

with the Act. In the majority of cases requiring attention it is pleasing to say that the notices served on owners were cheerfully and promptly complied with. In some cases, owing to various contingencies arising, an extension of time was granted within which to provide the necessary buildings, &c.

Proceedings were taken against three stationholders during the year. Two of these cases have been decided and one is still pending. In one case a fine of £5 was inflicted, with a penalty of 10s. per day during the time the default continued; in addition the costs amounted to £8 7s. 9d. In the other case the occupier was ordered to comply with the notice, and to pay costs amounting to £1 17s. In a few instances permission was given to erect tent accommodation, the Inspector having first made a thorough examination as to the suitability of the locality for their use. The work involved upon the Inspectors in visiting stations in some of the districts was very considerable, and often necessitated an absence of from two to five days from headquarters.

A number of complaints regarding inadequate accommodation provided was received from various sources during the year. These complaints were, as far as possible, investigated, and in the majority of instances it was proved that they were trivial. Before complaints are made to the Department it would be advisable for those submitting them to make themselves thoroughly conversant with the conditions existing, as it would obviate a good deal of wasted time and expense to the Department.

In regard to visits paid to farm accommodation, several have been made during the year. In the majority of cases the comfort of agricultural labourers has been well considered. Where alterations or additions have been ordered by Inspectors they have generally been complied with without question. In other cases there have been reasonable grounds for delay. It was found in connection with farm-accommodation inspection that the farmer was not always at fault, as the accommodation provided was adequate enough if the premises were kept in a cleanly state by the farm labourers themselves. It was obvious that a few minutes spent each day by the occupants in tidying up would greatly add to the appearance and comfort of the accommodation provided.

In respect to the accommodation provided for workers employed at sawmills and flax-mills: Following upon the amendment to the Act passed last session, regulations have been prepared which should materially benefit these workers. Immediately they are gazetted it is proposed to carry out a systematic inspection of all sawmills and flax-mills in the Dominion to see that the terms of the regulations are fully understood and complied with.

In the next report a comprehensive statement will appear as to the inspections made. The visits made last year by several Inspectors and myself to some of these mills show that there is real and urgent need for improved conditions.

WAGES PROTECTION AND CONTRACTORS' LIENS ACT.

There were five prosecutions under this Act, four of which were against one contractor for failing to pay the entire amount of wages in money. He was convicted and fined in all four cases. The other case was against a hotelkeeper for paying an assistant by means of a crossed cheque. A conviction and fine were obtained in this instance also.

LICENSING AMENDMENT ACT, 1910. BARMAIDS' REGISTRATION ACT, 1912.

The latter Act, extending the time within which registration of barmaids may be effected, was largely availed of, and at the date of this report nearly two hundred applications have been received. Every care has been and will be taken by the Department to see that the required service as barmaid has been worked before registration will be granted. As the time for receiving applications does not close until the 1st June next, the work will probably not be completed until towards the end of that month.

THE "SEDGWICK BOYS."

It is pleasing to be able to report another satisfactory year of progress in respect to the boys brought to New Zealand in January, 1911, by Mr. T. E. Sedgwick. As you are aware, these fifty boys were collected by Mr. Sedgwick for farm-work in New Zealand; twenty-five of them came from Liverpool and twenty-five from London. Most of them were totally unacquainted with farm-work, and were sons of poor parents residing in the crowded areas of the two great English cities mentioned.

In last year's report I mentioned that after fourteen months' experience I was able to classify the lads as follows: (a) Thirty-seven who have made good progress and have given the Department no trouble; (b) six whose conduct has not been entirely satisfactory, but who we expect will turn out all right eventually; and (c) seven whose behaviour has been so unsatisfactory that it is unlikely they will prove successful. Following the same classification after another twelve months' experience the result is not quite so good, as follows: (a) Thirty-five; (b) five; (c) nine. (The remaining boy died in the Wanganui Hospital of meningitis, after a short illness. Within a