

In connection with this industry, in close proximity to this town there is a tannery, which gives employment to about twenty-five hands. The proprietors of this tannery manufacture some very good leather, which is all used up by the local workmen. This tannery puts through about forty hides per week, and about two hundred calf-skins for each year. They do not confine themselves solely to tanning, for coupled with their tannery they carry on a fellmongery business, where they principally deal with sheep-skins, taking off the wool, which they wash and bale, the pelts being salted, casked, and exported, principally to America, where the most profitable market is found. There they are manufactured in a variety of ways, and portions of them find their way back to this colony in the shape of parchment, chamois-leather, &c.

IRON.

The iron-workers have had a very fair year, having been fairly well employed during the last twelve months. There has not been any change since my last report, excepting here and there improvements have been made in their machinery. The six foundries and the various smiths' and wheelwrights' shops have had sufficient to keep them going, and now, through the high price for grain and good crops, the farming community are dealing with a free hand in bringing their implements parallel with the times. This has had much to do with making the present part of the year look brighter in this industry.

THE FACTORIES ACT.

This Act has done much to make the lives of the working-men more pleasant, more healthful, and more useful. If carefully administered (which will require sound judgment), this Act will be the means of producing a more intelligent and a more superior race of beings, through those who labour physically seeking their rest and recreation in mental exertion, and, knowing by inconvenience the shortcomings of the machines they make use of, have a better opportunity of discovering an improvement than those who are totally ignorant of the machine's existence. All men who are worthy of the designation of man are working-men, and this Act seems to cater to their wants, in regulating the hours of labour and adjusting the atmosphere in which they work.

The only complaint I hear of is that the half-holiday is not universally held on Saturday, so that all may enjoy the privileges which are appended to it. Large factories do not like the Wednesday afternoon, on account of their having to permit their boilers to cool down twice during the week, which means additional expense. The Act in other respects meets with general approval.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary for Labour, Wellington.

J. B. GREIG, Agent.