

STAFF CHANGES.

During the year there were several changes in the staff. Some were made in connection with the general scheme of retrenchment in the Civil Service, and fifteen of our officers throughout New Zealand were affected—four Inspectors of Factories, five clerks, and six cadets. Four of the cadets were afterwards taken into the service of other Departments. In addition to the retrenchment of the above officers, three branches of the Department were closed—those at Oamaru, Taihape, and Ashburton—and the work is now again conducted by the police. The following transfers of Inspectors of Factories have taken place during the year: Westbrooke, W. H., from Oamaru to Gisborne; Bailey, R. T., from Taihape to Auckland; Lightfoot, G. H., from Ashburton to Timaru; and Carmody, D., from Gisborne to Wanganui.

Several of the cadets in the secondary towns have been transferred to the Head Office, and their places have been taken by temporary clerks appointed for the purpose.

In addition to these changes, four officers were retired, owing to having reached the age-limit.

I desire, in closing, to express my thanks to the Head Office staff, the Inspectors, and others throughout the Dominion for the helpful assistance rendered during the year.

The good feeling generally evidenced towards the Department and its work is a tribute to the tactful and able manner in which the various officers have performed their work.

J. LOMAS,

Chief Inspector of Factories and Deputy Registrar of Industrial Unions.

The Hon. the Minister of Labour, Wellington.

REPORTS OF LOCAL INSPECTORS OF FACTORIES AND AGENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR.

AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Auckland, 19th April, 1910.

I have the honour to submit for your consideration my report for the year ending 31st March, 1910.

THE LABOUR MARKET.

I have to report that during the early months of the period under review there was very general depression in all branches of labour. The building trade was very quiet, and numbers of men in all branches of the trade were out of work. The depression was not confined to the building trade, but was apparent in all industrial pursuits. The unskilled labour market was also in a bad condition, and it was very difficult to deal with the numbers of men who were clamouring for work, till the end of June, when instructions were received to send 100 men to railway-work in the Gisborne district. Since then the condition of labour in all its branches has been steadily improving, and it is now in a very satisfactory condition. There is every indication that the building trade will have a very busy winter season, as there are several large buildings in the course of construction, which must necessarily employ a large number of tradesmen. There are also the extensive drainage and street-formation works in hand, which will employ large numbers of the labouring-classes, so that altogether the prospects for a busy and prosperous year for the worker seem exceedingly good; there is, however, an exception in the case of the iron trade, the outlook for which is not encouraging. There is something wrong with this industry that an outsider cannot be expected to understand. There does not appear to be sufficient encouragement given to the New Zealand iron trade by the many corporations in the Dominion, who yearly import large quantities of gas and water pipes and other material which should very easily be made in the Dominion at almost the same cost. If this work were carried out in New Zealand, our own men would be employed and their wages spent here, instead of their being at least one-third of their time idle, while the money they should earn is sent out of the Dominion.

During the year business men have complained of the scarcity of ready money. That no doubt in a large measure due to the fact that so many men with families to support were thrown out of work through the general depression in the early part of the year, and got behind, and they have now a "dead horse" to pull along.

Throughout the course of the year 1,599 men were assisted through this office—viz., 358 married men with 1,224 persons dependent upon them, and 1,241 single men. Of this number, 744 were sent to private employment, and 855 to railway and other Government works. Of the above number, 1,124 belonged to the North Island, 76 to South Island, 37 came from the Commonwealth, 334 from Great Britain, and 28 from elsewhere. Also 36 wives and 69 children have been assisted.

It is satisfactory to note that nearly half of the men assisted have been sent to private employment. Whilst the interest of the worker is always kept in view, every care is taken to give satisfaction to private employers, and I have no doubt that this branch of the Department will grow in popularity with private employers each year.