

## DUNEDIN.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Dunedin, 6th May, 1912.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the operations of the Scaffolding Inspection Act, 1908, in the Otago District for the year ending 31st March, 1912.

Seventy-four notices of intention to erect scaffolding were received, but this small number, as compared with last year's figures, is no indication of the amount of scaffolding in use, as several large contracts were started before the end of last period, and the notices were included in the last report.

I have paid 562 visits of inspection to 172 buildings, and generally the provisions of the Act are being properly observed.

In 74 cases alterations have had to be made, principally in providing guard rails, extra bracing, and other small matters. The principal cause of complaint has been broken and badly constructed ladders, and in 28 cases such ladders have been destroyed. In one or two cases I found it necessary to order the whole of the scaffolding to be taken down and reconstructed.

Owing to Southland having been made a separate district, I have been able to devote more time than formerly to the inspection of scaffolding used in connection with cottage-work, and most of the defects mentioned above have originated in the said scaffolding.

The casualty list in connection with scaffolding is again surprisingly small, and I am pleased to say that only 2 accidents have been reported which entailed loss of time on the sufferers. Both these accidents were of rather a serious nature—one which was caused through the collapsing of a green-brick arch being responsible for injuring three men, two slightly and one seriously; in the other case the man fell through a small trap-door in the floor and sustained a fracture of his hip-joint, which incapacitated him for several weeks.

There are several large buildings in course of erection in this district, notably new shops and offices for Messrs. Hallenstein Bros. (four stories), new premises for the National Bank (three stories), large warehouse and shops for Messrs. Jameson and Son (four stories), new Baptist Church 70 ft. high, and new buildings for South Otago Freezing Company, and I attribute the almost entire immunity from accidents of any kind on the above buildings to the beneficial effects of the Act.

There has been no occasion to bring any prosecutions during the period, as the whole of the builders who tender for large works are thoroughly conversant with the provisions of the Act, and are conscientiously endeavouring to carry out the said provisions.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the members of the building trade with whom I have been brought into contact during the performance of my duties for their uniform courtesy, and also for their willingness to carry out any improvements or alterations in scaffolding which I have directed in my visits of inspection.

I have, &amp;c.,

F. BARTON,

Inspector of Scaffolding.

The Secretary of Labour, Wellington.

## INVERCARGILL.

SIR,—

Department of Labour, Invercargill, 22nd April, 1912.

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

Since taking up my duties in May, 1911, as Inspector of Scaffolding in this district I have made 270 visits of inspection to the various buildings in course of erection. Thirty-two notices to erect scaffolding over 16 ft. in height have been received, and several notices were forwarded to Dunedin before my appointment. I have also visited at regular intervals the suburban and outlying districts, and seen that scaffolding and ladders were in fit condition for working on. In many instances alterations have had to be made, but in all cases builders have been willing to carry out any alteration asked for.

Only 2 accidents have been reported—neither of a serious nature. Both accidents happened whilst taking down scaffolding.

Several batten ladders have had to be destroyed, and in many cases scaffolding has not been sufficiently braced. Contractors have willingly carried out instructions given. I have had occasion to visit Gore, Mataura, Wyndham, Otautau, Riverton, and Bluff, and have found that the Act is fairly well complied with.

The year has been a busy one for the building trade, and some very fine buildings have been completed, and at present there is no sign of trade slackening, as several large places are in course of erection, and others about to start.

There has been no prosecution under the Act.

In conclusion, I have to thank the several police Inspectors for their courtesy and assistance.

I have, &amp;c.,

JAMES BROWN,

Inspector of Scaffolding.

The Secretary of Labour, Wellington.