

The main support of Taranaki—viz., butter—has still maintained good prices, and the quantity sent forward still increases, notwithstanding a late and wet spring, and, as the country still continues to open up and improvements are made, the increase may reasonably be expected to continue.

Trade has not, however, been so lively as could be wished. The demand for houses has more than been met, with the consequence that the building trades are very slack, with only ordinary repairs and an occasional building in course of erection. The re-erection of the Moturoa Freezing-works in brick was one of the principal works completed during the last year. I regret to say that a brickyard, which was started to supply local wants, has not met with that success the enterprise merited.

The sewerage, drainage, improved water-supply and electric-light works which are now approaching completion, together with the general improvements in formation, levelling, and filling-up of roads and streets have given good and constant work to the unskilled labourer.

The sinking for petroleum which has been in progress at Moturoa for some time past has not come up to the expectation formed, and work in that direction has been suspended. A start, however, has been made with harbour-improvements, and the work of lengthening the breakwater will be continued for some time yet, and will improve the accommodation for shipping considerably.

I regret to report the occurrence of three accidents in factories during the year. One, a rather severe one, was occasioned by faulty design. The other two were such as will occasionally happen where machinery is employed, even when every care and precaution is exercised.

The exhibits of colonial manufactures, &c., which were on view at the Exhibition here at Christmas and New Year, were, no doubt, an object-lesson to the numerous visitors as to the variety and quality of our colonial industries, and should result in obtaining preference to the imported article.

No prosecutions were initiated during the past year. Seven permits to young persons under sixteen were given during the year, but in only one instance, and that was the youngest, had the Sixth Standard been passed at school.

THE SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

The new Act, which came into force during the year, has made but very little difference. Very few shop-assistants were found to be working longer hours than allowed during the week, and in these instances the difficulty is got over by a rearrangement of the hours. No prosecutions were initiated under this Act.

SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICES ACT.

There are four of these registry offices in the town now, quite sufficient, I think, for all requirements. I have every reason to believe that they give satisfaction to employer and employee.

I have, &c.,

W. H. HADDRELL,
Inspector of Factories.

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

HAWERA.

SIR,—

Hawera, 31st March, 1905.

I have the honour to report for your information upon the working of the Factories and Shop and Shop-assistants Acts during the past year.

There were 89 factories and workrooms registered, employing 323 males and 65 females, as against 87 factories and workrooms registered the previous year, employing 297 males and 75 females.

Warrants for overtime were issued to 123 males and females, who worked 246 hours.

Four accidents were reported during the year, none of which were of a serious nature.

Three licenses were issued under the Servants' Registry Act.

Four certificates of fitness were issued to young persons under sixteen years to work in factories and workrooms.

Unskilled labour has been in demand at times. The building trade is falling off, but the district is in a fairly prosperous state, dairying being in a flourishing way. Several new dairy-farms have been started recently.

There have been no prosecutions, the various Acts having worked satisfactorily.

I have, &c.,

J. S. BERNARD, Sergeant,
Inspector of Factories.

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

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Wanganui, 31st March, 1905.

I have the honour to submit my report for the period ending on the above date.

During the year the number of factories registered amounted to 165, an increase of 2 on the previous year. The number of hands employed amounted to 1,196—males 988, females 208, showing an increase of 13 workers since last report.