

A worker in a garage had jacked up the chassis of a heavy lorry, using a wooden block on the raising-plate of the jack in order to gain additional height, and was bending over one of the wheels below the chassis when the block slipped and he was struck on the back of the neck by the chassis and killed instantly.

On the completion of the loading of frozen meat into the first of a rake of four vans the signal was given to the engine-driver to move the vans along in order to bring the second one to the loading-point, when one of the workers engaged in the loading apparently slipped and had his left leg crushed between the door of the second van and a veranda support. The injuries sustained by him subsequently proved fatal.

A worker who was employed by an explosive manufacturer and whose duties included the handling of chlorate of potash had just left the factory for his lunch when his clothing, which was impregnated with the chemical, became ignited, apparently as a result of his smoking a cigarette, and he sustained fatal injuries.

A gasworker climbed into a pit to open the cocks of the drain pipes of a large purifier in order to drain off water. He was found about twenty minutes later asphyxiated as a result of accidentally inhaling coal-gas, which was being discharged from the pipes.

A worker employed in the manure department of a freezing-works opened the door at the bottom of one of the digestors and sustained fatal injuries as a result of being scalded by boiling water, which had not completely drained away.

A female weaver sustained fatal head injuries as a result of putting her head in a dangerous position when examining the cloth in the loom she operated.

INSPECTIONS, ETC.

During the year visits of inspection to the number of 14,817 were made. Complaints were received respecting 694 alleged breaches of the Act, resulting in 35 prosecutions and 459 warnings. In 176 cases investigation showed that no breach had been committed, while in the remaining cases no action was considered necessary. Forty-one 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 49 of the 76 prosecutions; the fines totalled £57 11s. No case calls for comment.

There were 760 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, renovations and structural alterations, heating-appliances, 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.

BOYS AND GIRLS IN FACTORIES.

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

Year.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Year.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1916-17	1,158	1,251	2,409	1932-33	509	1,067	1,576
1926-27	1,199	1,547	2,746	1933-34	510	1,283	1,793
1927-28	1,030	1,614	2,644	1934-35	791	2,011	2,802
1928-29	981	1,603	2,584	1935-36	1,026	1,964	2,990
1929-30	1,077	1,746	2,823	1936-37	1,890	2,572	4,462
1930-31	655	1,059	1,714	1937-38	1,881	2,135	4,016
1931-32	420	843	1,263	1938-39	1,830	2,320	4,150

It should be noted that while there were 4,150 certificates issued to boys and girls last year, in 2,930 cases (approximately 71 per cent.) the boys and girls concerned had passed the Sixth Standard, and the majority of the young people did not enter blind-alley employment, the principal trades in which they are engaged being—in the case of boys, engineering and allied trades, boot-manufacturing, furniture trade, printing, &c.; and, in the case of girls, clothing and allied trades, biscuit and confectionery, boot-manufacturing, printing, &c. Although the number of certificates issued increased considerably from 1934 onwards it should be noted that the numbers of boys and girls entering State post-primary schools have also increased each year from that date:—

Year ended 31st December, 1934	12,686
Year ended 31st December, 1935	13,177
Year ended 31st December, 1936	13,466
Year ended 31st December, 1937	14,315
Year ended 31st December, 1938	14,814

These figures are taken from the annual reports of the Education Department.

AMENDMENT OF THE FACTORIES ACT, 1921-22.

The holiday provisions of the Factories Amendment Act, 1936, were amended by section 17 of the Statutes Amendment Act, 1938, the main effect of the amendment being to require that payment of wages for the eight holidays specified by the Act shall be made to all persons employed in the factory