

The reporting of minor accidents is very desirable. It is often merely a matter of chance that a minor accident was not a serious one. The vagaries of accidents should be well known, but it is sometimes not appreciated that a valuable lesson as to how a serious accident may be safeguarded can often be learned from an investigation into the causes of a minor accident.

No less than one hundred and seven of the accidents occurred with machines considered to be adequately equipped with safeguards. In many instances the guarding of such machines as saws, planers, shapers, moulders, and other wood-working machines and presses could not be improved. These machines may be considered dangerous, and only experience and extreme care on the part of the worker can prevent accidents. Fortunately, the safeguards fitted will prevent serious accidents, and where accidents do occur they are generally of a minor nature. One hundred of the accidents, or 77 per cent. of the total number reported, were connected with injuries to the fingers or hands. In a number of these cases thoughtlessness or inattention on the part of the workers were contributing factors.

The number of young persons injured by machinery during the year ending 31st March, 1937, was again high, no less than thirty-nine, or 30 per cent. of the total number of victims, being young persons of eighteen years of age and under. Many of these had been operating the machines at which they were injured for very short periods and the high rate is no doubt due to their youth and to inexperience in working with power-driven machinery.

Saws (21), planers (11), shapers, moulders, and other wood-working machinery (14), belts and shafting of transmission machinery (14), presses (12), metal-working machines (8), textile machinery (6), cranes and hoists (4), mincers (3), printing-machines (3), guillotines (2), and power mangles (2) were responsible for the majority of the non-fatal accidents.

#### NEW ZEALAND'S STANDARDS.

This branch of the Department is represented on the Mechanical Engineering Divisional Committee of the New Zealand Standards Institute. Approximately sixty standard specifications were examined up to the 31st March.

#### PROSECUTIONS.

Legal proceedings which were taken during the year for breaches of the Inspection of Machinery Act, and those which were successful include seven prosecutions taken under section 16 (working machinery not adequately guarded), one under section 15 (working a lift when in charge of a boy not over eighteen years of age), one under section 38 (working machinery in respect of which a certificate had not been issued), and one under section 64 (employing an engine-driver not properly certificated and acting as engine-driver without a certificate).

#### STAFF.

During the year Mr. Dawson, of Invercargill, was transferred to the staff of the Senior Surveyor of Ships, Wellington. Mr. S. N. Johnston was transferred from Wellington to the position of Senior Inspector of Machinery and Senior Surveyor of Ships, Christchurch. Mr. Lidgett, of Hamilton, resigned, and Mr. G. W. Martin, Inspector of Machinery, Queensland, was appointed to fill the vacancy. Mr. J. G. Lockie was transferred from Auckland to Greymouth to have charge of the West Coast district. Mr. Mowatt was transferred from Greymouth to Invercargill. Mr. Parker whose appointment was made last year commenced duties at Wellington on the 1st April. Mr. Townsend assumed the position of Senior Inspector of Machinery and Senior Surveyor of Ships, Auckland, at the end of April.

During the year Mr. C. H. Cowell was appointed Inspector of Machinery and Surveyor of Ships, Wellington.

Arrangements were made for pending transfers arising out of the retirement early in 1937-38 of Mr. D. Bell, Inspector of Machinery and Surveyor of Ships, Dunedin.

#### EXAMINATIONS OF LAND ENGINEERS, ENGINE-DRIVERS, AND ELECTRIC TRAM-DRIVERS.

These examinations were held at the various offices of the Inspectors of Machinery throughout the Dominion at the regular intervals provided for in the regulations. In addition, a few special examinations were granted, but the holding of special examinations is not encouraged, as it is considered that the regular examinations are of sufficient frequency, and except in very exceptional circumstances, candidates are expected to arrange that they may attend the scheduled examinations.

The full list of places where the examinations were held is shown in an appended return, as also is the number of candidates examined at each place. The classes of certificates for which examinations were held were :—

- Extra First-class Stationary Engineer.
- First-class Engine-driver.
- Second-class Engine-driver.
- Steam-winding-engine Driver.
- Electric-winding-engine Driver.
- Locomotive-engine Driver.
- Traction-engine Driver.
- Locomotive and Traction Engine Driver.
- Electric-tram Driver.
- Electric-tram Driver (One-man car).

The total number of candidates examined was 565. Of this number, 420 were successful and 145 failed in their examinations. Four hundred and eighty-three certificates were issued, which includes 420 to successful candidates in their examinations, the remainder being replacements and issues under the provisions of sections 53, 59, and 62 of the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1928.