

year. Of the fatal accidents, 2 occurred through an explosion in a cement-factory, 3 in sawmills, 1 through a fall (internal rupture), 1 through being struck by a piece of flying timber, and the other through a wire rope breaking and striking an employee on the head; a manager of a bacon-curing factory met his death through becoming entangled on a shaft of a gas-engine, and an employee in a freezing-works was killed by falling through an open hatch; a sugar-worker, when adjusting a loose belt in motion, was caught and fell a distance of some 50 ft.; a premature fall of clay in a brickyard was responsible for the death of another worker; an engine-driver was killed in a bacon-factory through falling on a shaft (it was surmised in this case that the worker became giddy and lost his balance); a worker in a bakehouse was found dead, with his head jammed between the body of the engine and the fly-wheel, probably an attack of dizziness caused a fall; a worker in a meat-preserving works was killed through the bursting of a vat. The percentage of accidents to number of workers employed is still very low compared with other countries, being at the rate of one reported accident of any kind for every ninety workers, and one fatal accident for every 6,566 workers employed. The table hereunder shows the accidents which occurred during the year in each industrial district:—

Northern Industrial District	..	..	..	..	..	325
Taranaki Industrial District	..	..	..	..	..	4
Wellington Industrial District	..	..	..	..	..	229
Marlborough Industrial District	..	..	..	..	..	3
Nelson Industrial District	..	..	..	..	..	1
Westland Industrial District	..	..	..	..	..	7
Canterbury Industrial District	..	..	..	..	..	165
Otago and Southland Industrial District	..	..	..	..	..	138

A chart is included at the end of this report illustrating the accidents in factories during the years 1903 to 1910 inclusive.

Every care is taken by our Inspectors, where necessary, in conjunction with the Inspectors of Machinery, to see that the lives and limbs of workers are safeguarded; when an accident happens the whole of the circumstances are inquired into, and if there is any fault in the machinery or its surroundings, remedial steps are taken.

Prosecutions.

The decrease noted in last year's report is maintained this year. A total of 102 cases were brought before the Court, as against 113 last year. In 1909 the total cases reached 150.

Ninety-seven convictions were obtained, and 5 cases were dismissed.

The nature of offences under the Act are summarized as follows:—

<i>Nature of Offence.</i>	<i>Number of Cases taken.</i>
Failing to allow weekly half-holiday to females and boys	11
Failing to pay wages within the time prescribed by the Act	18
Failing to keep wages and overtime books	7
Employing persons under sixteen in factories without permits	11
Employing females and boys overtime without permits	4
Failing to grant statutory whole holiday to females and boys	5
Failing to keep register of employment	1
Failing to report accidents within forty-eight hours	7
Failing to post up prescribed form in factories specifying hours of work, holidays, &c.	2
Failing to register factories	22
Miscellaneous offences	14

Of the dismissed cases, 1, for non-observance of statutory half-holiday, was dismissed because it was shown that the holiday had been given, but changed from Saturday to Thursday by a poll of electors in accordance with section 36; 1 for failing to register factory—this was dismissed as the Inspector could not prove that the goods made therein were for sale; 1 against a laundryman for employing a boy under the age of sixteen years without first obtaining a certificate of fitness—this was dismissed on a rehearing, a Customs officer giving evidence to the effect that when the boy landed in New Zealand three years previously he gave his age as fourteen years. Two other cases against laundrymen for employing male workers after 1 p.m. on statutory half-holidays were dismissed as there was a doubt as to the workers being actually employed.

For details of the important decisions given during the year under this Act, see "Important Legal Decisions."