

Return showing the Falling-off in Number of Boys and Girls employed in Factories.

| Year. | | | | Total Number of Factory Workers. | Total Number of Young Persons (aged 14-16). | Percentage. |
|---------|----|----|----|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1908-9 | .. | .. | .. | 78,848 | 20,218 | 25 $\frac{2}{3}$ |
| 1909-10 | .. | .. | .. | 77,806 | 18,960 | 24 $\frac{1}{4}$ |
| 1910-11 | .. | .. | .. | 78,790 | 18,173 | 23 |

From the above it will be seen that the number of boys and girls of fourteen to sixteen years of age employed in factories has decreased from 25 $\frac{2}{3}$ for every 100 factory workers in 1908-9 to 23 for every 100 in 1910-11; so that if the proportion of these young persons in 1908-9 had been maintained, there would in 1910-11 have been 20,220 young persons, or 2,047 more than there actually were.

Overtime.

The overtime worked by women and by boys under sixteen years of age was 407,509 hours, an increase over the previous year of 41,881 hours. The dressmaking, tailoring, biscuit and confectionery making, printing, woollen-milling, and laundry trades mainly contributed to these extra hours. In each of these industries there has been at times a pronounced shortage of skilled labour, and the full limit of overtime allowed by law has been worked in each of the four centres. Details of hours of overtime worked in the several towns and trades are given in this report (page cviii). The figures quoted do not, of course, imply that full ordinary time has in all cases been worked. As a set-off against the overtime worked, it would be interesting to be able to record the extent to which ordinary working-time is lost, although, while workers sometimes lose time on account of the fluctuations of business, it is stated that in some cases workers absent themselves at holiday seasons, even when work is busy.

Permits.

The permits issued to young persons (fourteen to sixteen years of age) to work in factories, for the period total 1,106 to boys and 1,293 to girls. This is a decrease of 5 to boys and an increase of 20 to girls over last year's figures. A return giving details of the school standard passed in the various towns is appended to this report (page cix).

Accidents in Factories.

Despite the vigilance of the Inspectors, the number of accidents recorded in industrial occupations has increased, though it is pleasing to report that the increase is mainly in the slight accidents, the serious and fatal ones showing a decrease as compared with the previous year. The following table compares this year with last:—

| — | | | | Slight. | Moderate. | Serious. | Fatal. | Total. |
|---------|----|----|----|---------|-----------|----------|--------|--------|
| 1910-11 | .. | .. | .. | 638 | 145 | 77 | 12 | 872 |
| 1911-12 | .. | .. | .. | 792 | 167 | 50 | 11 | 1,020 |

The following is a summary of the fatal accidents: A butcher in the freezing-works at Gisborne slipped on concrete steps and was impaled on his butcher's steel; a power-house engineer at Dunedin was found dead, apparently having fallen whilst fixing some electric lights and caught a conductor, receiving a fatal shock; an engineer's apprentice at Greymouth was jammed by a travelling crane against a girder, and death was instantaneous; a flax-mill hand in the Wellington District, whilst fixing a belt, was carried round the main shaft and killed; a confectionery-maker, Dunedin, fell off a ladder and was killed; a sawyer, Northern District, was struck on abdomen by a piece of wood which flew off saw; a brickmaker's labourer, Auckland, was injured by a fall of clay, and did not survive operation; a confectioner's assistant, Canterbury, was caught in belting whilst fixing same on shaft in motion; a stonecrusher, Otago, was caught on shaft of machine and killed outright; a gasworker, Wellington, fell from top of retort bench down staircase-well; wool-dumper—a bale of wool fell off a truck and broke his spine.