

SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION.

I have inspected twenty-nine stations during and since the shearing-season, and I have recommended improvements in accommodation to be made at six stations. Although in some cases previous requests to provide additional accommodation have not been complied with, the circumstances justified the Department's action in giving an extension of time, as many of the stations are practically inaccessible during several of the winter months.

The Maoris have almost a monopoly of shearing in the district. Many of them are married, and their wives work on the board with the men. In fine weather they prefer a tent to a whare; but, as the shearing is done in the year when the weather is usually unsettled, it is necessary to have a whare to fall back on.

The remarks published in one of the local newspapers criticizing the Department's administration of the Act in this district are unjust. The statements made regarding the one station held up as a horrible example of the Department's maladministration were absolutely untrue. The writer had evidently based his criticism on the statements of others, and not on his own observation. It is to the credit of the former Inspectors that I have found excellent accommodation in places almost inaccessible to wheel traffic, where I feel sure, but for the Department, no accommodation would have been provided.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES.

There are six servants' registry offices in the district, and all are well conducted.

I desire to express my appreciation of the unfailing courtesy shown by all classes of the community with whom I have been brought in contact in the performance of my duty.

I have, &c.,

W. H. WESTBROOKE,

Inspector of Factories.

The Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

NAPIER.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Napier, 18th April, 1910.

I have the honour to submit, for your consideration, my annual report of the work of the Department in the Napier district for the year ending the 31st March, 1910.

GENERAL.

I am pleased to be able to state that, notwithstanding the general depression in comparison with the rest of the Dominion, the year just ended has on the whole been one of general prosperity in this district, and although the winter months were not so good as in the previous year, yet there is reason for congratulation for the volume of business done.

The building trades have not been busy at any time during the year, although a large number of private dwellings have been erected at South Napier. At the present time the building trade has taken a turn for the better, and there is every indication that it will continue to improve.

Bush sawmills have experienced a very bad year, as the demand for timber has not been as keen as the previous year. The employees have worked only about half-time.

Furniture-makers and cabinetmakers have not had a very busy year. However, towards the end of the year trade picked up, and difficulty was experienced in obtaining cabinetmakers and upholsterers for the country districts.

Iron trades: Engineering and boilermaking have had a satisfactory year, and a fair amount of overtime has been worked.

The coachbuilding trade has been busy, and employment has been plentiful.

The tailoring trade has been fairly busy all through the year. The amount of overtime worked is 939 hours in excess of that worked during the previous year. At times there has been a keen demand for tailors and tailoresses, especially the latter. There appears to be a considerable shortage of tailoresses all over the district.

Dressmaking and millinery trades have been very busy. The overtime worked exceeded that worked last year.

It is pleasing to state that the Hawke's Bay district is still progressing. During the year the Lands Department have opened up several new estates for settlement, with the result that there are 168 fresh selectors, holding 64,994 acres, and for future disposal the Department has 128,128 acres. This method of settling the people on the land will add greatly to the expansion of our industries, and thus indirectly give employment to a large number of workers.

The dairy industry: In consequence of the exceptionally good weather, many of the dairy factories have had very large quantities of milk supplied to them, and at times considerable difficulty has been experienced in dealing with all that came in. Good prices have been obtained for both butter and cheese. The season can be considered satisfactory to all connected with it.

Shearing: The shearing-season finished with a record clip, and the third wool-sale, as was expected, turned out to be a record for this district. The wool was arriving in such quantities that the brokers were unable to find accommodation for it in their capacious stores.

FACTORIES ACT.

During the year the Clive district, which included eleven factories, has been taken in with Napier. Thirty new factories were registered, and, including the 11 factories at Clive, there is a total of 296 factories in the district, employing 1,682 persons—viz., 1,276 males and 406 females.