

Two in every 9 accidents were of a serious (or fatal) nature. Accidents to bicyclists comprise 33 per cent. of the total; young drivers and passengers in motor-vehicles account for 30 per cent., pedestrians 20 per cent., and motor-cyclists and pillion riders together equal 15 per cent.

The worst ages are nineteen years (133 casualties); eighteen years (111); sixteen years (100); seventeen years (90); fifteen years (73); six years (48); fourteen years (47); thirteen years (46); and seven years (40).

PEDESTRIANS.

One in every 4 pedestrian accidents was of a serious (or fatal) nature.

Most accidents occurred in the cities of Auckland, Wellington, Dunedin, and Christchurch, in the order given.

All 6 fatal accidents were to children between three and eight years of age. Children of six and seven years of age were concerned in 22 of the 42 cases of serious injury.

The worst ages for pedestrians under twenty years of age are six, five, seven, four, and eight in that order. Very few accidents occurred to pedestrians of the ages eleven, twelve, thirteen, and fourteen years.

Two-thirds of those injured were males. One-third of the accidents to all pedestrians under twenty years of age befell boys of six, five, seven, and four years of age, in that order. Nearly three times as many accidents occurred to boys of those ages as to girls of the same ages; for the other ages there is little difference between the numbers of accidents for the two sexes. One-third of the accidents to females occurred to girls of the ages of six, seven, five, and four years, in that order.

The worst days are Friday, Saturday, and Wednesday, in that order. The worst hours are 3-4 p.m., 4-5 p.m., 5-6 p.m., 8-9 a.m., and 2-3 p.m., in that order. One-fifth of all the accidents happened to those in the 5-9 and 10-14 years groups in the two-hour period 3-5 p.m.

An outstanding feature is that 60 accidents (5 fatal, 14 serious, and 41 minor) resulted from children under ten years of age running on to or across the roadway. Emerging from behind a stationary vehicle, resulting in 34 accidents, was the next most serious cause. For all persons under twenty years of age these two causes alone were primarily responsible for over half the total number of accidents. Playing or loitering on the road accounted for 22 accidents, of which 15 were in respect of children between five and nine years of age.

Car and lorry drivers, and motor-cyclists, should be enabled more fully to understand the liability of young children to acts of impulsiveness and to be on the alert where children are walking along or across the roadway, or even where they are on the footpath.

PUSH-CYCLISTS.

Accidents to cyclists under twenty years of age represent about 45 per cent. of the accidents to cyclists of all ages.

One in every 5 accidents was of a serious (or fatal) nature.

Most accidents occurred in the cities of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Palmerston North, in that order.

As mentioned previously, pedestrians between eleven and fourteen years of age suffer very few accidents; but at age eleven the accidents to bicyclists become more numerous and rise steadily to their peak at age sixteen. (Motor-cycle accidents appear at age fifteen and rise steadily to age nineteen.)

The worst accident day for young cyclists is Friday. There is very little difference between the other days, including Sunday. For the under twenty group the highest accident hours are 5-6 p.m., 4-5 p.m., 12-1 p.m., 6-7 p.m., 7-8 a.m., and 3-4 p.m. For the ten to fourteen years group the worst hours are 5-6 p.m., 4-5 p.m., and 3-4 p.m.

One hundred and forty-six accidents occurred on straight stretches of road, 129 at intersections, and 26 at bends; 87 of the accidents occurred on grades ranging from steep to easy.

The danger of speeding down a grade, preventing the rider from yielding the right of way at an intersection, or throwing him out wide at a bend, or causing him to apply his brakes suddenly and fall or skid as the alternative to a collision, is suggested by the fact that nearly 30 per cent. of the accidents happened on a grade or at the end of a grade.

In 277 cases it was possible clearly to apportion the responsibility between motor-driver and cyclist. The cyclist was responsible for 6 fatal accidents, 40 out of 50 serious accidents, and 156 out of 219 accidents causing minor injury, or 202 (nearly three-fourths) of the 277.

One in every 8 accidents was due to failure of the cyclist to signal before turning at an intersection or through turning suddenly or swerving on a straight stretch of road. Next in order were failure to keep to the left, failure to yield the right of way to vehicles coming from the right at intersections, and excessive speed. In addition, there were 61 cases of general carelessness (covering also inexperience where young riders were concerned). These include a good many cases of cyclists riding close behind a motor-vehicle and striking the rear of the latter upon its stopping suddenly at an intersection or elsewhere. Riding straight off the footpath into the way of a passing motor-vehicle was another fairly common breach. The carelessness or recklessness to which some cyclists are prone is demonstrated by the fact that 17 cyclists ran into parked vehicles, generally in daylight.

The inexperience of young cyclists, and the tendency of such cyclists (and of some cyclists of higher ages) to do the "unexpected" are points which could with advantage be brought more prominently before all drivers.

An additional hazard affecting the safety of push-cyclists (and pedestrians on the roadway) at night exists when a driver is dazzled by the headlights of an oncoming vehicle. Under this heading there were ten accidents to cyclists and pedestrians. Further similar accidents will be obviated if drivers realize that their duty in similar circumstances is to stop.