

In conclusion, Sir, I have again the pleasure of informing you that the workers in this district are, with few exceptions, a steady and industrious class, and that the district generally is progressing in a satisfactory manner.

E. Tregear, Esq., Chief Inspector, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

W. J. BLAKE, Inspector.

HAWERA.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Hawera, 31st March, 1902.

I have the honour to report for your information upon the working of the Factories Act and the Shops and Shop-assistants Act during the past year.

There were 79 factories and workrooms registered last year, employing 236 males and 86 females; total, 322. There were two servants' registry offices registered. There has been plenty of work for unskilled labour in the district for the past twelve months and up to the completion of the water and drainage works at Hawera. The building trade has been brisk, and continues so. Milkers and bushmen have been in great demand. The shearing, I may say, is done by persons residing in the vicinity, who ride to and from their work. There have been no accidents reported, and no prosecutions. The Act is working satisfactorily.

I have, &c.,

J. E. BERNARD, Sergeant,
Inspector of Factories.

E. Tregear, Esq., Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, New Plymouth, 7th April, 1902.

I beg to submit my report for the year ending the 31st March, 1902.

FACTORIES ACT.

The total number of factories registered in this district is 106, and I have the satisfaction of reporting that no accidents have occurred at any of them. I think the factories have all been fully employed during the year, but there is very little overtime worked.

The attempt to enforce clause 31 of the Act of 1901 led to a certain amount of hardship, and was very unsatisfactory, the great objection being practically that the wage was to be paid according to age instead of according to ability—the young person who started work at, say, eighteen years of age having to be paid at the same rate as the employee who might have started at fifteen years and had three years' experience in the particular business. As a rule, I think the youths in most of the trades were paid somewhat in advance of the minimum wage laid down, but where girls and women were employed it was the reverse.

Very little overtime is worked here. I find that two of the provisions of the Act have been apparently quite unknown here—viz., section 10, providing that a factory shall not be used before being registered, and section 26, relating to the employment of boys and girls under sixteen years of age without the Inspector's certificate having been first obtained.

SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

Complaints have been made that in some instances shopkeepers residing on the premises have not kept so strictly within the law as they might have done. Steps have been taken to bring this matter under review, and I hope that the effect will be a good one.

One prosecution took place during the year against a sojourner.

THE SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There are now three persons carrying on business under this Act, and, I think, with satisfaction to all concerned.

I have, &c.,

WALTER H. HADDRELL,
Inspector of Factories.

E. Tregear, Esq., Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

PALMERSTON NORTH.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Palmerston North, 31st March, 1902.

I have the honour to submit report for the year ending the 31st March, 1902.

For the past twelve months in this district every industry has shown signs of prosperity. The building trade was most busy during the year, and still continues; every man who could use the tools is in demand, and good wages are being earned. The dairying industry has done much for the district in the way of making the place more attractive and suitable for settlers with small means. The land is the best in the colony, without exception, for grazing, crop-growing, &c. The town and country is most favoured from its central situation and from being a large railway terminus. The dairying industry within the last twelve months has attained great dimensions, there being no less than twelve creameries and butter-factories within a short distance of the town, and there is talk of others being built very soon. The farming community was never more prosperous than at present. There was no scarcity of employment during the year, complaints on that score being few and far between.

iii—H. 11.