

Only 1 accident has been reported during the year, and that was of a trifling nature, and only 1 employer was prosecuted during the same period—viz., for failing to give notice of intention to erect scaffolding; a penalty was inflicted.

I have made periodical visits to Ashburton, Geraldine, Methven, Temuka, St. Andrew's, Waimate, and Studholme, and also Mount Somers, and I found that the principal builders had already been made acquainted with the Act and regulations by Mr. Stringer, Inspector of Scaffolding, Christchurch, who was responsible for the administration of the Act in this district as well as his present one until my appointment.

Contractors and builders have now got all their plant and gear for scaffolding in accordance with the regulations, and every care is taken in the construction of scaffolding, particularly for brick buildings.

Nearly all the alterations that have been required to be made, have been on wooden and other buildings where the scaffolding has been less than 16 ft. in height.

In conclusion, I wish to express my thanks to the police officers acting for the Department of Labour in the smaller towns for their courtesy and assistance in locating the buildings in course of erection.

I have, &c.,

GEO. H. LIGHTFOOT,

Inspector of Scaffolding.

The Secretary for Labour, Wellington.

DUNEDIN.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Dunedin, 20th April, 1910.

I beg to submit the following report of the operations of the Scaffolding Inspection Act for the year ending 31st March, 1910.

During the period under review I have made 918 visits to 219 different scaffolds.

In 104 cases I directed that alterations be made in order to insure safety. Most of the defects have been of a trivial nature, such as bracing being too light, or a rope being perished, and in every case my directions have been carried out.

Neglect on the part of builders to keep ladders in proper repair has been the principal cause of complaint, and 21 have been condemned and destroyed during the year.

In 4 cases I have condemned portions of scaffolding altogether, and it has been promptly removed and other scaffolding erected in its stead.

I am pleased to say that rope guards have gone entirely out of use, and in most cases 4 in. by 2 in. rails are being used.

During the year 125 notices of intention to erect scaffolding exceeding the height of 16 ft. have been received, which is an increase of 50 on the previous year. This increase is largely due to the revival of the building trade in Southland, where several business firms are erecting more commodious premises than they have hitherto occupied.

Most of the buildings erected in Dunedin have also been for business purposes, and this fact also accounts for some of the increase in notices.

A large number of chimney-stacks have been repaired during the year by a firm of chimney jacks from the Old Country. Their style of scaffolding being altogether new to me, I ascended all the chimneys repaired by them, and am satisfied that their methods are entirely safe for men who are used to the class of work.

The New Zealand Express Company's new building, 115 ft. high, has been going on during the entire year, and has been most of the time surrounded with scaffolding erected in strict accordance with the regulations, and I am pleased to state that the whole job has been carried on without accident. This fact speaks volumes for the beneficial effects of the Act.

Four accidents have occurred on buildings in course of erection, all, I am pleased to state, of a trivial nature, and only one was connected with scaffolding, when a man slipped off a scaffolding in course of erection, and sustained a fracture of three ribs. During the year 2 builders were prosecuted for failing to send notice of intention to erect scaffolding, and in each case a penalty was inflicted.

I am pleased to state that any directions I have given have always been cheerfully carried out, and that all hands are recognising and appreciating the beneficial effects of the Act.

I have, &c.,

F. BARTON,

Inspector of Scaffolding.

The Secretary for Labour, Wellington.

REPORTS FROM WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT BRANCHES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

AUCKLAND.

Department of Labour (Women's Employment Branch),

Auckland, 16th April, 1910.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 31st March, 1910.

The volume of business transacted shows a large increase upon that of last year. During the period just closed 3,460 applications have been received and dealt with. Of these, 2,247 were from employers and 1,213 from women desiring employment. Out of this number, 695 actual engagements have been