

Brickmakers, bricklayers, carpenters, blacksmiths, saddlers, tailors, cabinetmakers, engineers, have all been busy and fully employed. Labour, both skilled and unskilled, has had a most prosperous year.

Trade, both wholesale and retail, has been very good and sound. So much so that the town has been growing with marvellous rapidity. Some fine buildings (business) have been erected, and several large firms have opened branches here during the period under review. As the sawmiller is clearing the land the dairy-farmer is following close up. There are now two large dairy factories.

I have, &c.,

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

A. CRUICKSHANK,

Inspector of Factories.

#### PALMERSTON NORTH.

SIR,— Department of Labour, Palmerston North, 5th April, 1904.  
I have the honour to submit my annual report for the year ended the 31st March.

##### FACTORIES.

I have registered 165 factories during the year, an increase of fifty-seven on the previous year, which is evidence of the growth of business and population in this district.

Certificates of fitness to work in factories have been granted to four boys and twelve girls under sixteen years of age.

Overtime warrants were granted to 118 women of all ages, and boys and girls under sixteen, who worked 1,626 hours.

There were two prosecutions during the year—one for working beyond the time specified by Act, and one for employing hands overtime without a warrant. In both cases fines with costs were inflicted.

##### SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES.

There are five in the town, conducted in a proper manner, and I have had no complaints lodged.

##### SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION.

I have visited forty shearing-sheds in my district, reports upon which have been forwarded to the Department. The sheds and houses were found to be satisfactory.

##### ACCIDENTS.

During the year four accidents have been reported to me. These happened to fingers and hands by saws and planing-machine, but were not of a very serious nature.

##### SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

The Act works fairly well. There have been no prosecutions under it. Notices have been served in several cases *re* sanitary arrangements, which were at once attended to. Forty-two females worked 530½ hours and four males under eighteen years worked thirteen hours' overtime.

I have, &c.,

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

H. W. KNOWLES,

Inspector of Factories.

#### WANGANUI.

SIR,— Wanganui, 7th April, 1904.  
I have the honour to submit my report for the period ending the 31st March.

##### FACTORIES.

During the year the total number of factories registered in Wanganui amounted to 163, an increase on the preceding year of 22, employing 943 persons—males, 791; females, 152.

There have been two prosecutions—one under section 39, "The Factories Act, 1901," for failing to report accident, and one under section 35 for failing to pay girl's wages for statutory holidays. Convictions were recorded and fines inflicted in both cases.

Overtime warrants were issued to fifteen occupiers of factories to work 145 females and boys 2,075 hours.

Certificates of fitness have been granted to fourteen girls and sixteen boys.

Two accidents have been reported—one to an employer, who lost three fingers at a circular saw.

The Factories Act works well in this district, and seems to grow in popularity with both employers and employees.

##### SHOPS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS ACT.

One employer was prosecuted for employing seven women for more than nine hours and a half in one day and over fifty-two hours in one week; he was further charged with failing to allow his assistants one hour for dinner. Convictions were recorded on all charges.

Everything is working smoothly now, and a large number of the principal shopkeepers have a movement afoot to close their shops at 9 p.m. on Saturday out of consideration for their employees.