

on Inspectors of Factories, powers covering workers in shops, offices, warehouses, and other workplaces are insufficiently wide. Work under the Emergency Precautions Scheme has been of considerable value in regard to means of escape from buildings, and Inspectors of Factories are co-operating with the authorities in this matter.

Inspectors of Factories have also been advised of the special dangers that may arise from industrial employments during enemy action, as well as the principles of effective ventilation and lighting in black-out conditions.

INSPECTIONS, ETC.

During the year visits of inspection to the number of 12,446 were made. Complaints were received respecting 395 alleged breaches of the Act, resulting in 10 prosecutions and 156 warnings. In 103 cases investigation showed that no breach had been committed, while in the remaining cases no action was considered necessary. Ten prosecutions were instituted for breaches which were discovered by Inspectors, and warnings were given in other cases, being either first offences or of a minor nature. Convictions were secured in 17 of the 20 prosecutions; the fines totalled £33. No case calls for comment.

There were 528 requisitions served to comply with various requirements of the Act, such as for lime-washing, safeguards for workers employed on machinery, &c., sanitary conveniences, fire-escapes, dust-extraction, renovations and structural alterations, heating-appliances, lighting, ventilation, spray-booths in duco work, first-aid appliances, and dining-rooms in the case of establishments employing over six women and girls and boys under sixteen; also provision of drinking-water.

AMENDMENT OF FACTORIES ACT, 1921-22.

The Statutes Amendment Act, 1941, varied section 14 of the Factories Amendment Act, 1936, relating to wages payable for holidays. It was designed merely to overcome any ambiguity that may have existed as to the intention of the Legislature that payment for any of the eight holidays prescribed by the Factories Act, 1921-22, is to be made to every person who has been employed in a factory at any time during the fortnight ending on the day on which the holiday occurs.

BOYS AND GIRLS IN FACTORIES.

The Factories Act, 1921-22, provides that a boy or girl under sixteen years of age shall not be employed in any factory unless the occupier holds from the Inspector a certificate of fitness relating to the boy or girl. Certificates to the number of 4,298 (previous year, 4,199) were issued during the year (boys, 2,153; girls, 2,145). Of the certificates issued, 196 were for boys and 284 for girls under fourteen years of age. The Inspector is to be satisfied before issuing a certificate that the boy or girl to whom it relates is of the age specified therein and is fit for the employment. Further, under section 27, "A boy or girl under fourteen years of age shall not be employed except in special cases, authorized in writing by the Inspector." Certificates are not issued lightly to boys and girls under fourteen, and are endorsed to the effect that the boy or girl concerned must not be employed on any machine in any workroom in which machinery is used.

Inquiries made by the Department definitely established that boys and girls below the age stated are not being employed on machines. It may be that in some workrooms, girls over fourteen years of age are employed on power machines of the standard type, but the work is usually of a comparatively light nature.

SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

The Department has no accurate record as to the number of shops and the number of assistants employed therein, but from the information available it is estimated that there were during the year 28,007 shops throughout New Zealand, of which 13,440 (approximately one-half) were carried on without assistants. In the shops with assistants it is estimated there were employed 24,451 males and 27,575 females.

During the year visits of inspection of shops to the number of 17,250 were made. The Department also made 2,045 visits of inspection of offices, but the information so far available is insufficient to enable it to make an accurate estimate regarding the number of offices in the Dominion and of assistants employed therein.

Prosecutions numbered 144 (employers, 142; workers, 2); convictions were obtained in 132 cases. A number of cases were withdrawn; fines totalled £180 15s.

Complaints were received respecting 419 alleged breaches of the Act, resulting in 54 prosecutions and 157 warnings. In 122 cases investigations showed that no breach had been committed, while in the remaining cases no action was considered necessary. Ninety prosecutions were instituted for breaches which were discovered by Inspectors, and warnings were given in other cases, being either first offences or of a minor nature.

One hundred and forty-four requisitions were served on occupiers of shops to comply with various requirements of the Act, such as for sanitary conveniences, heating-appliances, lunch-rooms, seating or rest-room accommodation, lighting, ventilation, cleanliness, and partitions, including separate entrances.

AMENDMENT OF THE SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

Prior to the amalgamation of the Borough of New Brighton with the City of Christchurch, which took effect on 1st April, 1941, an understanding was arrived at between the two local authorities concerned that the amalgamation was not to affect the existing position in respect of the half-holiday in the New Brighton area. This necessitated that the New Brighton area remain a separate district for the purposes of the Shops and Offices Act, 1921-22 (the Christchurch City Council being deemed to be the local authority thereof), also that the existing position in regard to the hours of closing on other working-days in the week be preserved. A section in the Statutes Amendment Act, 1941, gave effect to this understanding.