

1899.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR
(REPORT OF THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The SECRETARY, Department of Labour, to the Right Hon. the MINISTER of LABOUR.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, 10th June, 1899.

I have the honour to present herewith the eighth annual report of this department. It covers the late financial year—viz., from the 1st April, 1898, to the 31st March, 1899.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, Minister of Labour.

EDWARD TREGEAR, Secretary.

LABOUR.

THE steady upward tendency of trade and business from 1895 to 1897 has continued during the financial year ending the 31st March, 1899. The labour-market has kept pace in its records of employment with the general expansion of industry, even though part of this expansion may be due to improved machinery, increased facilities of transit, and extended markets. A phenomenally fine harvest corrected the balance that would have been depressed had the ruling low prices of wheat and other cereals been current with a poor yield of grain. Fortunately this was not the case, and so abundant was the supply that in several parts of the South Island the scarcity was of hands to gather in the crop and not of material to garner. The department continued its duty of assisting to bring the work and the worker together, and 2,115 men obtained work or received temporary advances of passages, &c., to enable them to reach employment. Of these, 937 were single and 1,178 married men, the latter having 4,759 persons dependent on them. The Woman's Branch of the department in Wellington has also found employment for 426 women and girls during the year. The summary of those for whom employment has been found hitherto is as follows:—

			Men.	Dependents.
June, 1891, to 31st March, 1892	...	...	2,593	4,729
1st April, 1892, to 31st March, 1893	...	...	3,874	7,802
1st April, 1893, to 31st March, 1894	...	...	3,371	8,002
1st April, 1894, to 31st March, 1895	...	...	3,030	8,883
1st April, 1895, to 31st March, 1896	...	...	2,871	8,424
1st April, 1896, to 31st March, 1897	...	...	1,718	4,719
1st April, 1897, to 31st March, 1898	...	...	2,035	4,928
1st April, 1898, to 31st March, 1899	...	...	2,115	4,759
			21,607	52,246