

## SCAFFOLDING INSPECTION ACT.

Visits of inspection have been made to all structures in course of erection, alteration, or repair throughout the Industrial District of Westland (see separate report).

## INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT.

Strict attention has been given to all industries throughout the Westland Industrial District affected by awards and agreements. It was considered necessary to prosecute in 2 instances. With these exceptions the Act has worked smoothly during the year, and amicable relations prevailed between employer and employee.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT.

There have been no complaints within the district regarding this Act. The more important provisions appeared to be fairly well understood and highly appreciated by the workers, as was also the practical advice and other assistance which the Department placed at the disposal of those requiring it.

## WORKERS' DWELLINGS ACT.

Considerable interest is being shown throughout the district regarding the working of this enactment.

After considerable trouble and unavoidable delay an ideal site for dwellings has been secured at Cobden on very reasonable terms. Tenders have been accepted for the building of 13 cottages of attractive design, and containing from four to six rooms each. A commencement has been made with the erection of these dwellings, and it is expected to have the various applicants in possession of their respective homes at an early date.

## CONCLUSION.

The principal towns in Westland have been visited, and as thorough an inspection of the shops and factories therein has been carried out as time and circumstances permitted. I desire to record my appreciation of the ready assistance and uniform courtesy extended to me by the various officers of local bodies with whom my duties have brought me in contact.

I have, &c.,

H. J. TORBIT,

Inspector of Factories.

The Secretary of Labour and Chief Inspector of Factories, Wellington.

## TIMARU.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Timaru, 26th April, 1913.

I have the honour to submit, for your consideration, my report of the Department's work in the South Canterbury district for the year ending 31st March, 1913.

Although a few industrial difficulties have arisen during the past year business has recovered itself, and I am glad to be able to report continued prosperity for the district generally.

The sheep and dairy farmers throughout the district have had a very fair year, as the wool-sales were very successful, the prices realized being exceptionally good, whilst dairy-produce has also brought good prices and feed had been plentiful for stock. The grain harvest has not been quite up to the average.

The meat-freezing industry has again had a good year, notwithstanding the inconvenience and loss caused by the slaughtermen's strike at the beginning of the present season; at the present time both local works are working at their full capacity.

The building trades have again had a very busy year, and the demand has been much larger than the supply available. During the latter part of the year, however, business has become quieter, and it is now about normal. Unless the money-market gets easier it is feared that the trade will be slack during the coming winter. The number of building permits issued by the Borough Council during the year was 212, and the approximate cost of the buildings was £113,862.

The woollen-milling and clothing trades have been very brisk and apparently prosperous. Female workers are still wanted, particularly in the woollen-milling (weaving department) and tailoring industries.

Retailers have, on the whole, done good business, although in some lines competition has been very keen, noticeable mostly in the grocery trade.

The Port of Timaru is still increasing its volume of trade, and last year (ending 31st December, 1912) the imports amounted to 99,026 tons and the exports 97,843 tons, making a total of 196,869 tons, which exceeds the previous year's total by over 11,000 tons. The principal imports and exports were as follows: Imports—General merchandise, 22,217 tons; timber, 1,154,830 superficial feet; coal, 23,970 tons. Exports—Wool, 33,284 bales; wheat, 79,077 sacks; oats, 96,500 sacks; beans and peas, 6,087 sacks; potatoes, 15,820 sacks; butter, 1,709 cases; cheese, 1,727 crates.

The declared value of foreign and intercolonial trade was £1,541,545, and the approximate value of coastal trade £700,000. The port still holds the third position in the Dominion for the export of frozen mutton and lamb, the total for the year being 739,787 carcases, which is an increase of 40,630 over the previous year's export.