

REPLACEMENT OF APPRENTICES JOINING THE ARMED FORCES

During the year the Industrial Emergency Council approved the engagement of 93 additional apprentices in industries in replacement of others who had joined the Armed Forces as follows, the totals since June, 1940, being shown in parentheses: baking, 0 (22); blacksmithing, 1 (1); bootmaking, 2 (20); boot-repairing, 0 (4); carpentering, 16 (126); clothing, 0 (7); coachbuilding, 3 (19); electrical engineering, 10 (93); engineering, 13 (84); furniture-manufacturing, 7 (129); hair-dressing, 0 (4); motor engineering, 17 (231); painting, 1 (19); photo-engraving, 1 (9); plastering, 1 (6); plumbing, 8 (62); printing, 10 (88); saddlery, 1 (3); tailoring, 0 (1); tinsmithing, 0 (5); watch-repairing, 2 (6); totals, 93 (939).

ARREARS OF WAGES

Amounts totalling £21,553 7s. 8d. (last year, £13,876 4s. 1d.) 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 £28,307 11s. 3d. (last year, £15,665 7s. 2d.) were paid by employers at the instance of the Inspectors directly to the workers concerned; total, £49,860 18s. 11d. (last year, £29,541 11s. 3d.).

Inspectors of Factories also took civil proceedings in 61 cases for recovery of wages due to workers, judgments being secured to the amount of £469 19s. 11d.

The amendment of various awards, industrial agreements, and apprenticeship orders following upon the pronouncement of the Court of Arbitration dated 17th March, 1945, specifying standard rates of wages was no doubt responsible for the very large increase in the arrears collected during the year under review.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT

During the year 111 cases were heard and determined by the Compensation Court (previous year, 118).

AMENDMENT OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT, 1922

By the Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1945, which came into force on the 1st January, 1946, but was not to apply to accidents which occurred before that date, the following variations of the law were effected:—

- (a) All workers (manual and non-manual) were given the protection of the Act.
- (b) Industrial-life-assurance agents were brought within the scope of the Act.
- (c) The Court was given discretionary power to award compensation in respect of accidents suffered by workers employed under an illegal contract of service or apprenticeship.
- (d) Weekly payments of compensation may not be ended or diminished (section 6) except—
 - (i) Where the weekly payment is in respect of total disablement and the worker has actually returned to work;
 - (ii) By agreement with the worker;
 - (iii) With the leave of the Compensation Court or of a Magistrate granted under this section;
 - (iv) By judgment or order of a Court of competent jurisdiction.

The Compensation Court may, in its discretion, grant leave to end weekly payments of compensation upon payment of a lump sum fixed by the Court, but this is not to debar the worker from instituting an action for damages where he feels that the accident was due to negligence for which the employer is responsible. If the employer wrongfully ends or diminishes weekly compensation payments, he shall be liable to pay to the worker double compensation. This section is in substitution for section 62 of the Statutes Amendment Act, 1938. Some of the subsections are the same as in section 62 of the Statutes Amendment Act, 1938, except for the substitution of the Compensation Court for the Court of Arbitration.