

FACTORIES ACT.

Year.				Number of Factories registered.	Movement.	Number of Factory Workers.	Movement.
1916-17	..	..	..	12,455	759 (decrease)	78,188	4,823 (decrease).
1926-27	..	..	..	16,619	308 (increase)	103,404	1,083 (increase).
1927-28	..	..	..	16,782	163 "	102,622	782 (decrease).
1928-29	..	..	..	16,677	105 (decrease)	102,795	173 (increase).
1929-30	..	..	..	17,082	405 (increase)	104,448	1,653 "
1930-31	..	..	..	17,019	63 (decrease)	104,377	71 (decrease).
1931-32	..	..	..	16,253	766 "	89,932	14,445 "
1932-33	..	..	..	16,176	77 "	86,222	3,710 "
1933-34	..	..	..	15,598	578 "	85,968	254 "

The figures as to the number of factories and workers employed therein do not purport to coincide with those of the Government Statistician (annual statistics of factory production), 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 1933-34, therefore, chiefly represent the numbers in April, 1933.

There has been a substantial decrease in the number of factories registered due to the closing-down of small businesses, while the decrease in the number of factory workers is negligible. A decided improvement is noticeable in a number of industries—viz., clothing and white working, boot-manufacturing, and sawmilling and other trades connected with the building industry. The improvement in boot-manufacturing has been contributed to to some extent by the action of the Unemployment Board in supplying locally made boots to the unemployed, while the operation of the Board's No. 10 Scheme has undoubtedly been responsible for the revival (even if merely temporary) of the sawmilling and other trades connected with the building industry.

The raising of the rate of exchange which was originally done for the purpose of benefiting the Dominion's primary producers has also been of considerable advantage to New Zealand manufacturers in that it has increased the landed cost of imported goods, thereby enabling the locally manufactured goods to secure a larger share of the market. This result has been particularly noticeable in the case of the clothing, white working, and other similar industries, where it was found necessary to work a considerable amount of overtime, and it is anticipated from the registrations that have so far been effected for the present year that the beneficial results observable during last year will be more than maintained during the coming year so far as factory employment is concerned. The establishment of the following new industries during the past year may also be regarded as an indication of the improved tone of manufacturing in the Dominion :—

- Rubberware-manufacturing.
- Flax woolpack and textile manufacturing.
- Vacuum packing of primary produce.
- Eel-canning.
- Manufacture of wooden matches.
- Manufacture of dry-cell batteries.
- Refining of crude oil into various grades of lubricating-oil, and the preparation of ethyl petrol.

ACCIDENTS.

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 to workers in factories is 2,747 (2,615 males and 132 females). Of the total number, 37 of the accidents occurred to workers under sixteen years of age, 550 to those between sixteen and twenty, and the remaining 2,160 to those above that age. Of the 6 fatal accidents 3 were caused by or were due to machinery. Of the total accidents, 357 were caused by or were due to machinery. The other principal causes of accidents were found to be as follows: Falls of persons (from stairs, ladders, platforms, &c.), 252; stepping on or striking against fixed objects, 108; faulty handling of tools, 896; handling of other objects—viz., objects dropped or tipped over, objects falling, or strain due to handling, 778; handling of poisonous, hot, and corrosive substances, 92; others (miscellaneous), 264: total 2,747. Disability caused: Temporary disability, 2,655; permanent partial disability, 86. Fatalities, 6.

The cases in respect of which time lost is available—viz., 2,601—show that a total of 48,829 days were lost, or an average of 18·8 days for each worker.

In cases where the amount of compensation paid is known—viz., in 2,685 out of the total of 2,747—the total amount paid is £32,596 2s. 11d.

The following particulars are given of the fatal accidents that occurred during the year :—

The manager of a sawmill died in hospital as the result of an accident which occurred while he was attending to one of the drive belts in the mill. No one witnessed the accident, but apparently the deceased in endeavouring to wipe some oil off the belt with a piece of cotton waste was caught up and thrown to the ground some distance away.