

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF THE WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT BRANCHES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

AUCKLAND.

Miss Morrison reports:—

During the period just closed 3,005 applications were received and dealt with. Of these, 1,950 were from employers and 1,055 from women desiring employment. 658 women—63 married and 595 single—were assisted to employment.

The office has been extensively used as a centre for obtaining information and advice by the working women of Auckland and by immigrants landing from overseas. Included in the above-mentioned total were 121 immigrants, who were placed in suitable employment during the year.

WELLINGTON.

Miss Bremner reports:—

During the year there have been 920 applications from employers and 768 engagements made, comprising 251 married and 517 single women. The total number assisted shows an appreciable increase of 119 over the previous year: this is due, no doubt, to the fact that the office has become more widely known and its benefit is recognized by both workers and mistresses.

All classes of women workers have been in steady demand throughout the year, and quite a large number of engagements were made in employments outside domestic pursuits.

CHRISTCHURCH.

Mrs. Way reports:—

There were 1,688 applications received from employers and 366 from employees. Of the latter, 324 have been placed in suitable positions, 72 of whom were married and 252 single women or widows. The number assisted is less than last year, due to the increasing difficulty in securing domestic help and to the fact that there are more avenues of employment for girls and women. In addition a large number of girls left Christchurch to go to Auckland for the Exhibition season.

There is a growing desire on the part of these workers to obtain work which is subject to awards of the Arbitration Court, as their duties are then more defined and the hours shorter.

Wages have been much higher this year, but in spite of this only a small percentage of help could be obtained in comparison with the demand, and it has been almost an impossibility to obtain help for the country, the tendency on the part of domestics being to get employment in or near the city.

New arrivals are eagerly sought for, but, unfortunately, very few of them are available here, owing to a very large percentage obtaining positions in the North Island nearer to their ports of arrival. Those who do call here are generally placed at once in good positions. Some of them, however, think they can demand £1 10s. or £2 per week in private houses.

DUNEDIN.

Miss Hale reports:—

During the period just closed 1,063 applications were registered—viz., 762 from employers and 301 from employees. 255 women—40 married and 215 single—were assisted; 52 of them were found employment on more than one occasion.

The demand for female domestic workers appears to be impossible to supply. The urgent demand for the class of maid who is willing to undertake the functions of general assistant rather than the maid who is skilled in one department or another is very keen indeed. This refers particularly to the requirements of the private employer.

NELSON.

Miss Emerson reports:—

The year has been a most favourable one for women workers. There has been a demand much in excess of the supply for domestic workers, dressmakers, tailoresses, factory workers, and fruit and hop pickers. The shortage of domestic workers is most serious. The wages offered for competent help are still increasing, and if the hours could be more clearly defined and the position of a domestic worker raised to a more dignified standing, one is inclined to think that a great deal of the present difficulty might be overcome.

Jam-preserving and confectionery factories report, as usual, that work has been much hampered on account of the shortage of women workers.

The pea, fruit, and hop picking industries are making rapid strides in this district. From five hundred to six hundred women and girls were employed during the past season in these industries.

During the year 546 applications were received from employers and 146 from workers: 143 of the latter were placed at suitable employment.