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LABOR IN NEW ZEALAND.

There is much interest and perhaps instruction in the report submitted to the State Department by Mr. John D. Connolly the United States consul at Auckland, upon the labor laws of the far-away colony of New Zealand. The consul shows that that country has taken the lead in the effort to solve by legislation the questions that have perplexed the present generation. Though many of the laws that have been placed upon the statute books of New Zea-

land during the last few years have been characterized, says the consul, as "socialistic" and "revolutionary," they are all working admirably, giving the utmost general satisfaction. The tendency of the legislation has been to reach the landless class, and to teach them their rights and how to obtain them. There has been no attempt to tear down established interests, but at the same time no effort has been spared to elevate the condition of the masses by placing within their reach all that rightfully belongs to them, or that would tend to their elevation and material prosperity. In the short space of three or four years the country has made wonderful progress. Among the Acts which have been passed to bring this about is the Employers' Liability Act, affording protection to labor, both as to wages and responsibility in case of injury. A much needed and beneficial Act was the Factories' Act of 1891. Government inspectors see that the factories are clean and healthy and well lighted.

No person under 18 years of age, and no woman is allowed to be employed for more than 4½ hours without an interval of half an hour for a meal. No boy under 16 is permitted to work more than 48 hours in any week in a factory, and child labor is prohibited entirely. Compulsory holidays are Christmas, New Year, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Her Mayesty's birthday, and every Saturday afternoon from 1 o'clock. A labor compulsory Arbitration Act is to be passed at next session of Parliament. The public works of the colony are conducted on the co-operative principle. When a railway or highway is to be constructed, the Government engineers make the survey and estimate. On the basis of this estimate of cost the work is given in small sections to gangs of men who each receive an equal proportion of the money earned. The contractor is dispensed with, and the profits are divided among the men. The Government supply necessary tools and material at first cost. The men work very hard and earn good wages. They pocket the contractors' profit, and the Government is at no greater cost. One peculiar feature of this system is that the young, robust and middle-aged men work together, while the weaker and less vigorous are formed into classes by themselves. The younger and stronger men object to their older and necessarily weaker brothers, because they are no longer able to perform their full share of the work. The old men are, however, perfectly content to have the opportunity to earn a livelihood in this way by themselves and they do so very comfortably. The co-operative system has given great satisfaction, and has to a large extent solved the problem of the unemployed in this colony. Another excellent system, described by the consul, is the Government Labor Bureau. If a man is out of employment he makes application to the agent in charge of his district labor bureau, who sends him to some suitable occupation, paying for his transportation, if necessary, and having it refunded from the first money the man obtains. Employers of labor can send orders for men, and in this way, the labor market is always open. In conclusion, the consul says among the vast majority of the public there are no complaints, generally speaking, and no fault-findings. All seem to appreciate what is being done for them, each working with a cheerful will to make all those new undertakings and innovations a success.