

## CONCLUSION.

I have visited all parts of the Wairarapa district. I wish to extend my appreciation of the willing assistance always received at the hands of the police officers who act as Inspectors in the various parts of the district. I would again record my thanks for the courteous treatment received from employers and employees, also the secretaries of local unions, with whom I have come in contact during the course of making any official inquiries into the working of the various Acts or awards.

I have, &c.,

J. GEORGESON,

Inspector of Factories.

The Secretary of Labour and Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

## NELSON.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Nelson, 25th April, 1912.

I have the honour to submit for your consideration my report on the administration of the various labour laws throughout the Nelson District for the year ending the 31st March, 1912.

The period does not present any remarkable features. There have been no serious disturbances in the various industries carried on in the district. Trade, generally, has been quite up to the standard of previous years, and many trades show a marked improvement. The outlook, from all points of view, is very promising for the coming year.

The building trade has been fairly good in both the city and country districts. There have been issued in the city 101 building permits, and buildings to the value of £23,500 have been erected; whilst in the country districts the estimated value of buildings erected is £12,000. All tradesmen have been kept fairly well employed, and work has been more plentiful than in the previous two years.

In the leather trades, saddlery and harness making has maintained a steady level. Few, if any, tradesmen have been out of employment. A good demand has existed in the boot trade for order-work, and employers state that there is a growing tendency for this class of boot. All operatives have been kept busy.

The year has been a record one in the clothing trades. There has been a continual demand for all classes of labour in the dressmaking and order tailor shops. Employers state they have great difficulty in obtaining sufficient labour to carry out orders coming to hand. A considerable amount of overtime has on this account been worked in these branches.

Business has been fairly bright in the woodworking trades. This has been very noticeable in connection with sawmilling. There has been a good demand for sawmill hands and bushmen.

The engineering trades, although quite up to the standard of previous years, show little, if any, signs of advancement. A set number of tradesmen are employed, chiefly on jobbing-work and general repairs to shipping.

Brick and pottery works have been about normal. At no time during the year has the demand for bricks exceeded the output from the local yards.

The coachbuilding trade has grown considerably. The demand for light vehicles has been very marked. Employers report that they have been kept very busy throughout the year on order work. Employees in this branch of industry have made practically full time.

The local freezing-works have had a very prosperous season, and are at present in full swing. It is estimated that 20,000 carcasses of mutton will be put through the works this season.

In the fellmongery and tannery trades several additions and new machines have been put into local works for the purpose of wool-scouring and dealing with green pelts. In all yards there has been an increase of staff, and employers state that the markets have been fairly firm. The returns to hand for the first nine months of the year were very good, but it is feared that the strike in England will have militated against prices at late sales.

The fruit industry, for which Nelson is noted, continues to advance by leaps and bounds. During the year about 530 acres have been planted, and 174,000 trees have been put in. This year 5,411 cases were shipped, to again test the British market. News has been received that the shipment arrived Home in excellent condition. This should give a true test of prices obtainable, and all orchardists are anxiously looking forward for final returns. If payable prices can be realized, a great future will be opened up for Nelson District.

Fruit-preserving, one of the most important industries in the Nelson District, continues to grow in importance. All fruit-preserving factories have extended their operations and increased their plants. The great difficulty in this industry is the dearth of female and boy labour. This has been overcome, so far as possible, by putting in the latest labour-saving machinery. Notwithstanding, many orders—notably from South Africa, Argentine, and Vancouver—have had to be refused on account of the shortage of labour. An idea of the quantity of fruit handled may be obtained when two factories alone have handled 1,100 tons for the season.

Agriculture: A considerable area of new country has been opened up, and a good demand has existed for all classes of farm hands. The abundant supply of feed has increased milk-supplies. Butter and cheese factories have been busy, and suppliers are well satisfied with the season's returns. Owing to heavy rains, early crops were not up to the usual standard; fair prices were, however, obtained. Late crops have turned out very satisfactory,