

sion amongst the labouring class here, for there are works just now in full employment. The number of men passing through here is getting smaller every month lately, in consequence of bushfelling contracts and late potato-crops. A few small infringements of the Shops and Shop-assistants Act were brought before the Court, and convictions recorded, which had beneficial effect.

E. Tregear, Esq., Secretary for Labour.

I have, &c.,

W. MULVILLE, Inspector.

WOODVILLE.

SIR,—

Department of Labour Office, Woodville, 4th May, 1895.

In accordance with Circular 16, of the 10th April ultimo, I beg to report that during the year ending the 31st May last there were some forty-five unemployed selected here, who worked at intervals on the railway adjacent to Woodville, and some felling and clearing bush for roads on the Hall Special Settlement. The work so obtained proved a great relief to persons in urgent need. A number of those employed, after completing their respective jobs, sought and obtained employment elsewhere occasionally, while others were content to wait about for weeks in order to get on again. These are generally the men who are first to complain of small prices given, and go so far as to insinuate that the Government are bound to find them employment.

The regulations have been strictly adhered to with respect to taking names of applicants and selecting same. If they were slightly altered, to enable single men who have mothers and sisters or brothers to support to get the same chance as married men, it would be a good thing.

In this district there are no industries exist where men in need could obtain employment, and stock of all kinds being so cheap precludes settlers from employing labour. On the whole, the condition of the workers in this district would compare favourably with workers in most other places. No breaches of labour Acts have occurred as yet in this district, and I am certain a number have benefited by these Acts. It is feared that this winter will be a bad one for the unemployed. I have been away at Rotorua on sick leave, and only returned a few days ago, or I should have sent this report in time.

J. TREANOR, Labour Agent.

The Chief Secretary, Labour Department, Wellington.

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Wanganui, 31st March, 1895.

I beg to state that, with regard to Wanganui district for the said year, the provisions of the Factory and Shop-assistants Acts have been well carried out by the employers in the district, and very few breaches of the Act has occurred, and these only of a trivial nature.

"The Factory Act, 1894," works well, and the only clause complained of is 37, with regard to persons under sixteen having to pass the Fourth Standard or equivalent examination. This comes hard on girls of fourteen learning dressmaking. Girls attending Catholic schools having to be two years in each standard, they often do not reach the fourth class at fourteen years.

With regard to "The Shops and Shop-assistants Act, 1894," it works fairly well, but employers think it ought to be compulsory for all shops to close on the half-holiday, and the day be fixed by the Government, as various trades have different days, and none of them are unanimous about the closing-day.

There have been ninety-seven factories registered here, employing 363 males, 97 females, and 9 children, this year, against forty-nine registered last year. This does not include the Eastown railway workshops, which employ about eighty men and boys, and is registered in Wellington. The increase in the number of factories is through the small factories having to register under 1894 Act. The factories here are mostly small ones, the principal being the meat-freezing works, employing eighty-eight men; sash and door company, forty-eight; Murray's foundry, twenty-four; and the coach-factories each employ twenty men. These firms are steadily advancing their businesses, and their trade increases yearly.

Trade on the whole for the last year has been good, and steady employment has been got by good workmen. The business of Wanganui has largely increased, and a large number of new buildings have been erected during the year.

Through low prices for stock and wool there has been less demand for unskilled labour this year, and less bushfelling has been done, which has kept a number of labourers out of employ, upwards of forty having their names down on the roll for employ on co-operative works.

EDWARD VILLARS, Inspector of Factories.

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

PALMERSTON NORTH.

SIR,—

Palmerston North, 31st March, 1895.

I have the honour to forward you a report of the factories for the year ending the 31st March, 1895, in the Palmerston North district.

There are in all fifty-four factories or workrooms registered under the Factories Act up to date, giving employment to 365 males, 54 females, and 16 children, giving a total of 439 in all, against forty-four registered last year. The majority of the factories are small, only employing a few hands, the Longburn Freezing-works being the largest, employing forty-eight hands.