

## EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF FACTORIES AND AWARDS AND AGENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR.

### AUCKLAND.

The Officer in Charge (Mr. W. Newton) reports:—

*General.*—The year covered by this report has been an exceedingly eventful one. The strike of waterside workers in Wellington resulted in a number of sympathetic strikes in Auckland of about seven thousand men in various trades. These strikes lasted about two months.

The building and allied trades have been very steady, and tradesmen have been kept fairly well employed in all branches except painting. A number of large business premises have been erected, but the number of residences built has not perhaps been as great as in some previous years. In the clothing trades business has again been very good, although there has not been such an insistent cry about the dearth of female labour as was the case in former years. The reason given is that more importation is taking place, especially in respect to shirts and men's ready-made suits.

*Factories Act.*—The provisions of this Act have been very well observed. The drainage system which is now nearing completion will undoubtedly improve the sanitary conditions of the workrooms in factories. The ventilation in workrooms is also receiving constant attention from Inspectors.

A number of new factory premises have been erected, which are greatly in advance of those previously occupied as regards light, ventilation, air-space, &c.

There were very few occasions where it was found necessary to prosecute, only six cases being taken during the year.

*Shops and Offices Act.*—Every attention has been paid to see that the provisions of the Act have been observed, particularly in connection with the rates of wages paid, ventilation, sanitary and seating accommodation. These have been fairly well observed. The provisions of the Act relating to the keeping of time and wages books have, on the whole, been satisfactory, although it has been found necessary to prosecute a number of occupiers for failure in this respect.

The change of the statutory closing-day from Wednesday to Saturday in June, 1913, by a poll of the electors disorganized matters for a time, and some shopkeepers suffered loss of trade thereby, but the complaints on that account are now reduced to a minimum.

Great difficulty is experienced in carrying out the law relating to the closing of shops by "requisition" of the majority of the shopkeepers engaged in the respective trades. I refer to those shops which stock as a side line a commodity which if carried as a principal stock would necessitate closing in accordance with the "requisition." For instance, one requisition provides that tobacconists must close at the hour specified therein, but other traders, such as grocers, who sell tobacco as a side line may remain open, although they may not sell tobacco after the hour fixed by the requisition. There are numerous complaints that sales are being effected after hours, but it is impossible to obtain a conviction except where a sale is proved, which is difficult. Opinions are fairly unanimous amongst tradesmen who employ labour that it would be better if all shops were compelled to close not later than 6 p.m. on four evenings of the week. Some firms have recently decided to close at 5.30 p.m. on four evenings during winter months and 12.30 p.m. on the statutory closing-day.

The Shops and Offices Amendment Act, 1913, reducing the hours of boys and women employed in hotels from fifty-eight to fifty-six, is now generally well observed.

It has been found necessary to take a total of seventy-nine cases for breaches of the provisions of this Act. A majority of these were in connection with employing assistants after hours.

*Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.*—The provisions of the Act and the awards and industrial agreements made under same continue to be generally well observed, most of the offences discovered being due to inadvertence. During the year 420 complaints were inquired into in respect to breaches of awards or industrial agreements. The largest number under any one award was in respect to hotel workers.

*Servants' Registry Offices Act.*—There are now twenty-three licensed registry-offices in Auckland, an increase of nine on the previous year. The new scale of fees chargeable to servants and employers which came into force on the 2nd March, 1914, proved much more workable than the previous one, and the Act is now working smoothly.

*Men's Employment Branch.*—Employment has, on the whole, been good throughout the year. Work has for the most part been fairly plentiful, and at no period of the year can it be said that acute unemployment existed. At various periods it has been impossible to supply sufficient men to fill applications for farm workers, milkers, &c. Altogether 858 persons were sent to work.

### WELLINGTON.

The Acting Inspector in Charge (Mr. R. T. Bailey) reports:—

*General.*—The conditions of trade and employment have been fairly satisfactory. The building trades have maintained a steady progress throughout the year. In the woodworking trades,