

CONCLUSION.

During the year I have paid frequent visits to Waimate, Temuka, Geraldine, Fairlie, St. Andrew's, Pleasant Point, Washdyke, &c., in connection with the various labour laws, and I desire to express my thanks to employers, employees, and others for their courtesy and assistance in carrying out my duties.

I have, &c.,

GEO. H. LIGHTFOOT,

Inspector of Factories.

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

OAMARU.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Oamaru, 25th April, 1913.

I beg to submit my annual report on the administration of the labour laws throughout the North Otago district for the year ending 31st March, 1913.

Trade generally has been fairly brisk during the year, and at no time has the unemployment difficulty become acute. This is shown in the fact that it was not found necessary last winter to send any of the workers away to Government works elsewhere, there being sufficient employment in the district for all applicants.

The dairying industry has experienced a record season, which has, to a large extent, compensated for the average light yield in grain crops.

The recent strike of slaughtermen was felt early in the season, but the freezing-works are now working at full pressure. Considerable loss to the district was caused by the strike of slaughtermen at the local freezing-works in June last, when 30,000 sheep had to be railed away to other works.

Since my last report considerable improvements have been made to a number of the business houses here, and this has added very much to the appearance of the town.

FACORIES ACT.

The number of factories registered was 166. Several of them have been much improved and enlarged during the year.

Forty-five certificates of fitness to work in factories have been issued to 25 boys and 20 girls under sixteen years of age. Of this number, 7 boys and 8 girls had passed the Sixth Standard.

The amount of overtime worked by boys under sixteen years of age and women was 3,927 hours, as against 2,494 hours for last year.

Five accidents were reported and inquired into; only one of them resulted in permanent injury. In this case the Department has seen that the amount of compensation paid was in accordance with the Act.

Arrears of wages amounting to £17 5s. 1d. have been collected, and paid to workers.

Although a number of warnings had to be given, it was not found necessary to lay any informations under this Act.

SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

The number of shops registered was 179.

Overtime permits were issued to 63 assistants, who worked 1,124 hours, as against 686 hours worked last year.

It has been necessary to give a number of warnings to shopkeepers during the year, but it was not deemed necessary to take any cases into Court.

Arrears of wages amounting to £12 1s. 3d. have been collected from hotel and restaurant keepers, and paid over to workers; and from ordinary shops £7 10s. has been collected and paid to the assistants.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT.

The provisions of this Act have been fairly well observed during the period under review, but in 2 cases action had to be taken before the Magistrates' Court for enforcement of the law—viz., in one case a shearers left work without due cause before completion of his contract, and in the other 13 slaughtermen struck work at the Eveline Freezing-works whilst bound by an award. In both cases convictions were obtained and fines inflicted. Three cases were settled out of Court, and arrears of wages amounting to £29 0s. 1d. collected, and paid to workers.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There were 3 offices registered, all of which were well conducted, and carried out the requirements of the law satisfactorily.

SHEARERS' AND AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT.

Last year a number of sheep runs were visited for the purpose of inspecting accommodation, &c., provided for the shearers. Seven requisitions had to be served upon owners requiring alterations and improvements, all of which have been duly attended to without recourse to the law.

CONCLUSION.

During the year I have paid visits to Enfield, Kakanui, Papakaio, Weston, Pukeuri, Awamoko, Totara, and other parts of the district, and desire to thank both employers and employees for assistance given to me when carrying out my duties.

I have, &c.,

J. C. YORKE,

Inspector of Factories.

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