

works of even necessary improvement. Thus an unusually large number of men have found their occupation gone, and these have swelled the ranks of other labourers seeking for work. The tendency among them has been to compete for any local work offered in an irrational manner, and at prices which cannot be remunerative. Numbers of instances bearing out this conclusion could be given. Owing to representations having been made to your department in December of the large number of men being out of work, steps were at once taken to provide employment on Government roadworks under the co-operative system. On the different works undertaken fifty-eight men were engaged, thus relieving to a considerable extent the glut of labour. The introduction of the Government co-operative system of roadworks has given satisfaction, and from reports furnished by the Lands Department it appears that the men did excellent work, and earned in most cases a remunerative wage. There were cases where men left regular work with contractors seeking employment on these works, but as far as it was possible they were not amongst those selected, the preference being given to those who were longest out of work, and especially to men who were some time resident in the district. I have to observe that, with reference to the "unemployed" difficulty, the periods of recurrence are in the months of May and December, or as near as may be before and after the bushfelling season. It is noticeable this year that the local bodies have generally endeavoured to assist in putting works in hand, and thus have assisted materially in reducing the number of unemployed.

E. Tregear, Esq., Wellington.

I have, &c.,

H. MCKAY, Agent.

SIR,—

Gisborne, 31st March, 1895.

I have the honour to report, for your information, that during the past twelve months the Factories Act has worked satisfactorily in the Gisborne district. A good many improvements have been effected since the Act came into force, all adding to the comfort of the employés. The factory-laws have not been countervailed to any extent worth mentioning. The employers do not exhibit a tendency to curtail any of the benefits conferred by the Act.

"The Shops and Shop-assistants Act, 1894": The half-holiday is not working at all satisfactorily here: The fact that it is not compulsory for all shops to close appears to be the main trouble. The general idea is that there should be no exemptions except in the case of the chemist, and that it would be more satisfactory if the compulsory half-holiday were selected by the Government. This would save a good deal of bickering and unpleasantness.

I have, &c.,

S. MOORE, Inspector of Factories.

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

NEW PLYMOUTH.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 31st March, 1895.

I respectfully beg to report, *re* your Circular 16/95, that during the past year seventy-nine factories have been registered in this district. All things in regard to labour, Factories, and Shop-assistants Acts have been received and met by the different classes in a fair spirit. The shop-keepers and manufacturers paid their fees, &c., for registration without much complaint.

The half-holiday, which is on Thursday afternoon, being well and cheerfully observed, there have been no prosecutions.

The different trades are mostly slack at present, but we have no real unemployed, or any names on the books.

Building trades, slack; engineering, &c., slack; boot trade, slack; clothing trade, medium; retail trade (generally), fairly good. Blacksmiths and coachsmiths, fairly employed; plumbers, painters, and carpenters, very slack.

Those of unskilled labour mostly get a few days' work during the week, or a few hours' at the breakwater.

JOHN DUFFIN, Labour Department, &c.

E. Tregear, Esq., Secretary for Labour.

NAPIER.

SIR,—

Napier, 31st March, 1895.

I have the honour to report on the state of the district over which I am appointed Factory Inspector, and I have great pleasure in informing you that everything here is working well, and trade appears to be improving slowly but steadily, 109 factories and workrooms having been registered this year, showing an increase of thirty-seven on last year. As far as I can see, the labour Acts are working very well. Under the Factories Act I have had no complaints from the employés, and the employers seem to be quite satisfied with the law as it stands at present, and all, in most instances, very law-abiding. The Shops and Shop-assistants Act also is working well, and the employés appear to be enjoying their weekly half-holiday, for I have no complaints from any of them, and the general public appear to appreciate more and more every day the working of this Act. At first it was thought inconsistent, but as people get used to it they find there is no law comes nearer to please everybody than this Act. At present there is no depres-