

Thirteen accidents were reported. One was fatal, a builder at Dannevirke falling from a verandah roof about 12 ft. in height, and fracturing his skull by striking the concrete kerbing of the street. A serious accident occurred to a journeyman plumber and his assistant who had erected some temporary scaffolding, for their own use, with a ladder and a few pieces of wood; this scaffolding collapsed, and both fell to the ground, a height of about 22 ft.; the man sustained a broken pelvis and other injuries, and the boy a broken thigh. A bricklayer in Wellington also sustained a serious injury—viz., a broken leg—through falling 4 ft.—a piece of timber breaking. A dogman fell about 48 ft. while attempting to free the hauling-rope of a crane; he escaped with a severe shock. The rest of the accidents were slight, incapacitating the injured persons for periods ranging from two days to a fortnight.

Two firms were prosecuted for failing to give notice of accidents; a fine was obtained in each case. Others were warned.

I think the small number of accidents occurring on buildings and other places where scaffolds are used must be considered very satisfactory. Although no doubt a number of accidents occur that are not reported, generally speaking these would be of a very minor nature, or otherwise the Department would get knowledge of them from some source or other. The percentage of workmen injured is very small, especially when the hazardous nature of their employment is taken into consideration.

I desire to express my thanks for the valuable assistance, courtesy, and attention given by those with whom my duties have brought me into contact.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary of Labour, Wellington.

R. A. BOLLAND,
Inspector of Scaffolding.

NELSON.

Department of Labour, Nelson, 25th April, 1912.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit for your consideration my report on the working of the Scaffolding Act for the year ending the 31st March, 1912.

The building trade has been fairly brisk, chiefly in the country districts, and visits of inspection have been paid to the various places where buildings were in course of erection.

Twenty-two notices to erect scaffolding have been received. Visits of inspection were paid in each case. As a rule, the construction of scaffolds has been in conformity with the provisions of the Act, and in very few cases has any alteration been required.

There is a considerable improvement in the class of scaffolding in use on villa and small buildings. The Humphries iron bracket has come into general use for painters, and greater care has been taken with the erection of scaffolding generally. A considerable improvement can yet be made where ladders are concerned. These are a considerable source of trouble, as men will insist on nailing a few battens across light scantlings, and using these instead of properly constructed ladders. During the year I have requested a considerable number of this class of ladder to be knocked to pieces or taken off the work. Carpenters are the biggest offenders in these matters, and the ladders are a continual source of danger, both to themselves and other tradesmen who are likely to use them.

Two cases were taken for failing to give notice to erect scaffolding; conviction was obtained in each case.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary for Labour, Wellington.

S. TYSON,
Inspector of Scaffolding.

GREYMOUTH.

Department of Labour, Greymouth, 24th April, 1912.

SIR,—

I beg to submit my report on the work done under the Scaffolding Inspection Act for the year ending 31st March, 1912.

Only 8 notices have come to hand for erection of scaffolding exceeding the height of 16 ft.—viz., 6 in Greymouth and 2 in Reefton; 49 visits of inspection have been paid to 18 buildings in course of erection in different parts of the district, and in most instances the Act has been found to be fairly well complied with. One scaffolding was condemned in Reefton, and ordered to be reconstructed in accordance with the provisions of the Act. In another instance the ropes were condemned. In other cases I insisted upon more braces being put in, and the platforms widened, guard-rails put up, and the standards firmly embedded in the ground. Three ladders were condemned as being unsafe, and in another instance I insisted upon longer ladders being used in order that the labourers could step on to the platform clear from the ladder.

Visits of inspection were made to Blackball, Reefton, and Westport. In the latter town I found a scaffolding erected about 28 ft. high, of which I had received no notice. Legal proceedings were subsequently instituted, and the builder was fined £2 and costs. There has been no accident of any moment during the year; one man was incapacitated for a few days by a fall, through a faulty brace giving way.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary of Labour, Wellington.

JOHN JACKSON,
Inspector of Scaffolding.