

The examiners for the practical part of the examination drew attention to the need for more care being taken in earthing the conduit ; and to the unsatisfactory manner in which the plug-sockets were installed and the flexible cord connected to the plugs. They also pointed out that more attention should be given to cleaning the ends of conduits and nipples, that the nipples should be cut to the correct length, that the standard of work in jointing and soldering was very low, and that the tying of the wires to the insulators was very badly done.

There were 46 reports of breaches of the Act during the year ended 30th June, and 15 prosecutions were taken. The fines and costs imposed totalled £44 12s. 6d.

Details of the reports follow :—

Cinematograph operators doing wiring, 2 ; claiming to be registered, 2 ; employing an unregistered person, 15 ; failure to give notice to an electrical-supply authority, 7 ; failure to return certificates, 3 ; farmer doing wiring, 1 ; labourers changing flexible cords, 2 ; labourers doing wiring, 6 ; mechanics doing wiring, 2 ; painters doing wiring, 2 ; permitting an unregistered person to work, 1 ; salesmen doing wiring, 1 ; slaughterman doing wiring, 1 ; window-dresser doing wiring, 1.

The defective work reports totalled 34 for the same period. As a result of these reports 4 wiremen were cautioned, 6 were censured, and 6 had their registration certificates endorsed. Four reports are still under investigation.

It seems inevitable that as work in the electrical trade increases as a result of increased activity in the building and allied trades the reports of defective work must increase, but it is gratifying to record that in very few cases is a wireman reported for defective work more than once.

Further efforts have been made during the year to impress on dealers in electrical apparatus the need for assembly and repairs to be carried out by skilled persons. A certain amount of success has been achieved with the assistance of the electrical-supply authorities, but much still remains to be done, more especially in view of the large increase in the use of portable appliances. Fortunately, the majority of portable appliances are used in situations where no ill-effects are to be apprehended from shock.

The sale of electrical appliances such as vacuum cleaners, washing-machines, radio-receiving sets, portable signs, portable milking-machines, and vulcanizers is undertaken to a very large extent by speciality salesmen whose main qualifications are ability to sell and not technical knowledge of electricity. These salesmen sometimes install appliances in a manner which does not comply with the safety regulations ; they also neglect to notify the electrical-supply authority, and the consumer is left to find out that the appliance must be properly installed, and, in some cases, may not be used at all.

The remedy for this state of affairs appears to be threefold. Firstly, the older children in our schools should be taught how to use electrical equipment properly, how to maintain it in good condition, when it is necessary for the metal case to be connected to earth, and how to ascertain whether it has been assembled correctly and is in good repair ; secondly, more of the apprentices to the electrical trade should be trained to become salesmen ; and, thirdly, the present salesmen should be given training so that they will know how electrical appliances work, in what situations the metal cases are required by the regulations to be earthed, and so that they will be able to ascertain whether the appliances are in good order.

F. T. M. KISSEL, B.Sc., M.I.E.E., A.M.I.C.E.,

Chief Electrical Engineer.