

The number of new contracts registered during the year ended 31st March, 1943, was 1,917. This compares with previous years since 31st March, 1936, as follows: 1,292; 2,328; 3,235; 2,700; 2,840; 1,974; 2,441.

APPRENTICESHIP ON COMPLETION OF MILITARY SERVICE

On their discharge from the armed forces apprentices may, by notice in writing within six months, revive their contracts of apprenticeship either until the normal expiry date or for the term unexpired at date of suspension (or any less period being to a date not earlier than the normal expiry date). Should an apprentice during his service with His Majesty's forces perform trade work of the same class as that to which he is apprenticed or of a class related thereto, he may be credited under his contract of apprenticeship with the period during which he was so engaged, this provision being designed to give full advantage of the trade training received in some branches of the armed forces.

The extent to which trade work is taught and performed in the armed forces and the continuance of emergency conditions may mean that many servicemen will have had on discharge trade training perhaps almost equal in some respects to that possessed by a journeyman tradesman. It may be advantageous for ex-servicemen in that position to accept employment in their newly-acquired trade in preference to their previous normal occupation. Even if an ex-serviceman is not fully trained as a result of his experience in the armed forces, he may be more advanced in his service trade than in his civilian trade. Thus from a rehabilitation point of view it may be preferable that before demobilization he receive the extra training necessary to advance him to the standard set by the industry.

Officers of the Department have been endeavouring, by a review of the training given and the experience secured, to value on a civil-occupation basis the Army experience of a trade nature. Some of the training is, of course, of a very specialized technical character not entirely in line with the practical training in trades, thus creating a difficulty for such personnel to be readily absorbed into peacetime trades. Nevertheless a good deal of it will be of considerable benefit to the servicemen concerned, and some statement of the average value of such wartime experience should be useful both to the men concerned, their prospective employers, and the community. This review is of interest as a demonstration of the theory study enforced in Services training establishments, but largely omitted in an ordinary apprenticeship training except in so far as use is made, either voluntarily or otherwise, of the facilities in technical schools. In these Services training establishments also there exists the means to provide intensive short-term instruction to many servicemen either just prior to or immediately following demobilization. The extent to which effective use can be made of the specialist training staff to provide a smooth change over from defence trade requirements to civilian occupations of a similar nature will be largely determined by an early decision as to policy and curriculum.

REPLACEMENT OF APPRENTICES JOINING THE ARMED FORCES

An employer may take steps, on the loss of an apprentice to the armed Services, to obtain the approval of the Industrial Emergency Council for the appointment of another to replace him, notwithstanding that the quota allowed by the apprenticeship order would be exceeded by employing the additional apprentice. During the year the Council approved the engagement of 244 additional apprentices in industries as follows, the totals since June, 1940, being shown in parentheses: Baking, 8 (16); bootmaking, 10 (10); boot-repairing, 2 (3); carpentering, 28 (51); clothing, 1 (3); coach-building, 5 (8); electrical engineering, 20 (38); engineering, 21 (34); furniture-manufacturing, 51 (71); hairdressing, 1 (2); motor engineering, 56 (95); painting, 6 (7); photo engraving, 2 (6); plumbing, 15 (30); printing, 17 (44); and tailoring, 1 (1).

ARREARS OF WAGES

Amounts totalling £12,481 15s. 4d. (last year, £15,922 19s.) were collected by the Department's officers on behalf of workers who had been underpaid the wages prescribed by awards and the various Acts, while further amounts of such arrears totalling £15,082 12s. 3d. (last year, £18,766 7s. 8d.) were paid by employers at the instance of the Inspectors directly to the workers concerned: total, £27,564 7s. 7d. (last year, £34,689 6s. 8d.).

Inspectors of Factories also took civil proceedings in forty-six cases for recovery of wages due to workers, judgments being secured to the amount £636 13s. 9d.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT

During the year 107 cases were heard and determined by the Compensation Court (previous year, 122).

The Statutes Amendment Act, 1942, provided that for the purposes of section 8 of the principal Act and the Second Schedule thereto the permanent loss of the use of one eye by a worker who is already permanently without the use of the other eye shall be deemed to be the permanent loss of the use of both eyes: Provided that any sum previously received by the worker by way of compensation in respect of that other eye shall be taken into account in estimating the compensation.

Section 59 of the Workers' Compensation Act, 1922, provides that where the Governor-General is satisfied that by the laws of any other country within the dominions of the Crown compensation for accidents is payable to the relatives of a deceased worker although they are resident in New Zealand, he may, by Order in Council, declare that relatives resident in that country shall have the same rights and remedies under this Act as if resident in New Zealand. The Workers' Compensation (Tasmanian Reciprocity) Order 1942 (Serial number 1942/206) was issued during the year pursuant to this authority. The countries to which reciprocity had previously been applied are United Kingdom, Queensland, and Western Australia (*N.Z. Gazette*, 1910, page 3823), South Australia (*N.Z. Gazette*, 1912, page 2658), Victoria (*N.Z. Gazette*, 1915, page 2193), New South Wales (*N.Z. Gazette*, 1918, page 1238), and Irish Free State (*N.Z. Gazette*, 1935, page 1912).