

Overtime warrants were issued to 15 employers to allow 66 women and boys to work 1,753 extra hours. The amount of overtime worked has considerably decreased this year, employers having endeavoured to do away with the overtime practice as much as possible.

Certificates of fitness to work in factories were issued to 23 young persons—18 males and 5 females under sixteen years of age.

Accidents occurring in factories have been few, and none of them were of a very serious nature. Machinery and belting protection is now more regularly enforced and provided for than formerly, and the risk of accident is thus considerably minimized.

No prosecutions were taken during the year, the different clauses of the Act being so very well known by both employers and employees that a breach rarely occurs.

The factories throughout the district have been visited from time to time during the year, and in several instances sanitary conditions have been improved; in this connection the Health Officers for the district have been of great assistance. The factories generally are in a very fair condition.

SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

During the year 182 shops have been registered, which is an increase of 5 over the previous period. The number of employees returned total 390—viz., 268 males and 122 females. The wages paid totalled approximately £35,000.

Overtime permits were obtained by 16 employers to allow 103 assistants—viz., 64 males and 39 females—to work 1,344 hours. This shows a considerable decrease on the number of the previous year.

Occupiers of shops are now well aware of the provisions of the Act requiring a wages and time book to be kept where one or more assistants are employed; very little trouble is now experienced in this connection. Where "requisitions" (by which a majority of the shopkeepers fix the closing-hours in the respective trades) are in force punctuality in closing is very well adhered to.

Practically the whole of the shops have been visited from time to time during the year, and the general arrangements have been found fairly convenient and satisfactory. Special attention has been directed towards seating-accommodation for female shop-assistants.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT.

Several alleged breaches of awards were fully investigated; they were not found to be serious.

In two or three instances under the Shearers' award differences of opinion arose at some sheds throughout the Wairarapa district in connection with rates of wages for shed hands, but on advice from the Department an adjustment was at once made in accordance with the award, and satisfactorily to all parties.

After the Carpenters and Joiners' award came into force it was found that minimum rates of wages were not being paid by some country builders. Owing to the award being new the employers were allowed to rectify matters by paying any arrears that were due; £12 10s. 11d. was recovered in this way through this office.

In connection with other awards, similar adjustments were made with regard to overtime due to workers, the total paid amounting to over £60.

Although there is quite a number of awards where provision is made for permits for under-rate workers, it is satisfactory to state that only 3 have been granted during the period.

The necessary inspection in connection with this Act and the awards has entailed a very considerable amount of travelling and investigation throughout the various parts of the district.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

Two servants' registry offices continue to conduct business in this district. No direct complaint has been received of any irregularity, and, according to their books, the fees charged do not exceed those prescribed under the Act.

SHEARERS' AND AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT.

A considerable amount of inspection has been carried out in connection with the accommodation of shearers. The most distant stations of the district have been visited and reported upon. In several cases improvements were ordered and effected during the current season, even while shearing was being carried out; in others the alterations are required to be completed before the coming season. The accommodation throughout this district has been much improved generally, and there are numbers of stations where the conditions are excellent. It cannot, however, be denied that there are also some stations where the accommodation requires considerable improvement, and steps are being taken accordingly.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT.

Workers have regularly availed themselves of the opportunity of seeking advice from this office on the various clauses of this Act, and full particulars were furnished.

Two agreements with respect to compensation for injury received have been arrived at and certified to by me under the statutory provisions made in 1911 to this effect; the sum involved and paid amounted to £253 1s. 11d.

WORKERS' DWELLINGS ACT.

It is anticipated that the provisions made by the above Act for assisting workers to obtain homes will soon be availed of in this district. A block comprising over 9 acres of land, excellently situated within the Borough of Masterton, has been acquired for the purpose of erecting workers' dwellings. Applications are now being made by *bona fide* workers.