

- (c) In connection with the issuing of certificates of fitness to boys and girls under sixteen years of age it is now provided that the employer must obtain and produce to the Department a medical certificate as to the fitness of the boy or girl for employment in the particular factory.
- (d) The provisions relating to the giving-out of work have, as described above, been extended considerably.
- (e) The minimum rates of wages payable to factory workers have been increased to a wage of not less than £1 2s. 6d. a week, with half-yearly increments on the agreed rate of not less than 5s. a week until the rate of payment is £2 12s. 6d. a week.
- (f) There are detailed provisions regarding machinery, dangerous liquids, means of access and safety of places of employment, and means of escape in case of fire to ensure the safety of the working environment. It is to be mentioned that the provisions as to doors in factories have been recast on the lines of the New Zealand Standard Code of Building By-laws.
- (g) The health and welfare of factory workers is dealt with at length. The relevant sections (54 to 78) follow the lines of the Imperial Act.
- They include reference to such things as air space, canteens, the care of employees, of amenities and other things provided by the employer to secure their health or welfare, and to the making of regulations laying down standards as to what may be regarded as adequate, effective, sufficient, or suitable health and welfare requirements.
- (h) The definition of "factory" has been amended to give the Act wider application, and the Act is now applied to Government undertakings.

SECTION 4.—SHOPS AND OFFICES ACT, 1921-22

(1) THE NUMBER OF SHOPS, OFFICES, AND ASSISTANTS

During the past year there has been a greater coverage of shops and offices by the inspection staff of the Department. This has brought greater accuracy in the estimates of the numbers of shops and offices and of assistants employed. Since, however, no registration provision applies to shops comparable with that which enables the Department to have accurate knowledge of the numbers and sizes of factories, it is to be emphasized that shop and office figures must be based upon the inspection reports of officers, and, to the extent that inspections may be made only at yearly intervals, no complete picture at any point in time can be obtained, and no account taken of changes since inspection. From information at present obtainable the following figures have been estimated :—

Shops with assistants	..	..	..	..	15,900
Shops without assistants	..	..	..	..	13,100
Total	..	..	..	..	29,000
Male assistants	..	..	..	..	26,800
Female assistants	..	..	..	..	31,200
Total	..	..	..	..	58,000
Offices	..	..	..	..	8,700
Male assistants	..	..	..	..	10,600
Female assistants	..	..	..	..	15,400
Total	..	..	..	..	16,000