

Naturally, the large, insistent demand does not give millers or merchants an opportunity to dry the timber. The timber for joinery requires two years' seasoning in the ordinary course, but seasoned stocks have been depleted by the heavy orders. It is hoped to overtake the shortage of timber for joinery and furniture by the use of artificial drying chambers, which are being installed in several quarters.

Building Control.

The Position Explained.

Statement by the Minister.

From "Dominion" 11/8/20.

An explanation of the regulations just issued as to control of works involving the use of cement, bricks and timber was made yesterday by the Minister of Industries and Commerce (the Hon. E. P. Lee), who stated the reasons for the issue of these regulations, their objects, and the process to be followed in order to obtain permits.

The Minister stated that as a result of the increase in the erection of buildings it had been found that the supplies of cement, bricks and timber produced in the Dominion were insufficient to meet demands. The Government had therefore decided that action must be taken to ensure that the available supplies were applied for use in essential works and the regulations just issued are designed to give effect to this decision. Under the regulations no new work of a completed cost in excess of £20, and involving the use of any of the materials mentioned, may be commenced without a permit issued under the regulations. As the whole object of the regulations is to direct supplies to essential works, arrangements have been made to facilitate the process of obtaining permits for dwellings. The local authorities throughout New Zealand have been supplied with the necessary forms and have been authorised to issue permits for dwelling-houses and essential farm buildings within their districts. All applications for permits must be lodged with the local authority within whose district the work is situated and upon receipt of these applications the local authority will deal with all of those having relation to dwellings or essential farm buildings, and will forward other applications through the local Inspector of Factories to the Secretary of the Board of Trade.

Applications other than those for works which the local authority it authorised to deal with will be considered by the Board of Trade, with whom an advisory committee will be associated for the purpose. Works at present in course of construction will be allowed to proceed for a space of two months, but the right is conferred upon the Board of Trade to order any such works to be discontinued at any time. Before the expiry of two months it is necessary that application for a permit to continue such works shall be lodged as in the case of a new work, and unless a

permit is obtained all works at present in course of construction must cease immediately upon the expiry of two months.

Before supplying cement, bricks or timber, distributors must satisfy themselves that the work for which the materials are required is being carried on in accordance with a permit or authority to continue issued under the regulations. Any distributor supplying any of these materials to works not so authorised is liable to penalties, as is also the person to whom such materials are supplied. The production of a statement in writing signed by the person for whom the work is being done, asserting that a permit has been obtained, is sufficient authority to relieve the distributor of liability. The use of the materials covered by the regulations for works other than those for which they were supplied is also an offence. The breach of these regulations is an offence under the Board of Trade Act and renders the person committing such breach liable to a fine not exceeding £200 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months.

The effect of these regulations, being to reduce the construction of non-essential buildings, will release labour at present engaged or proposed to be engaged on such non-essential buildings for the purpose of the erection of dwellings and other essential buildings. The Minister stated that he wished specially to urge those having in contemplation the erection of non-essential buildings to delay their proposals and thus reduce the work of administration of these regulations, as it is not possible at the present time to authorise the issue of permits for such buildings.

The control of the distribution of cement, which has been in the hands of the Board of Trade for some time, must be continued for the present, as even with the restriction of buildings it will still not be possible for the full demands with respect to cement to be met.

Scrap the Arbitration Act.

A Drastic Proposal.

The Hon. J. MacGregor gave notice in the Legislative Council of the following motion:—

"That in the opinion of this Council (1) the system of State regulation of industry under the provisions of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1908, and its amendments neither fosters genuine trade unionism nor promotes true conciliation nor prevents strikes, nor tends in any way to improve the relations between Capital and Labour. (2) The time has come when the whole subject of the relations between Capital and Labour must be looked at from an entirely different point of view and dealt with in quite a different manner; and in order to enable the Government, members of Parliament, and industrial unions, trade unions and associations of employers to reconsider the whole subject and avail themselves of the knowledge derived from the study, investigation and experience of other countries, a short Act