

Factories, who shall not give any such authorization except in the case of a boy or girl over fourteen years of age who is exempted under the Education Act, 1914, from the obligation to be enrolled as a pupil at any school.

During the year, 56 certificates of fitness were granted to boys and girls of the ages of fourteen years and under fifteen years. Thirty-one of these certificates were issued to boys and 25 to girls (previous year : boys, 175 ; girls, 161 ; total, 336). In each case a certificate of exemption from attendance at school in terms of the Education (School Age) Regulations 1943 had been issued by the local Education Board. This certificate was not required in all cases in 1944-45, as a general exemption from enrolment as pupils of a school was granted under section 4 of the same regulations to all children who had attained the age of fourteen years on the 1st February, 1944.

Of the 1,766 certificates issued to persons of the ages of fifteen years and under sixteen years, 888 were granted to boys and 878 to girls, compared with 706 to boys and 507 to girls the previous year.

The number of certificates issued during recent years has been :—

Year.				Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1938-39	..	..	..	1,830	2,320	4,150
1939-40	..	..	..	2,139	2,407	4,546
1940-41	..	..	..	2,119	2,080	4,199
1941-42	..	..	..	2,153	2,145	4,298
1942-43	..	..	..	1,706	1,557	3,263
1943-44	..	..	..	1,480	1,465	2,945
1944-45	..	..	..	881	668	1,549
1945-46	..	..	..	919	903	1,822

INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE AND OTHER PROBLEMS ARISING OUT OF INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES

Heating.—There is still considerable room for improvement in the heating of many factories. Because of shortages of coal and electric power some difficulty is still being experienced in securing full compliance with the standard previously adopted by the Department. The matter is one, however, to which Inspectors have continued to give as much attention as possible.

Ventilation.—To bring conditions in many factories up to a satisfactory standard, major alterations are necessary. Supply and power difficulties are, however, still retarding some improvements.

Welfare.—This is a matter to which increasing attention is being given, particularly in factories in which large female staffs are employed. At quite a number of such establishments industrial nurses are now employed.

Conditions in Foundries.—The review of foundries which was referred to in last year's report has been completed and suitable action taken by the Department to obtain compliance with the several requirements of the Moulder's award (1944 Book of Awards 449). In some cases it was found practically impossible to effect the necessary improvements in the existing premises. In such cases steps are being taken to erect new premises or to make additions which will comply with the requirements of the Department. Although the shortage of building-material is a retarding factor, many improvements in conditions in foundries have already been effected, and it is anticipated that improvements will shortly be completed in many additional cases. Details which give some idea of the activities of the Department in this connection are as follows :—

(a) Number of foundries inspected	..	..	..	..	111
(b) Number of foundries where improvements were called for by letter following inspection	..	..	..	..	47
(c) Number of foundries which were served with a requisition calling for improvements	..	..	..	..	26
(d) Number of foundries where no action was taken because of the probable early reconstruction of the premises	..	..	..	..	20