

## REPORTS FROM INSPECTORS OF SCAFFOLDING.

## AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Auckland, 22nd April, 1909.

I have the honour to submit my annual report for the year ending 31st March, 1909.

The Act is working very satisfactorily; both employers and employees appear to recognise its usefulness, and find that the work can be done with safety when scaffolding is constructed in compliance with the regulations.

The year has not been such a busy one compared with the previous year, although more notices have been received, several of which were for repairing and painters' work.

Since my last year's report I have made 1,344 visits, and have received 352 notices to inspect.

Some of the larger scaffoldings were in use from four to eight months, and required a great many visits to see that they were kept wedged up, and that bolts and ropes were kept tightened up.

Some buildings erected were 100 ft. high, and these required first-class gear; consequently the principal contractors now have very good plants.

The new regulations compelled the contractors who preferred square timbers for scaffolding to increase the size of the standards, and most of them have procured clean Oregon pine, which makes a very good pole.

Locally the chief alterations required to be made were—placing standards closer together, wedging up splices, and erecting guard-rails, fender-boards, and braces.

In some cases standards below the regulation size were erected, and required to be taken down and replaced.

During the year I condemned 8 scaffoldings as unsafe, and had them re-erected. Six were being erected with gear under regulation sizes, and had to be altered or reconstructed in accordance with the regulations.

I have paid visits to Gisborne, Hamilton, Te Aroha, Whangarei, Pukekohe, and Huntly during the twelve months, and can say that scaffoldings in most cases were in very good order. With the exception of Gisborne, the country contracts visited were taken by Auckland contractors, consequently they understood what was required.

I may state that one of the principal painters of Auckland informed me that he considered the Scaffolding Act had done an immense amount of good, especially in regard to swinging stages for their work, as at one time it was a very difficult matter to get men to do painting above ladder-height, but now, with the present regulation stage, he can send any of his men to the work, and they can do it with ease, and feel safe.

Upon making inquiries into the building trade at the present time in the city I find that contracts aggregating £666,700 are being carried out. This includes the ferro-concrete Grafton Bridge, which will last another eighteen months in building.

Plans for several more brick buildings are nearing completion, and, with the new post-office and technical school, I think there should be a satisfactory volume of work for the winter. •

## PROSECUTIONS.

It has been necessary to take proceedings against 3 contractors for failing to notify me of their intention to erect scaffolding, amongst which were 3 charges against one contractor—2 for failing to notify before erecting, and 1 for failing to report an accident. In every case a conviction and fine was obtained.

## ACCIDENTS.

I am pleased to be able to state that, although 22 accidents have occurred, only 4 were in connection with scaffolding, the remaining 18 happening in the erection of buildings.

In all cases the accidents were not of a very serious nature.

I have, &c.,

HUGH GRESHAM,

Inspector of Scaffolding.

The Secretary, Labour Department, Wellington.

## WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Wellington, 20th April, 1909.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 31st March, 1909.

I am pleased to say that as the Scaffolding Inspection Act and its regulations are getting better known to the builders and others concerned they are much better observed, and very little friction has been experienced in their administration in this district. The employers generally seem always very willing to carry out any suggestions, and when any alterations or additions are ordered to be made I seldom have any difficulty in getting them fully carried out.

The greatest difficulty that arises is to fix the responsibility for the care and maintainance of the scaffolding on some of the larger buildings on the right person where there are several subcontractors engaged.

It is almost always the rule in New Zealand to sublet the portions of work done by different trades, and after one trade has worked on and finished with the whole or portion of the scaffolding, it is very often left in a very neglected state, and when the next lot of tradesmen comes along, sometimes some months afterwards, the whole scaffolding has to be entirely altered or reconstructed, and the question arises as to who is to do the repairs and alterations.