

There were 370 permits issued to young persons under sixteen years of age—viz., 170 boys and 200 girls. Of the boys, 46 passed Standard IV, 46 Standard V, 76 Standard VI, and 2 Standard VII. Of the girls, 72 passed Standard IV, 54 Standard V, 71 Standard VI, and 3 Standard VII. In each case care is taken to have dates of birth verified by the Registrar, and to see school standard certificates.

#### *Accidents.*

There were 79 accidents reported during the year, 2 were fatal, 5 were of a serious nature, and the remaining 72 were slight, consisting chiefly of cuts and bruises incidental to employment in factories where machinery is used, and necessitating absence from work for a week or so. In all cases inquiries are made, and if anything can be done to prevent the recurrence of such accidents it is attended to at once.

#### *Overtime.*

4,027 persons have worked 124,740 hours overtime—viz., 1,622 males have worked 64,059 and 2,405 females and boys worked 60,681 hours. Every care has been taken to see that the ninety-hours limit for women and boys has not been exceeded. Particulars of trade and hours worked in each is given in separate return (see page ).

#### *Prosecutions.*

Ten cases were brought before the Stipendiary Magistrate's Court; convictions were obtained in eight, and two were dismissed.

Arrears of wages due to employees under section 33 of the principal Act and section 2 of the amended Act have been paid without recourse to the Courts as follows: Eleven firms paid sums amounting to £75 18s. 7d. This money was due chiefly for deductions erroneously made for holidays, and was promptly paid up on representation being made that it was wrongfully deducted; the balance was for failing to pay annual increases promptly when due. In reference to section 2 of the amended Act of 1905: shortly after the Act came into force inquiries were made and several women over twenty years of age who had worked the required four years in a factory and were receiving less than 17s. per week, were at once advanced to the legal rate of pay. In a few cases the employers said the women were not worth the increased wages and discharged them.

#### SHOPS AND OFFICES ACTS, 1904-5.

These Acts are working very smoothly; in fact, there are now very few restrictions imposed by the Act. One feature is very noticeable—viz., that the small shopkeeper takes full advantage of the half-hour's grace allowed, especially on Saturday night, and keeps his employees till 9.30 p.m. One serious defect in the Act is that section 4 provides that permits be obtained before overtime is worked; it also provides that overtime be paid for, but no provision is made for an overtime-book being kept. Section 27 certainly provides for extra-time book, but that applies to the office sections of the Act. I have experienced some difficulty in trying to ascertain what the assistants are paid for overtime, and in two cases had to give it up, because I could get no information from either employer or assistants. During the year the chemists in the city decided by a majority to requisition the Minister to fix closing-hours under section 21. Some trouble was experienced in bringing some who did not sign the requisition into line, and four persons were fined by the Stipendiary Magistrate for failing to observe the provisions of the *Gazette* notice; since then they have been closing satisfactorily.

There have been sixteen cases brought before the Court, and convictions were secured in fifteen cases, and one was dismissed.

Overtime has been worked as follows: 492 men have worked 5,710 hours, and 288 females have worked 1,922 hours.

#### SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There is practically no trouble with this Act; it is working peacefully and there are rarely any complaints. During the year one person has been called on to refund a fee of 5s. in a case where an irregularity occurred in engaging a servant for a country employer. There are nineteen offices registered in the district.

#### INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT.

The inspection of awards is being very carefully carried on, mainly by Mr. Hagger, Assistant Inspector, who is a most tactful and painstaking officer; consequently we have had absolutely no friction with either parties concerned during the year, whilst an enormous amount of inspection and inquiries have been attended to. I have had no business before the Court since taking charge of the district, though I have several cases pending.

Mr. Hagger, having had business in the Court, has reported so fully that it is unnecessary for me to dwell on the subject further. The return attached shows all cases settled on your approval without approaching the Court. (See page .)

I cannot close this report without thanking Dr. Finch, the District Health Officer, and his staff for the cheerful manner in which they render assistance in connection with sanitary matters in the district, also the officers of my own staff for their assistance cheerfully given, and to all with whom my duties have brought me into contact for their uniform courtesy and ready attention to any instructions it has been necessary to issue.

I have, &c.,

JAMES SHANAGHAN,  
Inspector of Factories.

Edward Tregear, Esq., Chief Inspector, Wellington.