

so that it may be safely assumed that the next dairying season will see the number of factories considerably increased.

Bush sawmilling : Bush in the immediate vicinity of Invercargill is fast disappearing, and quite a number of mills have cut out their areas and moved further back. The completion of the Orepuki-Waiau Railway has made it possible for sawmillers to work the fine timber-areas lying beyond the Waiau River, and already timber of splendid quality is finding its way on to the market from the far west. There is a good demand for timber at the present time, and all mills are putting in good work. Butter-, cheese-, and fruit-case timber is in good demand, and several mill-owners have turned their attention almost exclusively to the white-pine areas for the purpose of meeting the demand. This work should give continued employment to sawmill hands.

Flax-milling : A rise in the price of fibre in the spring induced several owners of flax-dressing plants which had been idle for two or three seasons to make a fresh start, consequently, a brisk demand for flax-mill hands set in. Men experienced in the work had no difficulty in finding employment. The quality of the fibre turned out was of a high standard.

Building trades : Probably no other trade on the list suffered so much from the depression which passed over the Dominion as the building trade in all its branches. There was almost a complete stoppage of cottage-building, and only a very few large blocks were put in hand during the year. As a consequence, an army of carpenters, bricklayers, painters, and other workers in this industry were forced into competition with the ordinary unskilled labourer for any work that was offering. With the advent of spring, however, a decided change for the better set in, and now all tradesmen have as much work as they can conveniently do. Present indications are decidedly hopeful for the next twelve months. Sash-and-door and general joinery factories were kept fairly well employed all through the year, but could have taken in double the amount of work.

Iron trades : The various branches of the iron trade felt the dulness during the winter months, but made a solid recovery in the spring and summer. General engineering probably suffered less than other departments, such as implement-making. There was always a fair amount of general work on hand, and employers were enabled to keep their staffs at work throughout the winter, and as spring and summer advanced a fair amount of overtime was put in. Implement-manufacturers found some difficulty in keeping their men employed, and a slight shortening of hands was necessary. Signs of a change for the better set in with the advent of spring, and a marked improvement is now apparent—in fact, the trade may be said to be prosperous. Taking the year through, employers express themselves as well satisfied with the business done.

Plumbing, gasfitting, &c. : Those who specialise in plumbing and gasfitting had rather a slow time of it during the first six months of the year, but where other lines were worked in conjunction, a better state of affairs existed. Tinware was much in demand for dairy purposes, and sales were satisfactory. The demand made on dairy-plant manufacturers for supplies was very keen right throughout, and could only be met by employers putting in overtime. With the general improvement in the building trade plumbers find less difficulty in profitably employing their workers.

Furniture trades : There was a decided quietness in the cabinetmaking branch of the furniture trade, which became more marked as the spring months approached. About the end of 1909, however, the looked-for improvement set in, and has continued throughout. Order work continues to come to hand freely, and stocks held by retailers have been much reduced. There is a prospect of a busy year for cabinetmakers, and light-wood workers generally. The experience of upholsterers and French-polishers was similar to that of cabinetmakers, and prospects for the future are equally hopeful.

Coachbuilding : Probably no other trade on the list has had the same experience as the coach-building trade in all its branches. Right throughout there was a note of prosperity sounded. The demand for light traps for dairy-factory work was constant and pressing, and builders found the greatest difficulty in keeping faith with their customers. Every description of vehicle was in demand, from the light sociable gig to the heavy four-wheeled wagon. The work turned out by local builders is a credit to the district, and they richly deserve the patronage which has been bestowed.

Boot and shoe trade : Boot-manufacturers have had a very steady year. Only twice during the currency of the year just closed was there any slackness reported, and then it was only temporary. Manufacturers and retailers express themselves as thoroughly satisfied with the trade done, and hopeful for the future.

Tailoring : Trade has been very steady throughout the year. Slackness at any time was not worth consideration, and, as usual, towards the end of 1909, just previous to the New Year holidays, full advantage was taken of the provisions of the Act relating to overtime. After the holidays orders continued to come to hand with surprising steadiness, and employers have been able to carry on without shortening hands.

Dressmaking and millinery : As in tailoring, dressmakers and milliners experienced their busiest time immediately prior to the holiday season. Contrary to expectations, business continues brisk, and employers are able to keep their workers employed right through.

Hosiery and shirtmaking : These are not very prominent industries in Invercargill, being principally worked as side lines in conjunction with other textile trades. Workers solely employed in the hosiery trade found steady employment during the year, and business was well maintained, the year closing with bright prospects.

MEN'S EMPLOYMENT BRANCH.

The resources of the Employment Branch were taxed to the utmost capacity during the year in an endeavour to find suitable employment for the large number of unskilled labourers and unemployed tradesmen registering on the books. Local bodies were written to and interviewed for the purpose of