

Accidents in Factories.

				Slight.	Moderate.	Serious.	Fatal.	Total.
1913-14	..	..	..	879	165	52	8	1,104
1914-15	..	..	..	747	171	46	3	967
1915-16	..	..	..	837	160	65	3	1,065
1916-17	..	..	..	938	144	84	5	1,171
1917-18	..	..	..	509	317	65	10	901
1918-19	..	..	..	795	192	58	8	1,053
1919-20	..	..	..	652	454	105	7	1,218
1920-21	..	..	..	1,122	351	91	11	1,575
1921-22	..	..	..	1,192	425	63	12	1,692

Every accident was inquired into in the usual way by an Inspector, and in only one case was it found that the accident was due to negligence or to defect of machinery or appliances. In this case proceedings were taken by the Inspection of Machinery Department.

Certificates of Fitness issued to Boys and Girls under Sixteen Years of Age to work in Factories.

Year.					Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1913-14	..	..	..	..	932	1,241	2,173
1914-15	..	..	..	..	952	1,136	2,088
1915-16	..	..	..	..	1,100	1,263	2,363
1916-17	..	..	..	..	1,158	1,251	2,409
1917-18	..	..	..	..	1,199	1,236	2,435
1918-19	..	..	..	..	1,240	1,333	2,573
1919-20	..	..	..	..	1,252	1,685	2,937
1920-21	..	..	..	..	1,267	1,368	2,635
1921-22	..	..	..	..	962	1,286	2,248

The fall in the number of girls for whom certificates of fitness were applied for is again marked, and is this year accompanied by a considerable drop in the number of certificates issued to boys. It may be inferred that, generally speaking, boys and girls are not being employed in factories to the same extent as in the past few years, when young persons were employed very largely in the absence of adult male workers at the war.

Other Matters.

Prosecutions numbered twenty-one, a decrease of twenty-two as compared with last year's total. Convictions in nineteen cases; the other two cases remain to be heard.

During the year a consolidating Act, the Factories Act, 1921-22, was passed, incorporating the provisions of the Factories Act, 1908, and its amendments, together with a few minor additions.

SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

Prosecutions, 174, an increase of forty-five over last year's total. Convictions in 169 cases. None calls for comment.

During the year an amending and consolidating Act was passed, bringing the Act up to date in all respects. Among the most important amendments are the following:—

(1.) The hour beyond which females could not be employed in shops other than hotels or restaurants (except on Christmas and New Year's Eves) was extended from 9 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.; boys under eighteen were included in the restriction; and the Act was made more clear in respect of those shops where the business of a restaurant is combined with that of an ordinary shop such as a confectionery-shop.

(2.) The hours of employment in hotels and restaurants are reduced in all cases to forty-eight a week. Under the former Act the maximum hours were sixty-two for men, fifty-six for women and boys in hotels, and fifty-two for women and boys in restaurants, although in many districts the hours had been reduced by awards and industrial agreements under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act to forty-eight in all cases. The previous provision that women and girls in restaurants could be employed under an overtime permit after the hour of 10.30 p.m. has been deleted.

(3.) A provision is made to enable the proprietor of an auctioneering business to sell by auction fish, fruit, vegetables, meat, or other perishable goods on the half-holiday with the permission of the Inspector.

(4.) One or more shops in a holiday resort in which the statutory closing-day is Saturday may, if the Inspector thinks fit in the interests of the public, be permitted to observe another day in lieu thereof.

(5.) The definition of "restaurant" for the purposes of this Act is extended to boarding-houses in which three or more persons other than the occupier's family are employed.