

has been experienced in getting suitable female labour for domestic service, and, indeed, for various manufacturing occupations. Many who had decided before leaving England to reside in this district were offered employment on their arrival in Wellington, the first port of call, and in consequence the time taken in making arrangements for their employment here has been wasted. A separate detailed report is furnished by Mrs. Way, the officer in charge of the Women's Department here.

#### SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

Careful supervision has been made under this Act to see that its provisions have been properly carried out, especially in respect to the charges made for engagements. Care has been taken also to see that new applicants for licenses are fit and proper persons to conduct servants' registry offices. The return taken last year from the books of the registry-office keepers disclosed the fact that the employees generally were charged an unfair proportion of the fees payable for engagements; indeed, in many cases it was shown that many of the employers had not been charged the full fee prescribed, and in other cases they had failed to pay anything at all. The regulations just gazetted providing for a more equitable payment by the parties to engagements should give very satisfactory results, and will tend to compel registry-office keepers to make a charge on the employers for engagements made. During the year 3 licenses were cancelled, 7 were renewed, and 6 fresh licenses were issued, making a total this year of 13 registry-office keepers in Christchurch.

I renew my suggestion that provision should be made in any future amendment of the Act for the registers kept by registry-office keepers to show dates of engagements, also the fees paid by workers and employers. The present book of engagements as laid down by the Act does not make such provision.

#### GENERAL.

During the year under review the correspondence has been considerable; 5,659 letters, 9,900 circulars, and 890 telegrams were sent outwards.

In conclusion, I have to thank the officers of other departments, also the officials of the various unions, for their courtesy and assistance in supplying information when required. It is satisfactory to note that the rulings or opinions given by the Department have generally been accepted by the persons concerned.

I have, &c.,

W. H. HAGGER,

Inspector of Factories.

The Secretary of Labour and Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

#### DUNEDIN.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Dunedin, 21st April, 1913.

I have the honour to submit my report on the work of this Department, together with a brief summary of the condition of trade during the year ended 31st March, 1913.

The year has been one of steady progress; trade has been well maintained and employment in nearly all skilled industries has been plentiful.

The building trades have been busy, and several large and imposing edifices which were in hand a year ago have been completed, and are now in use. At present there is a number of large buildings in course of construction, some of which are for business premises, and others are for the purpose of education, recreation, and amusement, as well as a number being built for residential purposes. The only branch of this industry that suffered through real slackness was stonemasonry. Some of the masons were unable to find employment at their trade for several months, but they are now in regular work. There were others, of course, who lost time on account of wet weather, and through shifting from one job to another, but there is nothing to indicate that the past year has been worse than usual in that respect.

The engineering and iron trades, with the exception of fitting and turning, have had a satisfactory year; although there has been no great rush, employment has been regular. The complaint often heard in this trade is that the industry is not sufficiently protected through the Customs to enable firms to compete with many stock lines now imported.

Boot and shoe manufacturing has been busy, and there has been an almost continuous demand for labour, especially for females for the upper-closing department. There is no doubt that if hands were available considerably more trade could be undertaken. Other branches of the leather trade, such as saddle and harness making, leather-bag and portmanteau making, have maintained a good steady trade.

Woollen-mills and hosiery-works have been very busy, and the full limit of overtime allowed by law has been worked. This industry is cramped for the want of female labour, especially the hosiery portion of it.

The clothing-manufacturing trades have had a very satisfactory year. The factories have been much busier than usual, owing to Government contracts for military uniforms; but apart from this special work, I understand that orders came to hand more freely than usual, with the result that some of them had to be reluctantly refused. The order-tailoring line went through its usual busy and slack periods, but, on account of the scarcity of male workers, there was very little lost time during the slack seasons. Dressmaking and millinery, like tailoring, also have their busy and slack periods, but in the main employment appears to have been fairly regular.

Felt- and straw-hat making has provided steady employment for all engaged in this calling.