

1942.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

(REPORT OF THE).

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

REPORT.

THE SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF LABOUR.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Wellington, 23rd June, 1942.

I have the honour to present herewith the fifty-first annual report of this Department for the information of His Excellency the Governor-General, and to be laid before Parliament in compliance with the Labour Department Act, 1908, and the Factories Act, 1921-22. The report covers the financial year 1st April, 1941, to 31st March, 1942.

I have, &c.,

HENRY E. MOSTON,
Secretary of Labour.

The Hon. the Minister of Labour.

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS.

A decrease from 17,940 to 17,421 is disclosed in the number of premises registered under the Factories Act, 1921-22, but the number of persons employed shows an increase from 132,907 to 134,039. Statistics as to employees in factories are collected mainly in April in each year, and the figures quoted therefore mainly relate to April, 1941. In the case of shops, numbers are compiled from estimates furnished by Inspectors, these estimates being based on information secured during visits to shop premises. From these it is estimated that a reduction occurred in the number of persons employed (53,461 to 52,026).

Because of the continued mobilization of men of military age the number of men employed in factories declined from 82,316 to 80,469, while a decrease from 26,718 to 24,451 in the number employed in shops can be attributed to the same cause. On the other hand, the number of women employed in factories increased from 34,291 to 37,111 and the number employed in shops from 26,743 to 27,575. In recent months registration of a group of women became necessary under the National Service Emergency Regulations, and it can be expected that transfers to essential employments following registration will vary considerably the numbers quoted above. Already the employment of women has become established in many occupations previously restricted by custom or law to men, while extended employment of women has occurred in several trades—e.g., the canning department of meat-preserving works. Striking illustrations of the employment of women in jobs previously performed by men are the appearance of women drivers, tram conductors, railway porters, and postal delivery officials. The employment of women has in some industries been restricted or precluded by the provisions of awards, also by the prohibition of night-work by the Factories Act, 1921-22. Provision for shift-work for women operatives has now been introduced in appropriate cases. Variation of awards has been undertaken on the recommendation of the Industrial Emergency Council, which in considering this general question has adopted the principle of equal pay for equal work. Thus lower rates of pay for women have been fixed only where it has been shown that a lower volume of work was inevitable or the whole of a job could not be allotted to women. With a view to the absorption of