

MASTER AND APPRENTICE AMENDMENT.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM.

THE first Part of this Bill relates only to farm apprentices whose passages from England to New Zealand are assisted by the Government. The Master and Apprentice Act, 1908, requires that the indenture of apprenticeship should be executed by the parent or guardian of the boy, and by the employer. Compliance with this provision is impossible in cases where arrangement is made for immigration of boys to be subsequently employed. The boys being under age, their own contract does not bind them. The Government undertakes the control and care of such boys, and therefore enters into a more or less definite arrangement with the parents, guardians, and relatives of such boys in the United Kingdom for due provision being made in New Zealand for the employment of the boy and for the provision of proper food, clothing, and comfort. Unless the boy is bound to remain in his employment, and be subject to such control by his employer as is provided in the Master and Apprentice Act, it is impossible for the Government to perform its engagements. Further, it is necessary that the boys should be under some control from the time of their departure until their engagement in New Zealand. For these objects provision is made for an indenture signed by the High Commissioner and the boy becoming binding in England, and afterwards to the extent defined in section 4.

Special provision is made in subsection (6) of section 3 enabling the Minister to alter the indenture signed in England in a manner advantageous to the boy, but not otherwise. Provision is made by which the apprenticeship extends to the age of twenty years. This is necessary because it is not intended to engage boys of an age of less than sixteen, and it is desired to engage them up to an age of somewhat over eighteen years, but under nineteen.

It is provided that after the first year the apprentice shall receive a full wage according to his age and capacity; such wages to be not less than the wages ruling in the district for lads of a like age and capacity.

The second Part relates to farm apprenticeship of boys already resident in New Zealand. The benefits of Part I are extended to such apprentices also.

[AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COUNCIL.]

Legislative Council, 28th August, 1914.

Hon. Mr. Bell.

MASTER AND APPRENTICE AMENDMENT.

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A BILL INTITULED

AN ACT to amend the Master and Apprentice Act, 1908.

Title.

BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. This Act may be cited as the Master and Apprentice Amendment Act, 1914, and shall form part of and be read together with the Master and Apprentice Act, 1908 (hereinafter referred to as the principal Act).

Short Title.

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PART I.

IMMIGRANT FARM APPRENTICES.

2. In this Part of this Act "Minister" means the Minister of Immigration.

Interpretation.

3. (1.) An indenture of apprenticeship of any boy between the ages of fifteen and nineteen years to the occupation of farming and farm-work may be made in the United Kingdom if it is made in accordance with this section.

Indentures of apprenticeship to be served in New Zealand may be executed in the United Kingdom.

(2.) The indenture shall be in a form prescribed by regulations, and shall be executed by the boy and by the High Commissioner or by an officer appointed by the High Commissioner for the purpose.

(3.) The indenture may provide for the payment out of the wages of the apprentice of the whole or of any part of the passage-money and other expenses incurred for the apprentice, and may also provide for the payment of any part of the balance of such wages

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during the term of the apprenticeship, or any part of such term, into an account to accumulate for the benefit of the apprentice.

(4.) The indenture shall contain a provision that the wages to be paid by the employer to the apprentice after the expiration of twelve months from the commencement of the employment in New Zealand shall from time to time be such as are usually paid on farms to boys of the age and capacity of the apprentice, and a provision that, if any difference arises as to the rate of such wages, such rate shall be determined in each case by arbitration in the manner prescribed by regulations to be made by the Governor by Order in Council gazetted. 5 10

(5.) It shall not be necessary to name in the indenture any person to be the employer of the apprentice.

(6.) The terms and conditions of the indenture may be varied by the Minister at any time before the employer of the apprentice nominated by the Minister signifies acceptance of such nomination, but no such variation shall be made unless it is in the opinion of the Minister directly or indirectly for the advantage of the apprentice. 15

Minister may
nominate employer
of apprentice.

(7.) On the arrival of the apprentice in New Zealand the Minister shall nominate a farmer or person or company engaged in farming pursuits in New Zealand to be the employer of the apprentice. 20

Acceptance of
nomination by
employer to be
endorsed on
indenture.

(8.) The employer nominated shall signify acceptance by an endorsement in the prescribed form on the indenture, signed by such employer.

(9.) An endorsement so signed shall render the indenture binding on the employee in the same manner as if he had been a party to the indenture. 25

(10.) Every apprenticeship so made shall continue until the apprentice attains the age of twenty years.

(11.) An indenture of apprenticeship made under this section shall not be assigned to any person except with the consent in writing of the Minister. 30

(12.) It shall not in any case be necessary that the parents or guardians of any apprentice under this Part of this Act should be parties to, or sign, or assent to any indenture. 35

Operation of
indenture of
apprenticeship
under this Part
of this Act.

