

The building trades—carpenters, painters, plumbers, and bricklayers—have been fully employed. Quite a large number of dwellinghouses and shops were erected and occupied during the latter part of the year, whilst others are in the course of erection. Two dairy factories, one being the largest and most complete of its kind in the colony, were erected and put into working-order. One schoolhouse and two bridges were erected, the latter proving of great benefit to the settlers in the locality.

The timber-market at the present time, taking the amount of timber railed away and used locally, must be in a very healthy condition. Prices are more than fair, showing a tendency to rise. The market never appears glutted.

Fencing, bushfelling, and flax-cutting have been the means of finding employment for a large number of men. There is no demand for agricultural labourers, as this is more of a dairying and pastoral district. The number of men travelling on the roads looking for work has been less than the previous year. No applications were made at this office for employment. A considerable amount of co-operative roadwork under the Roads Department has been done in the district.

Although there is no legal closing-day in this district the business-people, by voluntary agreement, close their premises on Thursday afternoon, and the day appears to suit everybody.

There have been no prosecutions for breaches of the different Acts bearing on labour, the people appearing anxious and willing to comply with the law.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES GREY,

Inspector of Factories.

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

PAHIATUA.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Pahiatua, April, 1903.

I respectfully report that the Factory and Shop Acts have worked well during the past year.

The unskilled-labour market has been firm for those resident in the district. Large numbers of swaggers passed through during the winter months looking for employment, but there was not work at the time for them all. A few got employment from the Roads Department and the County Council clearing slips which occurred at the time. There have been no swaggers during the past few months, and work has been plentiful.

The retail trade has been brisk, two more firms having started, and all are doing well. Saw-mills have been kept very busy during the year. The building trade has been very busy in Pahiatua and outlying districts. Bricklayers have been very busy, the supply being unequal to the demand. The coachbuilding business has been brisk. Tailors and dressmakers have been kept busy. The dairying industry in this district is going ahead, two new butter-factories—one at Makuri and the other at Pongaroa—have started; also two creameries—one at Coonoor and one at Mangatiti—have been erected, and have started work. Altogether this district is going steadily ahead.

I have, &c.,

GEO. HASTIE, Inspector of Factories.

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

MASTERTON.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Masterton, 22nd April, 1903.

I have the honour to present to you my report for the year ending the 31st March, 1903.

“THE FACTORIES ACT, 1901.”

Under this Act there were 92 factories registered during the present year, an increase of 6 on last year, employing 426 males and 63 females, making a total of 489, as against 358 males and 64 females for the year 1902, being an increase of 67 for the year.

Four accidents have been reported, 1 severe and 3 slight. The factories have been well conducted, and no prosecutions have taken place.

SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

The Act is working well, and the holidays and half-holidays have been well observed. One prosecution has taken place—for not observing the half-holiday: a conviction was obtained.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There are 4 licensed holders under the Act. The offices are all well conducted. No complaints have been made.

I have, &c.,

JAS. O'MALLEY,

Inspector of Factories.

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