

REPORTS OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT BRANCHES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

Department of Labour (Women's Branch), Auckland, 25th April, 1912.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 31st March, 1912.

During the period just closed 3,255 applications have been received and dealt with. Of these, 2,449 were from employers, and 806 from women desiring employment. Out of this number 626 engagements have been made—i.e., 90 married and 536 single women were sent to employment.

In addition to the above, a large number of women who, through physical weakness and other causes were unfit for active life, have been assisted throughout the year in various ways to the means whereby they could earn a livelihood.

The fact that we have been unable to supply maids for 1,782 applications received reveals the acute state of the domestic market in Auckland. As each year passes, a fair proportion of our domestics marry and set up housekeeping on their own behalf, and the gaps made by these unfortunately remain unfilled. Few of our girls leaving school care to take up domestic work for a livelihood, owing to so many more attractive avenues being now open to them, and in some of these the inducements offered are exceptional. For example, clothing and other manufacturers are now offering intelligent girls who have some knowledge of machining 15s. per week to learn the trade, and, to my knowledge, the girls in a few weeks' time earn from £1 to £1 5s. per week, according to ability. The shorter hours associated with factory-work and the advantage of living at home with their parents and family appeal very strongly to our young women, and with this feeling one cannot help but have considerable sympathy.

The future solution of the domestic problem undoubtedly lies largely with the mistress herself. She can make the conditions which will attract the girl of to-day to her home, and induce her to remain there. Domestic service has become decidedly distasteful to many of our young women, hence their preference for other work, which is both plentiful and at hand at remunerative rates. I am afraid the mistress of the private home has not taken these phases of the question seriously into consideration, otherwise there would have been a better attempt on her part to meet the new type of girl now coming into the labour-market, who will accept only employment that is congenial to her. Much of the dislike to domestic work is due also to the uncertain hours and irregular holiday periods.

IMMIGRATION.

During the year 126 immigrants from overseas have been placed in suitable employment, and I am pleased to say there has been a marked improvement in the domestics who have recently landed. The women express themselves in grateful terms for the agency of the office, not only as a means of assisting them to employment, but also as a medium for obtaining information, and, generally speaking, for taking them by the hand, so to speak, upon their arrival in a new country.

I have, &c.,

H. R. MORRISON,
Officer in Charge.

The Secretary of Labour, Wellington.

MASTERTON.

SIR,—

Department of Labour (Women's Branch), Masterton, 1st May, 1912.

I have the honour to submit for your consideration the report on the work of this branch during the year ended 31st March, 1912.

The women's branch in this district is now well established, and the facilities offered as a central agency for employment are being taken advantage of to a greater extent.

As has been the case in previous years, there has not been a sufficient number of women and girls applying or offering their services for domestic positions to in any way meet the demands of employers.

The bureau is now in a position to find situations for women and girls following any occupations besides domestic service, such as tailoresses, milliners, typistes, &c.; and in any case, all possible advice and assistance are given to workers.

During the period 81 applications were received from employers for domestic helps and other assistants, and the wages offered have ranged from 5s. to £1 5s. per week; 50 applications were received from employees, of whom 32 were suitably placed in situations.

I have, &c.,

H. R. HODGE,
Officer in Charge.

The Secretary of Labour, Wellington.