

manner. In pursuance of the above arrangements 360 special inspections have been made by Inspectors at the request of committees, in addition to which Inspectors themselves in the course of their ordinary inspection have made 3,940 inspections, of which 2,428 were made last year. The objections above referred to may also be overcome to some extent by the procedure adopted by the Dunedin Painters' Committee, for example, which calls upon several of the apprentices in succession to present themselves at the meetings of the committee for examination.

Section 5 (4) (b) : To cancel any contract of apprenticeship—for instance, where the committee is satisfied that the apprentice is not suited to the industry. Sixty contracts have been cancelled—fifty-nine by committees and one by agreement of the parties.

Section 5 (4) (c) : To prohibit an employer from employing an apprentice. This may be done, for example, on account of lack of facilities for instruction, or because the trade is not a suitable industry in which to train apprentices, or until an employer can show that he is sufficiently established in business to continue as an employer. In twenty-two cases employers have been prohibited by committees under this section from taking apprentices, viz : Baking, 1 ; painting, 1 ; plumbing, 10 ; electrical working, 2 ; bootmaking, 2 ; bricklaying, 1 ; carpentering, 3 ; cabinetmaking, 1 ; and plastering, 1.

Section 5 (4) (d) : To order the transfer of any apprentice to another employer who is willing to take him—for example, where the committee considers better or further training can thus be obtained. Nine such orders have been issued on account of the first employer's inability to teach.

Section 5 (4) (g) : To order the attendance of any apprentices at a technical school, either in their own time or in the employers' time, if sufficient facilities for complete training are not provided by the employer. Nineteen committees, covering fourteen trades, have ordered all apprentices to attend technical schools in their own time. In one instance the Court made a similar order. Extra remuneration has been provided for in twelve trades upon the boys obtaining certificates showing satisfactory progress made at the schools. No orders appear to have been made requiring employers to give time off to their apprentices to attend technical schools. The furniture trade committee in Wanganui has, however, agreed to two hours on Saturday morning being given for the purpose in the employer's time.

Section 5 (4) (h) : To order the examination of apprentices. Eight committees, covering thirteen trades, have ordered such examinations.

Section 5 (4) (i) : To order that any increase in wages due to an apprentice may be withheld—for example, on account of negligence or carelessness of the apprentice. In one case—painting trade—the committee made such an order.

Section 6 (2) : The Act confers a right of appeal to the Court of Arbitration upon any party affected by the decision of a committee. There have been only six such appeals. One of these is of interest, as follows : An engineering firm in Christchurch appealed against the refusal of the committee in that trade to register two apprentices to welding. The committee had refused to register because it considered it would be unfair to require them to spend five years at this branch of the trade. At the Court's suggestion the matter was held over in order to see whether the engineering firm could bring forward some definite proposals to the committee in regard to the length of time the apprentices should serve at welding and one other branch of the engineering trade.

The Act applies generally to all apprenticeships hitherto covered by awards and industrial agreements under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, but the Court may extend the Act to other cases. Apprenticeship orders have been made respecting eight trades in localities which were not previously covered—viz., plasterers, stonemasons, hairdressers, moulders, boilermakers, engineers, motor mechanics, and wicker workers in the Wanganui, Nelson, Westland, and Otago Districts.

The Act does not apply to females unless specially ordered by the Court in any case. In one instance (hairdressing) females have been included in the order covering that trade.

Other provisions : Section 8 requires that every apprenticeship to which the Act applies shall, if in order, be registered by the District Registrar of Apprentices. From returns obtained from employers of apprentices under the Act it was ascertained that at the 31st March, 1925, there were 6,836 apprentices employed, and on 31st March, 1926, 8,055. It is intended to obtain the figures for this year as at the 1st October, in order that up-to-date information may be available for the guidance of head teachers and boys about to leave the schools. The estimated number of apprentices as at the 31st March, 1927, is 9,073. The increases shown are partly due to the proportionate natural increase from year to year in the number of journeymen, to the fact that the apprenticeship orders as issued by the Court from time to time have covered a wider field, and no doubt to some extent to a larger number of apprentices being employed. The District Registrar may in any case refuse to register a contract of apprenticeship if he considers that the Act or any regulation or order of the Court or committee has not been complied with. Thirty-four applications have been refused on these grounds. He may also, if he thinks fit, withhold registration for any other reason (such as a doubt as to the capacity of the employer to teach or the suitability of the trade or factory), and refer the question to the committee (or to the Court if there is no committee); in such case he shall be guided by its decision. In the boot trade in Christchurch application was made to register an apprentice to be taught by two pieceworkers employed on boot-repairing work ; registration of the contract was withheld by the District Registrar and the question was referred to the Court. The Court directed that registration should be refused on the grounds (a) that the employers of the apprentice, being pieceworkers, had not the security of tenure to guarantee their being able to keep the apprentice for the full term of the apprenticeship, and (b) that in any case under the terms of the award the boy could not be apprenticed to boot-repairing only. In ten other instances applications for registration were referred to the committees and finally refused. There is a right of appeal to the Court against all refusals to register. (There have been no such appeals.)