

total number, 92 of the accidents occurred to workers under sixteen years of age, 541 to those between sixteen and twenty, and the remaining 2,325 to those above that age. Of the 8 fatal accidents, 3 were caused by or were due to machinery. Of the total accidents 646 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.), 276; stepping on or striking against fixed objects, 159; faulty handling of tools, 739; handling of other objects (viz., objects dropped or tipped over, objects falling, or strain due to handling), 741; handling of poisonous, hot, and corrosive substances, 148; others (miscellaneous), 249; total, 2,958.

Disability caused: temporary disability, 2,811; permanent partial disability, 139. Fatalities, 8.

Of the accidents 1,330 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.

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

(1) A master plumber experienced trouble with his blow-lamp and attempted to adjust it near a can of methylated spirits, which exploded with fatal results.

(2) An engine-driver in a sawmill was seen to mount a platform in order to attend to a boiler-injector. Later he was found lying on the ground with severe head injuries which subsequently proved fatal. It is assumed that he was struck by a protruding nut on the belt from the main drive-wheel or by the belt-fastening. The Inspector of Machinery has called upon the employer to install satisfactory guards to prevent a similar occurrence.

(3) Two lads were taking a truck of wet gelatine into a drying-tunnel when one was caught in a suction fan and sustained fatal injuries. At the request of the Inspector of Machinery the fans were subsequently guarded by means of wire netting.

(4) A worker was feeding a sausage-machine when his right hand apparently slipped, four fingers being severed.

(5) The drying-furnace of a foundry had been banked for the night, but later in the evening it was reported that volumes of smoke were being emitted. A member of the firm accompanied by his son went to investigate the matter and was stirring the fire when an explosion of gas occurred. Both persons were severely burnt, the son subsequently dying.

(6) A lime worker was riding down a steep incline on a truck which was being lowered by means of a cable and winch. The truck got out of control and crashed into another at the foot of the incline, the worker being thrown off and sustaining fatal injuries. Subsequent examination of the winding-gear failed to reveal any defect, but it appeared that the truck had been lowered without having the clutch in and both brakes in operation. Only the one brake had been used. Notices have now been posted prohibiting workers from riding on trucks.

(7) Two experienced workers were engaged stacking heavy iron plates each weighing about 16 cwt. When one of the plates was lowered the impact with the ground threw the crane-hook out of the eye on the plate-grab, causing the plate to fall forward on to the workers, both of whom were pinned beneath it. One of the workers subsequently succumbed to his injuries. Steps to prevent a similar occurrence were taken by the Inspector of Machinery.

(8) While attending to the oiling of machinery a worker seventy-three years of age fell from a ladder a distance of about 16 ft., receiving fatal injuries to the head. There were no witnesses to the accident, which may have been caused through the worker becoming giddy or fainting. Arrangements were made, however, to recondition the ladder, the rungs of which were considered to be too far apart, and also to provide a hand-rail.

(9) A joiner who was ripping strips of panelling on a circular saw lost a thumb and joints of two fingers as a result of his hand coming in contact with the saw. The saw was properly guarded, but the worker failed to use the wooden "poker" that is usually used in such circumstances.

(10) A foreman printer was lifting a heavy roller when it fell on his foot, crushing the big toe. The wound became septic, apparently as a result of the introduction of dye or some other substance from the worker's clothing, and he subsequently died.

(11) Following a small bruise on the arm a labourer in a brick-kiln contracted blood-poisoning, which resulted in his death.

(12) A lad lost four fingers of the right hand and also sustained injuries to the sinews of the hand and arm while freeing with his fingers a piece of meat adhering to the inside wall of a mincing-machine. The boy had shifted the belt to the loose pulley, but owing to some defect the belt, which had recently been repaired, worked back on to the fixed pulley and set the machine in motion.

(13) A worker had his hand and arm severely crushed and lacerated between the rollers of a caramel-rolling machine. The Department arranged for guards to be placed on this particular machine in 1928, but these were subsequently removed by some person apparently without authority. New guards have now been fitted.

(14) A youth employed as a general hand in a box-factory lost the four fingers of the left hand through contact with a travelling saw. The saw was well guarded, but was open on one side. It is assumed that the worker brought his hand against the saw while turning to speak to another worker.

(15) In order to remove a block and tackle from a girder a worker in a foundry, instead of using the pole supplied for the purpose, apparently stood on a rail. It is presumed that in reaching for the block he overbalanced and, coming in contact with a live wire, was electrocuted. For all ordinary purposes the wires were sufficiently guarded.