

INSPECTIONS, ETC.

Inspectors paid 15,750 visits of inspection to factories during the year, as compared with 13,761 during the previous year.

Prosecutions numbered 67, in 56 of which convictions were obtained. No case calls for comment; fines totalling £93 were imposed.

During the year complaints were received respecting 161 alleged breaches of the Act, resulting in 18 prosecutions and 79 warnings; while 1,127 other breaches were discovered by the Inspectors themselves, for which 49 prosecutions were instituted and 1,071 warnings were given, the latter breaches being either first offences or of a minor nature. No action was considered necessary in the remaining cases.

There were 748 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; lighting; first-aid appliances; washing-water; and dining-rooms in the case of establishments employing over six women and girls, and boys under sixteen.

SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT.

The records show 24,509 shops throughout New Zealand, of which 12,148 (approximately one-half) were carried on without assistants. In the shops with assistants there were employed 19,472 males and 18,896 females.

Visits of inspection to the number of 19,044 were made during the year, as compared with 15,681 in the previous year.

Prosecutions numbered 246, in which 230 convictions were obtained. The sum of £420 in fines was imposed. The following is the only case that calls for comment. In this instance the action was taken against a restaurant-keeper who had sold cigarettes, for failing to observe the weekly half-holiday as required for tobacconists generally: a conviction was recorded. As this restaurant-keeper had been previously convicted of a similar offence within the previous twenty-four consecutive months, the Magistrate, in pursuance of section 21 (c) of the Act, ordered him to observe the half-holiday for the next twelve months. This is the first occasion on which such an order has been made. The provision was inserted in the Act in order to protect tobacconists, who had frequently complained of illicit selling of tobacconists' goods after closing-hours by shopkeepers in other trades. Such offences are difficult to discover.

During the year complaints were received respecting 337 alleged breaches of the Act, resulting in 54 prosecutions and 170 warnings; while 1,068 other breaches were discovered by the Inspectors themselves, for which 192 prosecutions were instituted and 870 warnings were given, the latter breaches being of a minor nature or first offences. No action was considered necessary in the remaining cases.

One hundred and eighteen requisitions were served on occupiers of shops to comply with various requirements of the Act, such as for sanitary conveniences, heating-appliances, sitting-accommodation for females, lighting, ventilation, and drinking-water. Ten requisitions were also served on occupiers to comply with the requirements of the Retail Shop Assistants' award for dining-room, cloak-room, and couch accommodation in the case of establishments employing six or more females.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT.

WORK DONE UNDER THE ACT DURING THE YEAR 1926-27.

Industrial agreements filed	..	..	..	..	..	..	20
Recommendations of Councils of Conciliation	..	..	..	..	..	..	134
Awards of the Court of Arbitration	..	..	..	..	..	..	126

The awards and industrial agreements actually in force on the 31st March, 1927, total 476 (last year 489). The reason for this reduction is merely that in a number of instances a "Dominion" award has taken the place of the several local or district awards in the same industries.

WORK PERFORMED BY COMMISSIONERS AND COUNCILS OF CONCILIATION DURING THE YEAR.

Industrial agreements arrived at and filed as such under section 28 by parties through the Commissioner alone	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Disputes dealt with by Conciliation Councils—							
Where recommendations were fully accepted and forwarded to the Court to be made into awards	..	..	..	..	..	..	70
Where recommendations were substantially accepted or agreements reached and referred to the Court to make awards	..	..	..	..	..	..	55
Where only minor recommendation or no recommendation was made	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Total..	..	..	..	..	..	..	142

The above figures would indicate that 93.6 per cent. of the disputes dealt with by the Commissioners and Conciliation Councils were settled or substantially settled by them; but it should be noted that in some cases the settlements reached merely followed upon recently made awards of the Court, or settlements through Commissioners or Councils in the same or similar industries elsewhere.