ELECTRICAL ACCIDENTS.

During the year there were reported to the Department forty-eight electrical accidents, involving the loss of human life in nine instances. (Four of the accidents included more than one person injured.) Corresponding figures for 1935 were forty-five and seven respectively.

This year's electrical accidents resulted in injuries (fatal and otherwise) to the following :—

Electrical employees	13
Other tradesmen	10
General public	20
Stock	9
Total	52

ELECTRICAL FIRES.

During the year there were twenty-seven fires attributed to electrical causes and reported to the Department by electrical-supply authorities, as per list below. The corresponding figures for 1935 and 1934 were twenty-two and twenty-six respectively.

The sources of this year's electrical fires included the following :—

Electric irons	8
Electric radiators	2
Other electrical appliances	4
Defective installations	12
Soldering-iron accidentally placed on celluloid film	1
Total	27

REGISTRATION OF ELECTRICAL WIREMEN.

The Electrical Wiremen's Registration Act was passed in 1925 to ensure the safety of the public and users of electrical energy by providing qualified persons to install electrical wiring and equipment and by providing qualified inspectors to see that the wiring regulations are complied with.

The apprentices in the electrical-wiring trade are required to pass an examination, to serve three years, and to be not less than nineteen years of age before they can be registered.

The examination consists of two parts, a written part to test the candidate's knowledge of the theory of electricity and his knowledge of the safety regulations, and a practical part to test his workmanship.

The Act has been in operation for ten years, during which time there has been a gradual raising of the standard of electrical work, with the result that the consumer is now obtaining better value for expenditure and an installation which will have a longer life.

During the ten years ended the 31st March, 1936, there have been registered 3,520 electrical wiremen with full registration, 479 with limited registration, and 452 inspectors.

In addition, 4,167 candidates sat for the written part of the examination and 3,323 for the practical part.

A total of 528 reports of breaches of the Act and 424 reports of defective work by registered persons have been received.

For carrying out defective work 76 wiremen have been cautioned, 90 have been censured, 87 have had their registration certificates endorsed, and 5 have had their names removed from the register.

The increasing value of the Act can be gauged from the fact that when it came into force there were 192,392 consumers, and these had increased to 355,973 at the 31st March, 1936.

The success which has attended the administration of the Act has to a large extent been due to the co-operation of the electrical-supply authorities whose duty it is to inspect all electrical wiring.

To make the requirements of the Act more widely known a précis was prepared during the year, and this was included as an appendix to the electrical-wiring regulations. The inquiries with regard to the Act which have been received since the wiring regulations were published indicates that the appendix is serving a very useful purpose.

To keep the registers clear of dead names it is provided that they shall be purged once every five years. This purging took place during the past year, and as a result 502 names were removed from the full-registration register and 55 from the limited-registration register.

About 50 per cent. of removals were due to failure on the part of the registered persons to notify change of address, consequently the notice sent to the person concerned was returned unclaimed. In addition to a notice having been sent to each registered person, posters were forwarded for display in post-offices, by the supply authorities and in the district offices of the Public Works Department, and the secretaries of the respective wiremen's unions were notified in order that they might also bring the matter under the notice of their members.

Up to the end of June 153 names had been restored to the registers.

During the year ended 30th June there were registered 68 wiremen with full registration, 61 with limited registration, and 35 inspectors of electrical wiring. There were 248 candidates for the written part of the examination and 149 for the practical part; the passes were 57 in the written part and 65 in the practical part.