

Subdivision VI.—Fisheries :—

Item—					
Compassionate grant to G. M. T. Burnett			£		£
Hakataramea Salmon-hatcheries (repairs)	..	..	250		
Salmon fisheries, &c.					
Travelling allowances and expenses	..	..	75		
Portobello fish-hatcheries	..	..	398		
					723
<i>General :—</i>					
Future scale of fees (deck cargo)	..	..	300		
Sales, " Nautical Almanac "	..	..	100		
					400
					<u>£14,553</u>

VOTE—DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR.

747. The expenditure of this Department in 1914-15 and 1930-31 was as shown hereunder :—

1914-15.			1930-31.		
Salaries.	Other Charges.	Total.	Salaries.	Other Charges.	Total.
£	£	£	£	£	£
14,948	15,731	30,679	37,929	20,015	57,944
Less credits-in-aid ..		2,537	Less credits-in-aid ..		2,544
		£28,142			£55,400

748. A proportion of vote Immigration has been transferred to the vote of this Department during 1931-32, but previously the whole expenditure had been met out of the Public Works Fund—*i.e.*, loan-money.

749. The Department collects fees for various services, such as factory-registration, weights and measures verification, &c. The excess of expenditure over income (after charging interest and depreciation) for 1930-31 was £47,499.

750. The staff of the Department increased from 89 in 1914-15 to 136 in 1930-31, but some reductions have recently been effected.

751. There are district offices at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, and inspectors' offices in the secondary towns. The basic functions of the Department are in connection with the administration of the Factories and Shops and Offices Acts, Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, Scaffolding and Excavation Act, Weights and Measures Act, &c.

752. The passing of the Unemployment Act and the growth in the number of unemployed has resulted in a considerable burden of extra work being thrown on to the Department, which has supplied the machinery for the registration of unemployed (part of its normal function) and has generally acted as the agent of the Unemployment Board throughout the Dominion.

753. This increase in the work has resulted in the curtailment of inspections of shops, offices, and factories, as it has been necessary for the Inspectors to devote more time to unemployment matters. We are of opinion that the present measure of inspection should suffice for the present. **It is evident that the high standard of inspection once per annum formerly set by the Department was largely unnecessary.** This should result in a measure of administrative economy when conditions again become normal, and the co-ordination of the duties of Inspectors of Factories with those of Inspectors of Machinery attached to the Marine Department should also assist in this direction.

754. Before dealing with the expenditure as provided under the vote, we shall review the fees charged for various services.

755. **Some measure of economy should result from a revision of the fees for registration of factories.** These were fixed some considerable time ago and are as follow :—

Where the maximum number of persons to be engaged in the factory does	£	s.	d.
not exceed three	..	0	1 0
Where such number exceeds three but does not exceed eight	..	0	5 0
Where such number exceeds eight but does not exceed fifteen	..	0	10 0
Where such number exceeds fifteen but does not exceed thirty	..	1	1 0
Where such number exceeds thirty	..	2	10 0

756. **An amendment of the scale with the object of increasing the total collections by £1,000 is recommended.**

Saving, £1,000.