4. The indenture shall have operation and be binding as follows:—

(a.) From the time of the execution by or on behalf of the High Commissioner until the acceptance by an employer of nomination by the Minister it shall have effect as an indenture of master and apprentice under the principal Act as between the boy or apprentice and any person or persons appointed by the High Commissioner as master to control the boy during the passage to and on and after arrival in New Zealand to the extent that sections four, twelve, thirteen, and fourteen of the principal Act shall apply. 40 45

(b.) From the time of the endorsement thereon of acceptance by an employer nominated by the Minister and until the boy attains the age of twenty years, or until the indenture is sooner cancelled with the consent in writing of the Minister, it shall have full effect either in its original form or as varied by the Minister, under the provisions 50

of subsection *six* of section *three* hereof, as an indenture of apprenticeship under the principal Act between the boy as apprentice and such employer as master, and shall also have such full effect as between the boy as apprentice and any employer to whom, with the consent of the Minister, the apprentice may be assigned.

5 5. In respect of every indenture under this Part of this Act the following provisions shall apply:—

Provisions as to evidence of indentures.

10 (a.) Where such indenture purports to have been signed by the boy it shall be deemed without proof of the fact to have been duly executed by the boy named in the indenture, and it shall be presumed that the boy whose passage to New Zealand was provided in accordance with such indenture is the boy who signed such indenture.

15 (b.) Where such indenture purports to have been executed by the High Commissioner it shall be deemed without further proof to have been duly so executed.

20 (c.) Where such indenture purports to have been executed by a person employed by the High Commissioner, or in the office of the High Commissioner, it shall be deemed without further proof that such indenture was duly executed by such person, and that such person was an officer duly appointed by the High Commissioner for the purpose of the execution of such indenture.

25 (d.) Where an endorsement of acceptance purports to be signed by an employer it shall be presumed, unless the contrary is proved, that such endorsement was duly signed by the employer named, and that such employer was duly nominated by the Minister.

30 (e.) A copy of such indenture and of any endorsement of acceptance certified by the Minister shall be admitted as evidence without production of the original indenture.

PART II.

FARM APPRENTICESHIP OF NEW ZEALAND BOYS.

35 6. In this Part of this Act "Minister" means the Minister of Lands. Interpretation.

7. (1.) An indenture of apprenticeship of any boy between the ages of fifteen and nineteen years resident in New Zealand to the occupation of farming and farm-work may be made in accordance with this Part of this Act, and not otherwise. Apprenticeship of boys resident in New Zealand to occupation of farming.

40 (2.) The indenture shall be in a form prescribed by regulations, and shall be executed by the boy of the first part, and by the parent or guardian of the boy or (if he has no parent or guardian) by the Minister of the second part, and by the employer to whom the apprentice is bound of the third part.

45 (3.) The indenture shall contain a provision that the wages to be paid by the employer to the apprentice after the expiration of twelve months from the commencement of the employment shall from time to time be such as are usually paid on farms to boys of the age and capacity of the apprentice, and a provision that, if any difference arises as to the rate of such wages, such rate shall be determined in

each case by arbitration in the manner prescribed by regulations to be made by the Governor by Order in Council gazetted.

(4.) Every apprenticeship so made may continue until the apprentice attains the age of twenty years.

(5.) An indenture of apprenticeship made under this section shall not be assigned to any person except with the consent of the Minister. 5

PART III.

GENERAL.

Interpretation.

8. In this Part of this Act "Minister" in respect of an apprenticeship under Part I of this Act means the Minister of Immigration, and in respect of an apprenticeship under Part II of this Act means the Minister of Lands. 10

Application of Part I of principal Act to indentures under this Act.

9. The provisions of Part I of the principal Act shall apply in respect of an apprenticeship under Part I of this Act from the time of endorsement of acceptance by an employer nominated by the Minister, and in respect of an apprenticeship under Part II of this Act from the time of the complete execution of the indenture by the required parties, except as follows:— 15

(a.) Sections five to eight inclusive shall not apply. 20

(b.) In section nine, in lieu of the words "two Justices under their hands," the words "the Minister" shall be read.

(c.) Section eleven shall not apply, and in lieu thereof it is hereby enacted that an apprentice by indenture under this Act may make complaint to the Minister of any ill-usage or neglect of duty by his employer, and the Minister may, on proof to his satisfaction of such ill-usage or neglect of duty, discharge the apprentice from all obligation to such employer under the indenture, and may nominate a new employer to whom the apprentice shall become bound under the provisions of this Act forthwith upon such new employer signing an endorsement of acceptance upon the indenture, as if the indenture had originally been endorsed or executed by such new employer. 25 30 35

(d.) Upon the hearing of any application or complaint under section thirteen or section fourteen of the principal Act the Justices hearing and determining the matter thereof may, in lieu of or in addition to any penalties provided by the said sections respectively, direct that the wages of the apprentice shall be subject to reduction by an amount not exceeding *one-half* thereof for a period not exceeding *two months*. 40

(e.) No application or complaint shall be made under the provisions of section thirteen or section fourteen without the previous consent in writing of the Minister. 45

Apprentice to be liable as if of full age.

10. Every apprentice under either Part I or Part II of this Act shall for all the purposes of this Act, and of the principal Act, be liable as if he were of full age both at the time of signing the indenture and at all times thereafter. 50