

FACTORIES ACT.

Year.	Number of Factories registered.	Movement.	Number of Factory Workers.	Movement.
1913-14 (before the war)	13,469	94 (increase)	87,517	919 (increase).
1914-15	13,937	468 "	88,812	1,295 "
1915-16 (during the war)	13,214	723 (decrease)	83,011	5,801 (decrease).
1916-17	12,455	759 "	78,188	4,823 "
1917-18	12,485	30 (increase)	79,653	1,465 (increase).
1918-19	12,444	41 (decrease)	82,783	3,130 "
1919-20 (after the war)	13,490	1,046 (increase)	85,591	2,808 "
1920-21	13,661	171 "	96,603	11,012 "
1921-22	14,013	352 "	96,980	377 "
1922-23	14,535	522 "	92,608	4,372 (decrease).
1923-24	15,009	474 "	97,731	5,123 (increase).
1924-25	15,868	859 "	99,423	1,692 "
1925-26	16,311	443 "	102,321	2,898 "
1926-27	16,619	308 "	103,404	1,083 "
1927-28	16,782	163 "	102,622	782 (decrease).
1928-29	16,677	105 (decrease)	102,795	173 (increase).

The returns do not show any marked change in the number of factories or the number of factory workers in any of the industries.

The figures as to the number of factories and the workers employed therein do not purport to coincide with those of the Government Statistician (Census of Industrial Manufactures), as his returns, which are drawn up purely for statistical purposes, do not cover various small establishments that are included as factories under the Factories Act.

It might be explained that the above figures are those ascertained at registration-time (April in each year), except that, in order to include factories in seasonal industries which might be closed in April, any new establishments opened during the year are added; the figures shown for 1928-29, therefore, chiefly represent the numbers in April, 1928.

MASS PRODUCTION IN FACTORIES.

While other countries show a considerable development in the direction of large-scale factories and other works, there has been no such tendency in New Zealand, except in butter and cheese factories, notably in the Waikato. It is urged in Australia and elsewhere that manufacturers cannot expect to be able to compete with those in other countries unless they adopt similar methods. In New Zealand the tendency has been in the opposite direction, quite a large number of factory workers having opened small establishments for themselves either in preference to remaining as employees or on account of losing their positions.

ACCIDENTS.

As mentioned previously, in order that the accident statistics may be comparable with the statistics of other countries, as urged by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1923, the figures cover the calendar year instead of the financial year.

The total number of reported accidents in factories is 2,856 (2,726 males and 130 females), an increase of 92 compared with the previous year; 12 were fatal (last year 12). Of the total number, 73 of the accidents occurred to workers under sixteen years of age, 509 to those between sixteen and twenty, and the remaining 2,274 to those above that age. Of the 12 fatal accidents, 4 were caused by or were due to machinery. Five hundred and ninety-five of the total accidents were caused by or were due to machinery; this number is slightly under one-fourth of the total number of accidents that occurred in factories and is in about the same proportion as in previous years. The other principal causes of accidents were found to be as follows: Falls of persons (from stairs, ladders, platforms, &c.), 256; stepping on or striking against fixed objects, 136; faulty handling of tools, 760; handling of other objects (viz., objects dropped or tipped over, objects falling, or strain due to handling), 658; handling of poisonous, hot, and corrosive substances, 114; others (miscellaneous), 337; total, 2,856.

Disability caused: Temporary disability, 2,725; permanent partial disability, 119; fatalities, 12.

Of the accidents 1,472 occurred in freezing-works; this is about one-half of the total for all factories—the same proportion as during the previous year; most of these accidents, were, however, of a minor nature, such as cuts on the hands. As mentioned in the last annual report, it was decided to make a special inquiry in order to ascertain whether the number of these accidents could be reduced; these investigations are not yet completed.

Of the fatal and other serious accidents the following particulars are given:—

(1) A sawmill hand was fatally crushed by a log which had rolled from a truck owing to the breaking of a rack-chain; the strength of the chain appeared to be adequate, but one of the links contained a faulty weld.