

NEW PLYMOUTH.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, New Plymouth, 23rd April, 1913.

I beg to submit my report on the operation of the Act in the Taranaki district for the period from the 15th October, 1912 (when I took up my duties), to the 31st March, 1913.

Previous to my appointment as Inspector of Scaffolding in this district, in October, the duties were carried out by the Inspector at Wanganui. Since that time 18 notices to erect scaffolding of over 16 ft. in height have been received, and 47 visits of inspection have been made, while 32 visits have also been made in relation to scaffolding under 16 ft.

The building trade has been fairly busy, especially at Hawera, where several buildings are in course of erection.

Very little trouble has been given by builders, and when alterations have been required the verbal instructions given have been immediately complied with.

The inspection of ladders is a matter which requires constant attention, and I have had to condemn several which were unsafe. I am of opinion that Inspectors should be given the authority to have faulty or worn-out ladders destroyed.

Two slight accidents have been reported. No prosecutions under the Act have taken place.

I have paid several visits to Waitara, Inglewood, Hawera, Moturoa, and Patea for the purpose of inspection.

I have, &c.,

W. SLAUGHTER,

Inspector of Scaffolding.

The Secretary of Labour, Wellington.

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Wanganui, 18th April, 1913.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending the 31st March, 1913.

Forty-three notices of intention to erect scaffolding over 16 ft. in height from the base have been received. These related to the whole district, including the Rangitikei. In all these cases inspections have been made as far as possible while the buildings were in course of erection.

The necessity of supervision is apparent, as in most cases, especially on the smaller jobs, sufficient care is not taken to provide a safe and proper platform to work upon. On one scaffolding which came under my notice in a country town I found workmen engaged on a single plank 10 in. in width and 30 ft. in height from the ground; the standards supporting the platform were 3 in. by 1½ in., and to obtain the desired length one piece was nailed to the side of another with only from 12 in. to 12 in. lap. No guard-rails were provided, and in no way whatever did the scaffolding comply with the regulations. This is perhaps the worst case which has come under my notice, but other cases, in some respects similar to the one mentioned, are still found.

There is a growing tendency to use the Humphries brackets on wooden buildings in course of erection. While the use of these brackets may be considered satisfactory to work on where the work is of a temporary nature, or where no lifting is to be done from the platform, they are objectionable in most other cases, and it has been my duty to condemn their use on many buildings.

Four prosecutions were taken for failing to give notice of intention to erect scaffolding over the height of 16 ft.; a penalty was inflicted in each case.

Six accidents were reported; none was of a serious nature, while in no case could the accident be traced to faulty scaffolding or neglect in carrying out the regulations of the Act.

Throughout the year the building trade has been exceedingly busy, especially in the erection of the larger class of building, and at the present time there is a number of large buildings in course of erection. Tenders are also being called for the erection of several large business premises.

In connection with the duties under the Act, I have visited New Plymouth, Hawera, Eltham, Taihape, and Marton.

I have, &c.,

HENRY E. MOSTON,

Inspector of Scaffolding.

The Secretary of Labour, Wellington.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Wellington, 25th April, 1913.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 31st March, 1913.

The year, generally speaking, has been an uneventful one, and the state of the building trades in this district can be said to have been about normal.

I am glad to be able to state that very little friction has been experienced in the administration of the Act, and with a few exceptions I found that the people concerned were very willing to carry out any requirements when such were made known to them.

During the year the size of the district under my control has been materially reduced. This was badly wanted, as the district was far too large before, and it was impossible to effectually keep inspected the different works situated over such a wide extent of country.

It has been proposed during the year that the Scaffolding Inspection Act should be recast, and made to cover more fully all work done in connection with building operations and work pertaining to such; this I consider very desirable and necessary. I am also of the opinion that the present Act could now be improved in some ways, as since the Act came into force (over five years ago) a good deal of alteration in the methods of building has taken place, and the nature of the materials used has also altered, steel, concrete, and stone having come more into use. One