

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

The registry offices in this district are very well conducted, due in a great measure to the careful inquiries that are always made as to the fitness of the applicants for licenses. This year 3 new licenses have been granted, and 5 offices have ceased to exist, leaving 17 offices still doing business in this district. Only a few complaints from certain clients have been brought under my notice, which, upon investigation, were found to be of a trivial character. On the whole the requirements of this Act are well observed.

In ending this report I again wish to express my gratitude to all that my somewhat difficult and at times unpleasant duties have brought me into frequent and personal contact with for their invariable kindness, and also to the office staff for the faithful way they performed their duties, and for the assistance they at all times rendered me in my official work.

I have, &c.,

JOHN LOMAS,

Inspector of Factories.

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

WHANGAREI.

SIR,—

Police-station, Whangarei, 7th April, 1907.

I beg to report that during the year I registered 61 factories, in which 206 males and 65 females were employed, and 45 shops, in which 95 males and 25 females were employed.

One shopkeeper was convicted and fined for failing to close his shop on the statutory half-holiday.

There were no prosecutions under the Factories Act.

The business people report having had a prosperous year. The building trade has been very busy during the year, all local men fully employed; and a number of men from other parts, including carpenters, bricklayers, and painters, and handy men, obtained employment as soon as they arrived. All other trades—engineering, blacksmithing, wheelwrighting, saddlery, dressmaking, tailoring, bootmaking, &c.—were kept busy throughout the year, very good business being done.

There was a steady demand for good unskilled workmen throughout the year; any man worth his salt could obtain employment.

The gumfields still continue to employ a large number of men.

I have, &c.,

THOS. J. DRAKE,

Inspector of Factories.

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

GISBORNE.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Gisborne, 3rd April, 1907.

I have the honour to submit to you my annual report as to the working of the various Acts and awards, and the conditions of labour generally throughout this district for the year ended the 31st March, 1907.

FACTORIES ACT.

During the year 147 factories have been registered, an increase of 13 on the preceding year, employing 709 males and 115 females.

The total amount of overtime worked in factories was 6,250 hours—viz., 73 males worked 4,575 hours, and 65 females 1,675 hours. Six certificates were granted to young persons under the age of sixteen years—3 males and 3 females.

During the year 40 accidents have been reported and inquired into. The majority were freezing-workers, with cuts, bruises, and poisoned and torn fingers, &c. Unfortunately one accident was of a serious nature, and proved fatal, being caused by an inhalation of gas from a power gas-producing plant. It is always strictly seen that exposed pulleys, belting, and gearing-wheels are effectually guarded, also that the employees are protected by insurance under the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act.

I feel pleased to state that this Act has worked very smoothly during the year, only two prosecutions having been taken.

Some little trouble arises through employers not keeping proper dates, or making full inquiries when employees enter their service; and, although I do not think it is the intention to evade the law, some instances have been found where the wages have not been increased at the proper time; when investigated the arrears have been paid. This difficulty is now greatly overcome by insisting on employment-books being kept and certificates produced. The factories generally throughout the district are clean and well kept, and with the introduction of the water-supply soon to be completed, I anticipate an improvement from a sanitary point of view.

SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

There are now on the register 164 shops in this district, and I am pleased to state that during the past year everything has worked very well; there has not been any serious cause for complaint against any of the tradesmen.

The amount of overtime worked represents 813 hours—34 males working 608 hours, and 8 females 205 hours.