

## PROSECUTIONS.

There have been no prosecutions under the Labour Acts during the year.

## FROZEN RABBITS.

This business has now commenced, and, judging from the number of rabbits coming in, and number exported from here last year, it has become a very profitable industry. I am safe in saying that this trade put more money into direct circulation than any other industry where unskilled labour is employed.

## UNSKILLED LABOUR.

In consequence of the number employed at rabbiting there has been a keen demand for this class of labour, during the harvest and previously. Farmers have had a great difficulty in getting hands, and at harvest-work 1s. an hour and found was given. I have had no application for assistance to obtain employment, clearly showing that matters in this direction are healthy.

## CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I am glad to say that the condition of the workers has—at least, in this part of the colony—become sensibly easier during the past twelve months. People are more hopeful than they have been for years, and I think I may safely say that the cloud of depression that a few years ago hung on this district is now fast disappearing. The greatest stranger must come to this conclusion, for at our frequent race-meetings—too frequent—and numerous season holidays, all classes may be seen cheerful, and well dressed, and by no means short of money.

I have, &c.,

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

P. JOYCE, Inspector of Factories.

## INVERCARGILL.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Invercargill, 5th April, 1900.

I have the honour to forward you a brief report of the working of this department for the year ending the 31st March, 1900.

## LABOUR.

During the year employment has been found on co-operative works for forty married men, with 120 persons dependent on them; also sixteen single men, who had to support twenty-three persons. Twelve persons were sent to private employment.

The unskilled-labour market in this district is in a much more satisfactory condition than it has been for years past, as applicants for employment on Government works have been few in comparison with previous years. This, I may state, is owing to so many men being employed in rabbit-trapping in Southland, which has now become a great industry.

The engineering and iron trade has been very busy for the past year. The building trade has been active in all branches, and the future outlook is very promising, one hundred new buildings having been erected in the town and suburbs during the past year. All trades have had a very prosperous year with the exception of the bootmaking trade, where in some cases tradesmen have only made three-quarter time.

## FACTORIES.

The number of factories and workrooms registered this year is 196, as compared with 183 in the year 1899, being an increase of thirteen.

I am pleased to report there is no marked increase in overtime permits for persons who come under the restrictions of the Act, but in many cases I have found male adults working overtime, especially in the tailoring trade.

The sanitary condition of the various factories and workrooms has been well maintained, as factory-owners now seem to know the Act better than in previous years, thus giving less trouble to the department.

## EMPLOYMENT OF BOYS OR GIRLS WITHOUT PAYMENT PREVENTION ACT.

There was a little trouble (slight) over this Act, owing to its being new to most of the factory-owners, but only a few cases have occurred where any factory-owner has infringed the Act by non-payment of boys or girls.

## SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS.

This Act has worked very well for the past year, shopkeepers and assistants having done their best to observe the Act.

There is a considerable amount of irritation over employes in warehouses working overtime. If it were possible to bring warehouses under the Shops and Shop-assistants Act the same as offices, it would have a good effect, and be beneficial to those employed.

## SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES.

There are now five registry offices in this town, and they are in the hands of people who give little or no trouble to the department. No irregularities have occurred during the past year.

I have, &c.,

WM. J. McKEOWN, Inspector of Factories,

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