

## BOYS AND GIRLS IN FACTORIES.

The following table shows the number of boys and girls taken on in factories during the war years and subsequently :—

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

Year.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Year.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1913-14 .. ..	932	1,241	2,173	1921-22 .. ..	962	1,286	2,248
1914-15 .. ..	952	1,136	2,088	1922-23 .. ..	995	1,530	2,525
1915-16 .. ..	1,100	1,263	2,363	1923-24 .. ..	1,156	1,445	2,601
1916-17 .. ..	1,158	1,251	2,409	1924-25 .. ..	1,259	1,277	2,536
1917-18 .. ..	1,199	1,236	2,435	1925-26 .. ..	1,300	1,586	2,886
1918-19 .. ..	1,240	1,333	2,573	1926-27 .. ..	1,199	1,547	2,746
1919-20 .. ..	1,252	1,685	2,937	1927-28 .. ..	1,030	1,614	2,644
1920-21 .. ..	1,267	1,368	2,635	1928-29 .. ..	981	1,603	2,584

The figures for last year as compared with the previous years do not show the marked falling-off in the number of young persons taken on in factories that might be expected in view of the large number of boys that have recently left school and been unable to find employment.

*Effect of the War on the Number of Boys and Girls that will shortly reach Workable Age.*

Inquiry from the Government Statistician shows that, assuming that the pre-war birth-rates per 1,000 and other usual conditions had continued to the present time (including the mortality-rates and immigration), there will shortly be in all about thirteen thousand fewer boys and girls reaching the age of fourteen years than if the war had not occurred. The peak year (in which the effect of this loss of potential population would be at its greatest) should be in 1933, and it will be interesting to note from the present year to that time what effect this loss of potential population will have on the numbers of boys and girls available for industry.

## INSPECTIONS, ETC.

Inspectors paid 16,687 visits of inspection to the factories of the Dominion (numbering in all 16,677) during the year (previous year, 16,654). Prosecutions numbered 31, in 26 of which convictions were obtained; the fines totalled £44; no case calls for comment.

Complaints were received respecting 212 alleged breaches of the Act, resulting in 3 prosecutions and 125 warnings; while 1,448 other breaches were discovered by the Inspectors themselves, for which 28 prosecutions were instituted and 1,141 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 875 requisitions served to comply with various requirements of the Act, such as for limewashing; 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 25,509 shops throughout New Zealand, of which 12,753 (approximately one-half) were carried on without assistants. In the shops with assistants there were employed 20,496 males and 19,462 females.

Visits of inspection to the number of 21,380 were made during the year (previous year, 20,283). Prosecutions numbered 376, in which 357 convictions were obtained; fines, £432 5s.

Complaints were received respecting 625 alleged breaches of the Act, resulting in 64 prosecutions and 294 warnings; while 1,620 other breaches were discovered by the Inspectors themselves, for which 312 prosecutions were instituted, and 1,224 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 two 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.

## AMENDMENT OF ACT.

Under the 1927 amendment of the Act a large number of exemptions from the requirements as to closing were applied for by small shopkeepers from Magistrates, and a fair number of them were granted—either partly or wholly. The grounds on which exemption may be granted are that the exemption would not substantially affect the business of any other shop, or, that, after having regard to the interests of other shopkeepers, exemptions would be in the public interest. Few complaints of the exemptions granted have been received from other shopkeepers. The closing-hours fixed by or under the Act are—

- (1) Six o'clock on four days of the week and 9 o'clock on one day, in cities and other large towns whose population exceeds 5,000; certain trades are exempted—viz., fruiterers, confectioners, &c.; also hairdressers and tobacconists.