

One hundred and eighty-nine permits to young persons—*i.e.*, 130 boys and 59 girls—have been issued. Care has been taken to have the required standard certificates produced, and only in very exceptional cases have permits been granted to children who had not passed the Fourth Standard.

Permission to work overtime has been granted to 2,294 persons to work 6,785 hours, as follows:—

	Persons.	Hours.
Dressmakers	706	1,934
Tailors	544	1,785
Waterproof clothing... ..	478	1,434
Printers	126	373
Hatters	83	208
Bootmakers	20	60
Cabinetmakers	4	12
Engineers	2	6
Laundries	331	973
	2,294	6,785

The provision in the Act by which power is given to grant overtime on Saturday afternoon in exceptional cases has given great satisfaction, especially to laundry-proprietors.

I regret to say that several employers are taking advantage of the error in section 54, and are claiming forty-eight hours' work per week from female employes.

There have been six accidents in the district during the year. Fortunately, none of them were of a serious nature.

There is a feeling amongst occupiers of small workrooms employing only one person (in many instances a child of the occupier) that they should not be required to pay a fee. No doubt it is hard, and might (if thought well) be rectified by either fixing a minimum in present schedule or introducing a reduced fee for small workrooms. As the schedule stands at present the fee must be charged.

SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

This Act came regularly into force in this district on Wednesday, the 6th February, that being the day fixed by the conference. Since then I have done my best to enforce its provisions, with only moderate success, as a large number of shopkeepers who do not employ labour in their business keep their shops open, and carry on their trade, whilst their neighbours are closed. We expected to have had some trouble with the Chinese shopkeepers; but close attention to them, and several prosecutions, have had the effect of bringing them into line, and they now close their premises punctually at 1 o'clock, and give very little trouble.

There have been thirty-two prosecutions during the year, three under old Act and twenty-nine under new.

In conclusion, I have to regret that, owing to the advantage taken of the exemptions in the Act and the many law points raised in cases taken into Court, the successful working of the Act in this district has been, so far, very much retarded.

I have, &c.,

JAMES SHANAGHAN, Inspector of Factories.

E. Tregear, Esq., Chief Inspector of Factories.

GREYMOUTH.

SIR,—

Police-station, Greymouth, 31st March, 1895.

In compliance with Circular No. 16, of 10th April, 1895, I have the honour respectfully to report that there are thirty-two factories registered in this district as per Schedule C sent you.

The average wages for adults are £1 10s. per week; females, £1; young persons, from 10s. to 15s. per week. In the dressmaking the employes are principally apprentices, and receive no wages. The timber trade is on the increase, and the barque "Rangitiki" will take away from this port, about the 7th May next, 300,000ft. of timber, principally black-birch, for London. If this shipment turns out well, and good prices realised, the timber trade will be the means of giving employment to a good many. I believe many men are out of employment, and I am afraid it will come very hard on them this coming winter, which promises to be very severe, although, taking into consideration the large amount of money taken out of Greymouth by theatrical companies and race-meetings since the 1st January, I am inclined to think that the majority of the people are in fair pecuniary circumstances.

I have no remarks to make respecting certain industries, or the condition of workers, as no complaints have been made here. Neither can I make any suggestions on the existing labour Acts.

I have, &c.,

EDWARD STIRLING WHITE, Inspector of Factories.

E. Tregear, Esq., Chief Inspector of Factories.

SIR,—

Greymouth, 16th May, 1895.

With reference to the telegram received from you, I have the honour respectfully to report that there are thirty-two factories registered in this district, as follows: Two printing-offices, employing 21 males; two breweries, 4 males; one foundry, 23 males; four dressmakers, 15 females; four tailors, 7 males, 17 females; three carriage-makers, 7 males; two aerated-water makers, 5 males; three furniture-makers, 12 males; one sawmill, 10 males; one gasworks, 4 males; one railway workshop (registered in Wellington); three blacksmiths, 6 males; five bakeries, 12 males.