

being started; large tracts of land are being settled or reclaimed, including a large portion of swamp ground; and with another such year as the past I am sure the Napier district should be proud of her position in the Dominion.

In conclusion, I desire to express my appreciation of the courteous treatment I have received at all times from employers and employees with whom I have come in contact; even those whom I have been compelled to prosecute have been most obliging. I also desire to thank yourself and the headquarters staff, and especially the visiting Inspectors, for the kindly assistance and consideration I have at all times received in carrying out my various duties.

I have, &c.,

W. J. CULVER,

Inspector of Factories.

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

DANNEVIRKE.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Dannevirke, 13th April, 1908.

I beg to submit my annual report for the year ending 31st March, 1908.

FACTORIES ACT.

There were 76 factories registered this year, employing 273 males and 39 females, and 11 males and no females under sixteen years of age; making a total of 323—a decrease of factories registered from last year of 6, and a decrease of workers (males, 157, and females, 5) of 162. This is accounted for by the fact that sawmilling, which has been the principal industry here for many years past, has almost disappeared, the milling bush being cut out where numbers of mills were in operation.

Certificates of fitness to work in factories were issued to 2 boys under sixteen years.

Overtime warrants were issued in the tailoring and dressmaking trades. Total overtime worked, 72½ hours.

There were 2 prosecutions—namely, one for failing to keep an overtime-book; conviction followed: and the same person was also charged with employing an employee for more than forty-eight hours in one week; at the Court's suggestion the charge was withdrawn.

Two accidents were reported during the year, neither very serious.

SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

The shops close, by virtue of a gazetted requisition under section 21 from a majority of the shopkeepers, at 6 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays; on Wednesdays at 12 noon, and Saturdays at 10 p.m.

The legal weekly half-holiday has been well observed.

There were 2 prosecutions against one person for employing two assistants for more than fifty-two hours, excluding meal-times, in one week. A conviction followed on one charge, and at the Court's suggestion the second charge was withdrawn, being the first prosecutions under this heading in this district.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There were 3 licensed registry offices, one of which closed during the year.

I have had a few complaints under the above heading from those sent to employment, and from employers applying and being supplied with unsuitable employees, but after investigation it was found that no serious inconvenience resulted to either, and no offences were disclosed.

LABOUR.

The sawmilling industry has been on the decline in this district, but all the sawmillers have secured milling rights in other bush districts, mostly along the line of the North Island Main Trunk Railway, and in closing here, after cutting out, removed their plant and employees to their new field of activity.

Sawmilling leases over bush Native lands having expired, and in some cases having been arranged and acquired by the Government, considerable areas have been opened for settlement; and have been surveyed, roaded, bridged, balloted for, and selected, and this new state of circumstances is still going on, giving full employment to both skilled and unskilled labour in the branches indicated.

The exit of the sawmiller and the advent of the settler, being gradual, has neither disturbed labour nor business to a great extent. No man willing to work has experienced any difficulty in obtaining employment, and business has been solid and steady; and when the whole of the lands in this district which were held under sawmilling rights are roaded and settled this town and district should have a good prospect.

I have, &c.,

A. CRUICKSHANK,

Inspector of Factories.

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.