

It will be noted that the number of accidents in these industries represents one in the year for every twenty-eight workers. This would mean that on the average every worker would probably meet with an accident of some kind once in every twenty-eight years. A large proportion were, however, of a minor nature, as the average absence for the whole of the workers in the factories where the accidents occurred is approximately one day. Nevertheless, every effort is being made to reduce accidents to the lowest possible number, and special attention is being given to those industries that appear to show the largest proportion of accidents. In this connection Inspectors have called attention to the large number of cuts, &c., that become septic, chiefly in freezing-works. These slight accidents are unimportant in the first case, but frequently lead to incapacity through septic poisoning. The cause is not altogether clear, but apparently many of the cases are due to neglect of cleanliness and proper precautions. Further inquiries are being made.

In October last the Department drew up the posters referred to on page 2, after consultation with the Health Department, and issued them to factories, giving advice as to first aid and other treatment of wounds; and it is suggested to employers that they should arrange and grant facilities for one or two of the workers in each factory to receive instruction in first-aid treatment.

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	1919-20	1,252	1,685	2,937
1914-15	952	1,136	2,088	1920-21	1,267	1,368	2,635
1915-16	1,100	1,263	2,363	1921-22	962	1,286	2,248
1916-17	1,158	1,251	2,409	1922-23	995	1,530	2,525
1917-18	1,199	1,236	2,435	1923-24	1,156	1,445	2,601
1918-19	1,240	1,333	2,573				

PROSECUTIONS.

Prosecutions numbered sixty, in fifty-two of which convictions were obtained. No case calls for comment.

REQUISITIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN FACTORIES.

During the year, 1832 requisitions were served to comply with various requirements of the Act, such as lime-washing, safeguards for workers employed on machinery, &c., sanitary conveniences, fire-escapes, heating-appliances, ventilation, lighting, first-aid appliances, washing and drinking water, and dining-rooms in the case of establishments employing over six workers.

INSPECTION.

Inspectors paid 10,504 visits of inspection to factories during the year.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS OF THE ACT.

Requests have been made by workers in the clothing-manufacturing trade that the giving-out of work by manufacturers to be performed by persons in their own homes should be either prohibited or restricted, it being urged that it is impossible to see that the work is done during reasonable hours and at fair rates, or that proper hygienic conditions are observed in these homes, as required by the Act for ordinary factories. There are 161 such places in the Dominion which have been registered as factories by the firms giving out the work. Such registration places the rooms in question under a measure of inspection, and, moreover, obviates the necessity of placing a label in compliance with section 30 of the Act setting out that the work has been done in an unregistered factory. The question of the rates of pay presents difficulty, especially where the worker is a contractor for the work at a certain sum, in which case the award or agreement, if any is in force for the occupation, does not apply. It is considered that hardship would in some cases be caused to workers by the total prohibition of the practice, but the following conditions for such work might be laid down:—

- (1.) That the work must be done in a suitable room exclusively set apart for the purpose:
- (2.) That registration may be cancelled at any time if it is found by the Inspector that hygienic conditions do not exist:
- (3.) That the parties satisfy the Inspector that the remuneration paid for the work is, on the whole, at least equivalent to the award or agreement rate (if any) applicable to such work.

Those engaged in the order-tailoring trade complain of the growing competition of chart suits, made under what are described as factory conditions, and it has been asked that labels should, for the information of customers, be attached to the latter. It would appear that the two classes of work referred to might best be described as those in which certain operations are performed by hand, or by machine, as the case may be. There is considerable difficulty in the matter, however, as in some factories a certain amount of the work is being done by hand, while in many of the tailoring work-rooms some of the operations are done by machine. The matter is now the subject of inquiry.