

FACTORY ACTS, 1871 (RELAXATION OF STATUTORY LIMITS).

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 15 April 1874;—for,



“RETURN, for the Year 1873, of each Instance in which, in accordance with the FACTORY ACTS, 1871, Relaxation of the Statutory Limitation of Hours of Labour has been Granted in FACTORIES and WORKSHOPS coming under the WORKSHOPS ACTS; the Date of Granting such Relaxation; the Reason in each Case why such Relaxation has been Granted; a Description of the Manufactures in which such Relaxation has been Granted; the Duration of each Relaxation; and whether and how often such Relaxation has been RENEWED.”

DISTRICT OF MR. REDGRAVE.

By Order of the Secretary of State, dated 28th December 1871, young persons, of at least 14 years of age, and women, were allowed to be employed as follows, in certain occupations dependent upon the seasons of the year, to wit:—

Tailors.
Dress, mantle, and paletôt makers.
Milliners.
Hat, cap, and bonnet makers.
Shirt-collar makers.
Boot and shoe makers.
Braid, fringe, and fancy trimming makers.
Artificial flower makers.
Bonbon and Christmas present makers.
Valentine makers.
Fancy-box makers.
Almanack makers and finishers.
Firewood cutters.

By such Order they might be employed for one hour and a-half beyond the ordinary hours of work, for not more than five days in a week, nor more than one month at a time, and for not more than 96 days in the year.

By Modification No. 2 of Factory Act, 1871, it is enacted that an Order shall be in force for such time, and during such periods only, as may be specified in such Order.

Upon the issue of the Order authority was given under it, to certain establishments, to work overtime for one month. (*See Return, House of Commons Papers, 1872, No. 121.*)

But an experience soon showed that it was not desired generally to work overtime for five days a week, consecutively, for one month, therefore the same number of days were authorised to be spread over a longer period; and as it appeared that it would be sufficient for overtime to be authorised on not more than two days in a week, the Order has been so limited; thus, instead of working overtime five days a week for one month, *i. e.*, 24 days, overtime is granted for two days a week for three months, *i. e.*, 24 days. (*See Reports of Inspectors of Factories, April 1872, p. 16; October 1872, p. 37.*)

As the seasons vary in different places, different arrangements had to be made. For instance, in London the season begins about or after Easter, and lasts for three months; consequently that is the time most desired by the London establishments.

In Lancashire and Yorkshire Whitsuntide is generally the brisk season.

In other places there is a necessity only to work overtime for wedding or funeral orders, and thus the 24 days may be spread over the whole year.

In some trades the brisk seasons vary considerably; as, for instance, Christmas presents, almanacks, valentines, &c., and the Orders are confined to the special seasons in each case, as the dates of granting the Orders will show.