

The prohibition referred to above against the employment in factories of female workers between 6 p.m. and 8 a.m. has been lifted in a number of industries because of emergency conditions. In these industries employment on "shift-work" is now practicable. A special shift allowance—usually 1s. 6d. a shift—is payable, and a requirement that conveyance of workers on the late or night shift to their homes be arranged is introduced. Examples of industries affected are—

Ammunition-manufacturers.

Bread-baking (bread packing and checking, bread wrapping and banding, bread cutting and wrapping, assisting in the distribution of bread in the bread-room to drivers' racks and vans, and keeping the bread-room clean).

Biscuit-manufacturing.

Brushware-manufacturing (limited to two Auckland employers).

Laundry workers (Auckland Hospital Board).

Woollen-milling.

WORKSHOP COMMITTEES

Inquiries show that while committees have been established in some towns, this position is by no means general. Good work appears to have been done in several cases, though there is a suggestion that in some instances the committees have become a mere channel for the ventilation of complaints. It was not contemplated that workshop committees deal with matters arising out of an award, this being the function of the Disputes Committee provided for therein. The Department's view is that the following matters are such as could be discussed by a workshop committee representative of the management and the workers: (1) Health and safety of the workers; (2) greater efficiency; (3) increased production; (4) prevention of wastage in the industry; and (5) cleanliness of the factory.

It has been reported that joint Production Consultative and Advisory Committees have been set up in the Royal Ordnance Factories in Great Britain and are to be set up in the engineering and allied industries. The report states that these provide means for a regular exchange of views between the management and workers on matters relating to the improvement of production. Examples of the matters to be discussed are: Maximum utilization of existing machinery; upkeep of fixtures, jigs, tools, and gauges; improvement in methods of production; efficient use of the maximum number of productive hours; elimination of defective work and waste; efficient use of material supplies; efficient use of safety precautions and devices. It is evident, therefore, that in Great Britain committees are consulted on many matters that have normally been regarded as essentially the responsibility of the management.

FACTORIES ACT

NUMBER OF FACTORIES AND FACTORY WORKERS

For the registration year 1942-43 the number of factories registered was 16,408. In these factories there were employed 15,714 working occupiers, 76,754 male employees, and 38,092 female employees, a total of 130,560 workers. While the number of factories and the number of workers had increased annually for a number of years up to 1939-40, a reduction in the number of factories had occurred each year since (1939-40, 18,141; 1940-41, 17,940; 1941-42, 17,421; 1942-43, 16,408). The number of employees, however, increased until 1941-42, but a reduction is recorded in 1942-43 (134,039 to 130,560). This reduction is in respect of male employees (80,469 to 76,754), a further increase having occurred in respect of female employees (37,111 to 38,092).

A recent analysis indicates that there is 1 factory employing more than 1,000 hands, 11 employing between 500 and 1,000 hands, 73 employing between 200 and 500 hands, and 92 employing between 100 and 200 hands. Therefore, there are 16,231 factories employing less than 100 hands.

ACCIDENTS IN FACTORIES

Because the results had not been tabulated it was not possible to include in last year's report the usual information regarding accidents reported to have occurred to workers in factories. Details given in this connection are always for the calendar year, this being to facilitate international comparison. The total number of accidents reported during 1941 was 6,517 (6,002 males and 515 females). Other details are—*Age*: Under 16, 194; 16-20, 1,086; 21-24, 853; 25-34, 1,991; 35-44, 1,210; 45-54, 703; 55 and over, 370; not stated, 110. *Disability*: Fatal, 5; permanent partial, 189; temporary, 6,323. *Causes*: Fixed machinery, 958; vehicles, 35; explosions and fires, 214; poisons and corrosive substances, 227; electricity, 10; falls of persons from elevations, 256; falls of persons into excavations, 23; slipping or stumbling on the level, 348; stepping on or striking against fixed objects, 381; falling objects, 271; falls of earth, 2; handling of objects, 2,006; hand-tools, 1,326; animals, 34; miscellaneous, 426. *Time lost*: 120,341 days. *Compensation paid*: £106,473 6s. 7d.

A preliminary count in respect of accidents reported during 1942 gives a total of 7,548. The increase in the number of accidents can be partly accounted for as a result of notification of accidents by some employers who had not previously carried out this duty. However, it is to be anticipated that with the increased overtime, the introduction into factories of workers not having previous experience of factory and machine processes, and the mobilization of many skilled workers and probably maintenance hands an increase in the number of accidents will occur. Such an increase is also recorded in the report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for Victoria for the year ended 31st December, 1941. Inspectors are giving careful attention to processes and methods of work in an endeavour to keep the number of accidents to a minimum. A special review made in the Auckland District illustrating the action of Inspectors revealed interesting features as follows:—

- (a) In thirty-four cases out of forty-four investigated involving particles or dust in the eyes, workers had failed to make use of protective apparatus provided:
- (b) One factory with a considerable increase in size due to war demands did not have a high accident rate, but roughly 70 per cent. of the accidents were to workers with six months' or less experience. Many machines are used, and the most frequent cause of accident was the insertion of fingers under a guard to remove blockages, or doing, while machinery was in motion, something that should be done only after a machine has been stopped:
- (c) Investigation of the number of accidents at a canister-factory suggested that to a large extent unsatisfactory layout of machinery was involved. Arising out of the Department's action, which was supported by the insurer, a complete alteration of layout was undertaken:
- (d) Acid and sodium burns in one factory were traced to carelessness in the adjustment of protective apparatus, particularly among inexperienced workers.