

fairly large-sized woollen-mill, in which operations will shortly commence, and I understand that within the course of a few months about a hundred hands will be employed there. The iron trades, together with all other skilled trades, have been busy throughout the year, and in consequence of the sanitary improvements decided upon by the Borough Council of Napier the plumbers and drain-connectors are likely to have a busy time for the next two or three years.

UNSKILLED LABOUR.

As I have mentioned in previous reports, the conditions governing this class of labour vary little from year to year, though this year I had not nearly so many applications for employment as in the two previous years. This, no doubt, was due to some extent to work being more plentiful about town, though I think the fact of the Napier-Wairoa Road formation being completed had also something to do with it, as during the time this road was in the course of formation men were attracted here from other parts of the colony, and, as there are now no co-operative works in the immediate district, there is not the inducement that there formerly was. During the year 53 men were assisted through this office, 33 of the number married and 20 single, some of the latter having widowed mothers to support. The whole had 139 persons depending on them. Thirty-nine of these were sent to Government road-works and 9 to private employment. In selecting these men due regard is paid to Hastings and other parts of my district, and I do not think there was any distress through scarcity of employment.

"THE FACTORIES ACT, 1901."

In many respects this Act is an improvement on the one it repealed. The sanitary provisions are very good, but it is too soon to speak with any amount of certainty. Section 31 was not received with very much favour. Section 19, so far as it affects boys, has not given general satisfaction.

THE SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

This Act continues to work well, and I have had very little trouble in enforcing its provisions.

THE EMPLOYMENT OF BOYS AND GIRLS WITHOUT PAYMENT PREVENTION ACT.

This Act, now incorporated in the Factories Act, was very beneficial to boys and girls, and after the first few months of its existence there was little trouble in enforcing its provisions. However, one prosecution was necessary, defendant being fined 5s., with 8s. costs.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There is only one office in this district, which is in very good hands, and I have had no trouble with it whatever.

SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT.

In accordance with instructions contained in circular M/01, I visited a number of sheep-stations in the Hawke's Bay District, and found that extensive and permanent improvements had been made. Notices have been served on several others to improve both sheds and whares. A detailed report on each station was forwarded to you in December.

I have, &c.,

L. D. BROWETT,

Inspector of Factories.

Edward Tregear, Esq., Chief Inspector of Factories, Department of Labour, Wellington.

HUNTERVILLE.

SIR,—

Hunterville Police-station, 22nd April, 1902.

I have the honour to submit my labour report for the year ended the 31st March, 1902.

The labour-market during the past year has been fairly good, considering that the greater number of farmers in this district own large areas of land, and the principal stock raised are sheep, as the country on the whole is unfit for agriculture, and consequently the amount of crop raised is small—only a few acres round the homesteads for home use. During the past year the very low price of wool and mutton has induced nearly all the farmers who possess land fit for dairying to slowly get rid of their sheep and go in for milking, mostly on shares, the owner finding the land and cows and the person milking taking half the profits. There is also a large export from this district in pork, which is forwarded to Dimock and Co., Wellington. Great numbers of fat sheep are now being collected, Mr. Duncan, of Otairi Station, sending 15,000 to the Meat Export Company, of Wellington, and to other firms.

THE SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

The provisions of the above Act have been complied with. There have been no complaints, which I take to mean that the employees are satisfied.

BUILDING TRADES.

During the year the building trades have been very busy. The Township of Hunterville, which had been burned down, has been rebuilt with a very superior class of buildings, which has kept employed painters, bricklayers, and all trades connected with house-building.