

MISCELLANEOUS.

The amount of labour in this district outside milking and shearing is small, and consists mainly of bushfelling and fencing, of which very little is being done at present.

I have, &c.,
WILLIAM GRAY,
Constable, Hunterville.

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Wanganui, 31st March, 1902.

I have the honour to present to you my report for the year ending the 31st March, 1902.

“THE FACTORIES ACT, 1894.”

Under this Act there were 126 factories and workrooms registered during the year, an increase of 5 on the previous year, employing 822 males and 174 females, making a total of 996, as against 801 males and 203 females, or a total of 1,004 hands, an increase of 21 males and a decrease of 29 females, or a total decrease of 8 persons.

Permits for young persons between the ages of fourteen and sixteen to work in factories or workrooms have been issued to 7 boys and 6 girls. Six boys under eighteen years of age and 150 females of various trades have worked overtime. The trades and hours worked are as follows:—

	Hours worked.		Number of Persons.	Total Hours.
	Male.	Female.		
Tailors (order)	...	760	51	760
Dressmakers	...	858	70	858
Printing and bookbinding	19	412	32	431
Milliners	...	11	2	11
Turners	17½	...	1	17½
Totals	...	...	156	2,077½

I am unable to give the amount of overtime worked by adult males, as most of them are piece-workers, and employers have not heretofore kept records of the overtime of this class of workers. Tailoring, cabinetmaking, and joinery are the principal trades adult males have worked overtime at.

Seven accidents have been reported during the year, 4 of which were at planing-machines, and in each case fingers were lost. Factory-owners in this district have their fixed circular saws and emery wheels fairly well guarded, but there seems to be no way at present of properly guarding planing-machines, and, as the smaller factory-owners allow lads to work them, I am afraid that accidents of this class will often occur.

The factories and workrooms are generally clean, well lighted, and comfortable, while the sanitary arrangements are, with two exceptions, all that can be desired. Several new and up-to-date workrooms have been erected since my last report. The order-work for tailors and dress-makers has been exceedingly good, and, so far as I can learn, the work has been continuous.

There has been one prosecution, with a conviction, during the year.

SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

This Act, with the exception I mentioned in my last report—namely, that some drapery firms very often have their male and female employees back to work at night, an evil which should be stopped—is fully appreciated by employers and employees. Shop-owners, with the above exception, are kind and considerate to their hands. The sanitary arrangements and sitting-accommodation of nearly all the business premises are in conformity with the Act.

There have been two prosecutions; a fine was imposed in one case, the other was dismissed.

LABOUR.

Seventy-one applicants for work have been registered, one-half of whom did not call a second time at the office; employment was found for most of the remainder.

It has been a very fair year for the unskilled labourer, and those who were energetic had not to wait long for work. Steady tradesmen of all classes have had a fairly good year, a great many being fortunate enough to make full time. At times the supply has been slightly in excess of the demand, but the prosperous small towns along the line have generally absorbed the excess.

EMPLOYMENT OF BOYS AND GIRLS WITHOUT PAYMENT PREVENTION ACT.

This Act, until it was merged into “The Factories Act, 1901,” was duly observed by factory-owners.

SERVANTS’ REGISTRY OFFICES.

There are 7 licensed registry offices in this town, all of which are conducted in a creditable manner.