

## KAWAKAWA.

The kauri-gum and timber industries have given employment to a large number of hands during the year.

There are also about 360 men employed on the Opuā-Grahamtown railway construction-works, and, if the number is not diminished, fifteen or eighteen months hence should see the completion of the line, which when finished must undoubtedly give an impetus to the farming, timber, and other industries in the district. It is estimated that over a hundred million superficial feet of timber will then be tapped, and the land along the line of route, which hitherto has been lying practically useless, will be made productive and much enhanced in value.

There is a large Native population in this district, and it is satisfactory to be able to say that the present outlook for them seems bright, inasmuch as they have excellent maize, kumara, and potato crops. I visited some of these settlements recently, and one and all whom I have spoken to say that their crops are much better than they have had for years. On the whole, this district should therefore be in a prosperous condition.

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## HASTINGS.

The year just ended has been one of general prosperity in this district, notwithstanding that in the latter end of 1908 money was not so plentiful as it had been.

The building trade also fell off somewhat after what might be termed a slight boom. Some very fine buildings were erected in the town during 1908, several shops and offices being built in ferro-concrete.

The fruit and fruit-canning industry developed considerably, and agricultural farming increased more than for years past, which was the means of employing a large number of hands, both male and female.

Land-settlement also advanced considerably, thus adding to the population of this district.

Almost all trades did fairly well until towards the end of last year, when business slackened off, but showed signs of improving again in March of this year.

The Shops and Offices Act has worked well, with the exception of the provisions of section 25, under which a requisition of shopowners was sent forward to close all shops at 9 p.m. on Saturday nights. The prayer of the requisition was granted, but did not meet with general approval. The discontents forwarded a requisition after the lapse of six months, their requests being granted, with the result that different shops close at different hours—from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. on Saturday nights. I am of opinion that the law should be amended so as to make it compulsory to close all shops at 10 p.m. on Saturday nights.

Very little overtime has been worked here during the past year: this indicates the fact that employers have engaged sufficient hands to do their work during daytime. Only a few permits to young children were issued, the majority of them being for work at Frimley during fruit-picking season.

I have visited nearly all the shearing-sheds in this district, and found in nearly all cases good, clean, and ample quarters, and I did not receive any complaints from shearers.

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## DANNEVIRKE.

Sawmilling was the principal industry here a few years back, but some thirty-odd mills have disappeared, and only six now remain, and four of these are small. The lands that were held under sawmilling leases are being rapidly converted into dairy farms, and the roading, bridging, clearing, fencing, and stumping of the blocks have given employment to all local workers, in addition to many from other parts seeking employment.

I think that too large a percentage of the casual unskilled labourers coming into this district are improvident with their earnings. Were they otherwise, it would be better for both their health and comfort, and there would be fewer casual applications for temporary charitable aid.

Work has been fairly plentiful during the last three months, and business has been steady, but inclined to be quiet. The town and district bear evidence of a good future.

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## HAWERA.

There were 101 factories registered, employing 338 males and 69 females, as against 103 factories registered the previous year, employing 320 males and 81 females. 81 shops were registered, as against 79 the previous year.

Twelve certificates of fitness were granted to young persons—6 males and 6 females—to work in factories, and 656 hours overtime were worked by 38 females at tailoring and dressmaking.

There were 8 accidents reported, none of a serious nature.

There was one prosecution under the Factories Act for failing to give employees a holiday.

The various Acts have been working satisfactorily.