

Arising out of the disputes filed under the Act since its inception to date, only six ballots have been necessary, and in none of these cases did a strike take place in pursuance of such a ballot.

There were on 31st March, 1933, eleven agreements in force under this Act in the following industries :—

Gas-manufacture (including clerical and showroom employees).  
 Tramway and omnibus services (including coach and car building and power-house employees).  
 Electric-power Board employees.  
 Freezing-works employees.  
 Managers in dairy factories.  
 Butchers (retail).  
 Storage workers in dairy-produce and cold stores.

### APPRENTICES ACT.

This Act, which was passed in 1923, places the regulation of apprenticeships in the control of the Court of Arbitration. It also provides for the establishment of Committees representative of employers and workers; these have such powers as may be delegated to them by the Court.

The Committees, of which there are 105 functioning, are chiefly to be found in the main towns, and there is usually one for each industry.

The Department has again made available to Committees the services of some of its experienced officers, who undertake inquiry work and in many cases act in a secretarial capacity. These officers made 885 inspections under this Act during 1932–33, the inspections being carried out chiefly in the course of ordinary inspection and investigation work and while visiting factories, &c., in connection with other duties.

Complaints were received regarding 228 alleged breaches of the Act, while 41 other breaches were discovered by the Department's Inspectors, 173 warnings being issued.

There were 20 prosecutions during the year for various breaches of the Act and the orders made thereunder, convictions being entered in 12 of the cases, and penalties amounting to £14 11s. being imposed. Of the prosecutions, 3 were against employers and 17 against apprentices.

The following table gives the approximate number of apprentices in the trades to which the Act applies. This information is based mainly on contracts of apprenticeship as registered with the Department.

#### RETURN SHOWING NUMBER OF APPRENTICES EMPLOYED IN SKILLED TRADES, APRIL, 1933.

(The figures for the previous year are shown in parentheses.)

Trade.	Number of Apprentices employed.	Trade.	Number of Apprentices employed.	Trade.	Number of Apprentices employed.
Baking ..	219 (281)	Electrical ..	329 (434)	Plumbing ..	391 (515)
Boatbuilding ..	19 (31)	Engineering ..	672 (794)	Plastering ..	106 (164)
Boilermaking ..	45 (58)	Motor-engineering ..	861 (887)	Printing ..	596 (643)
Bootmaking ..	145 (187)	Furniture ..	421 (534)	Saddlery ..	33 (34)
Boot-repairing ..	32 (30)	Gardening ..	15 (15)	Sail, tent, &c. ..	1 (1)
Blacksmithing ..	25 (29)	Hairdressing ..	107 (97)	Tailoring ..	16 (21)
Bricklaying ..	33 (64)	Hatmaking ..	2 (2)	Tinsmithing ..	117 (135)
Carpentering ..	757 (1,095)	Jewellery ..	36 (43)	Wicker-working ..	14 (19)
Clothing ..	53 (59)	Leadlight ..	20 (24)		
Coachbuilding ..	217 (272)	Masonry ..	16 (21)		
Coopering ..	5 (4)	Moulding ..	85 (97)		
Cycle-working ..	11 (14)	Painting ..	195 (306)		
				Totals ..	5,594 (6,910)

The following table shows the number of apprentices employed in each year during the past six years :—

April,	Number of Apprentices.	April,	Number of Apprentices.
1928 .. ..	10,227	1931 .. ..	8,901
1929 .. ..	9,943	1932 .. ..	6,910
1930 .. ..	9,826	1933 .. ..	5,594

### AMENDMENT OF ACT.

As mentioned in last year's report, owing to the great difficulty that was being experienced by employers in finding employment for their apprentices during the present economic crisis, provision was made in section 56 of the Finance Act, 1932, giving Magistrates power, on application by any party concerned, to amend, suspend, or cancel any contract of apprenticeship in force at the date of the passing of the Act. Before cancelling any contract, however, the Magistrate is required to be satisfied that, owing to the economic conditions affecting the industry concerned or the particular business of the employer, the employer cannot reasonably be expected to continue to carry out the terms of the contract, but in the event of his ordering cancellation of the contract he may, if he thinks fit, award compensation to the apprentice.