surplus labour will be absorbed. Again, the increased activity in the building trade will, no doubt, assist to keep the market clear of the usual surplus of labour during the winter months. A comparison of the figures of building permits for March give a good idea of the general prosperity of this district. During March, 1910, permits for buildings to the value of £5,827 were issued, whilst for the corresponding period, of 1911 the amount was £23,954.

WORKERS' DWELLING ACT, 1910.

The number of inquiries from workers for application-forms, particulars, &c., indicates that this Act is likely to supply a want among the workers. The question of house-rent has been in the past a serious matter for the heads of families, and the Act should help in a great measure to relieve a burden that has for years been borne by the workers.

CONCLUSION.

During the year my predecessor has visited at intervals Hastings, Waipawa, Dannevirke, and Wairoa districts, and the reports indicate that the factories and shops on the whole are well conducted, and the provisions of both enactments have been observed.

The prosecutions under the Shops and Offices and Factories Acts have decreased during the period under review, and it is to be hoped that the year upon which we are now entering will see a further decrease.

I have, &c.,

ROWLAND T. BAILEY,

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

Inspector of Factories.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, New Plymouth, 29th April, 1911.

I have the honour to submit for your consideration the annual report of this office for the year ending 31st March, 1911.

GENERAL.

Although the building and manufacturing trades have had a fairly satisfactory year, there has not been any marked progress in the direction of an increased number of manufacturing establishments or in the number of hands employed. To many, no doubt, it is quite satisfactory that there has been sufficient employment offering during the year to keep the working section of the community constantly, or almost constantly, employed. To those who take a real interest in the place, however, it must be a matter of regret that such an old-established town, backed by closely settled country, and possessing many natural advantages, a good climate, and beautiful scenery, should be able to show a gain of only 89 in population during the last five years. The natural increase of births over deaths should have given at least an increase of 350. There is no doubt that the slow advancement in the manufacturing trades is due in a great measure to a lack of support given by the people to local productions. Boots, clothing, furniture, and most necessities are manufactured in the town of as good a quality as can be obtained elsewhere, yet a very large section of the community has clothing, boots, furniture, &c. made outside of the town.

The order-tailoring, dressmaking, millinery, boot and shoe, cabinetmaking, and upholstering, and printing trades have had a very fair year; and most of the employees have been fairly well employed.

There has been quite a revival in the sawmilling industry in comparison with the preceding year the output from the local mills having been much greater.