

In the secondary and country towns of my district I find the builders are generally very careless in regard to properly protecting the public when buildings abutting on the street are being erected. By ordering overhead cover, gantries, or fanguards to be added to scaffolding where necessary, and by working in conjunction with the local authorities, I hope to shortly bring about a more satisfactory system.

Six persons were prosecuted for failing to give notice of intention to erect scaffolding. A conviction was obtained in each case. A number were also warned for this offence.

Thirteen accidents occurring in connection with buildings in course of erection or repair were reported. Of these one was fatal—viz., a plasterer's modeller fell from the face of a building and was killed instantaneously.

A firm of builders was prosecuted and fined for failing to report an accident. A number of others were warned.

In conclusion, I desire to thank all those with whom my duties have brought me into contact for their courtesy and attention, especially those Inspectors of Factories stationed in the different towns in my district for their valuable assistance, without which much of the work done would not have been possible.

I have, &c.,

R. A. BOLLAND,

Inspector of Scaffolding.

The Secretary for Labour, Wellington.

NELSON.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Nelson, 14th April, 1910.

As Inspector of Scaffolding for the Nelson and Marlborough districts, I have the honour to submit for your information my report for the year ending the 31st March, 1910, separate from that as Inspector of Factories, Awards, &c.

There have not been so many buildings erected as during the previous year. Ninety notices have been received from contractors of their intention to erect scaffolding. Visits of inspection have been paid in all cases, and, as a rule, the scaffolding has been satisfactory. In a few instances I have had to condemn scaffold-planks. If power were given to Inspectors to visit builders' yards once a year to inspect scaffolding-planks, a lot of work which is now necessary would be saved. As far as possible, I discountenance the use of rope for guard-rail, and advocate 3 in. by 2 in. wood rail being used, it being a far better and safer protection.

I have made periodical visits to the various townships in Nelson and Marlborough, including Blenheim, Picton, Havelock, Canvastown, Richmond, Brightwater, Wakefield, and Motueka. I found a great improvement in the class of scaffolds, ladders, and ropes in use. As the regulations under this Act have been supplied to all builders in the district, there can be no excuse for non-compliance with same. However, there are a certain number of persons in the trade who either through gross carelessness or wilful ignorance do not send in notice of their intention to erect scaffolding. When reasonable excuse has been given for such neglect, copies of regulations and a letter of warning have been sent. In two cases prosecution was necessary, and convictions were obtained in both cases.

The number of buildings erected in the Towns of Nelson and Blenheim was 126; value, £58,000.

I have, &c.,

S. TYSON,

Inspector of Scaffolding.

The Secretary for Labour, Wellington.

GREYMOUTH.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Greymouth, 12th April, 1910.

I have the honour to submit, for your information, a report on the working of the Scaffolding Inspection Act, 1908, for the year ending 31st March, 1910, separate from that as Inspector of Factories, Awards, &c.

I am pleased to say that after twelve months administration of this Act in the Westland district, the results have shown the necessity for a strict supervision over the erection of scaffolding and gear in connection therewith. Both employers and employees appear to recognise its usefulness, and instead of the flimsy structures that formerly existed, more reliable and substantial scaffoldings are now being erected.

In a few instances I have had to order the entire reconstruction of the scaffolding, some employers using material altogether too weak to withstand the strain to which it was subjected, while in other cases the timber had not been carefully selected, and standards were used with knots right across the timber. In selecting timbers enough discretion is not used as to the amount of strain, either tensile or compressive, that the timbers may be subjected to, but I am pleased to say that contractors generally are taking more pride in their scaffolds, and show more interest in their construction than formerly.

During the year 69 scaffoldings were inspected. In 9 cases the scaffoldings were condemned, and the workmen warned from working on them. In the case of larger scaffolding, the greater negligence seemed to be displayed through failure to securely wedge the putlogs in the walls, and sufficiently brace the scaffolding together.

One accident occurred during the period—a man falling from a scaffold—which was due to faulty timber being used.

Only one charge had to be made under this Act during the year, a conviction being obtained. This case was brought for failure to give notice of intention to erect scaffolding.