

Servants' Registry-offices Act.—There are twenty-four licensed offices in Auckland City.

Workers' Dwellings Act.—There are 127 dwellings erected under this Act in and around Auckland City, twenty-five having been completed recently. Dwellings have also been erected, or are in course of erection, in the following townships in the Auckland District: Hamilton, 6; Ngāruawahia, 6; Te Puke, 6; and Tauranga, 6. The demand for these dwellings continues, the class of house erected and the easy system for the payment of the purchase-money being very suitable to the average worker.

Men's Employment Branch.—On the outbreak of the war a certain amount of dislocation ensued, and a large number of applications for work were received. 1,613 men obtained work through this office.

WELLINGTON.

The Inspector in Charge (Mr. H. E. Moston) reports:—

General.—Little or no distress has been felt as a result of the war, and almost all classes of labour have been well employed. The building trades (which are usually the first to feel the effects of the tightening of the money-market) have been remarkably steady. The engineering trades have maintained a satisfactory condition, and tradesmen have been kept in constant employment. The textile trades (particularly the clothing trades) have had the busiest period on record, due principally to the demands made by the Defence authorities for the urgent supply of uniforms, &c. A committee was set up to deal with distress and unemployment arising out of the war, and during the earlier period of the war many unemployed persons were assisted by the committee. As representing the Department on the committee, I have been able to keep the members acquainted with the position (through the medium of the Labour Bureau) of the unemployment in the district.

Factories Act.—Particular attention has been paid to the factories where foodstuffs are manufactured. The advisability of compelling occupiers, when erecting bakehouses in the future, to build in brick or concrete is a matter which ought to receive consideration. The number of factories registered is 1,144, an increase of thirty-four. Overtime worked by 2,060 boys under sixteen years of age and women totalled 80,329 hours, a considerable increase over last year, mostly due to the demand for uniforms and supplies for the Defence authorities. During the year 128 accidents occurred. In the most serious cases arrangements have been made to prevent a repetition. Three prosecutions took place.

Shops and Offices Act.—Special attention has been given to the seating-accommodation for females, and the larger shops have now provided permanent seats behind the counter. Some shopkeepers have taken a keen interest in the matter, and have provided most satisfactory seats, which fold back under the counter when not in use.

Nineteen prosecutions have taken place against shopkeepers for failing to close their shops at the time fixed by a majority of shopkeepers and for selling tobacco after the tobacconists in the district are closed. The latter is a very common offence, and has caused much dissatisfaction. I would suggest that all tobacconists—i.e., those shopkeepers who sell tobacco—should be compelled to obtain a license, but that the fee should be only a small one, say, 10s. Power should be given to the Magistrate to endorse or cancel the license where a shopkeeper has committed offences under the Act. All the prosecutions were decided in favour of the Department.

Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.—The administration of the Act, the awards of the Court, and the industrial agreements becomes more onerous year by year. 346 complaints were received, and thirty-three employers and six employees have been prosecuted.

Servants' Registry-offices Act.—There are twelve licensed registry-offices in Wellington.

Workers' Dwellings.—There are fifty-one workers' dwellings in Wellington, and a further eleven are almost completed. At Petone there are twenty-eight, and it is proposed shortly to erect three more there.

CHRISTCHURCH.

The Officer in Charge (Mr. H. B. Bower) reports:—

General.—The district has suffered extensively through the European upheaval, though there are exceptional cases where a particular industry has largely benefited by the demand for materials for the equipment of our Forces. The building trade has experienced the heaviest slump for many years, carpenters, painters, plasterers, plumbers, bricklayers, and others competing with recognized general labourers for any relief work offering. Since the New Year an improvement has taken place, and the majority of the skilled artisans are back at their various trades. The lot of the unskilled labourer was not improved, and at no time could it be said that there was anything like sufficient work. Public works were largely responsible for employing 789 men, while municipal undertakings were also of valuable assistance. Private employment was found for 435 men. Private employers are now making more use of the Department.

Factories Act.—Every precaution has been taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the workers. 1,282 factories were registered. Certificates of fitness to work in factories were issued to 362 young persons. Males under sixteen years of age and women worked 56,295 hours of overtime. Accidents reported totalled 236, but none was fatal. There were four prosecutions under this Act.

Shops and Offices Act.—Thirty-one cases were taken against shopkeepers, and judgment was given for the Department in all cases. At stocktaking and special work 1,195 assistants worked 16,630 hours overtime.

Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and Awards, &c., thereunder.—Prosecutions for breaches of the Act and awards totalled twenty-four.

Workers' Dwellings Act.—The number of dwellings erected in Christchurch is fifty-seven. All are occupied and with two exceptions are held on the purchase system. An inspection of these