

the existing premises by temporary partitions, screens, or other expedients have had to be accepted. It has been noted that where change-rooms are located at some distance from the workplace workers tend to ignore their use since they prefer to have their clothes handy.

(9) *Heating*.—Inspectors are endeavouring to increase the standard in many factories, but are faced with difficulties caused by the fact that some premises are difficult to heat adequately.

(10) *First-aid Equipment, &c.*—Improvements have been noted by Inspectors in many factories, and in quite a number of the larger plants full-time industrial nurses are now employed. Two difficulties present themselves—first, the proper maintenance of first-aid equipment after installation, a number of cases of depleted or dirty cabinets being found; and, second, the education of the workers (especially men) to use first-aid facilities for minor cuts and abrasions.

(11) *Industrial Diseases*.—Arrangements have been made for the State Fire Insurance Department, which has taken over compensation insurance under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act, 1947, to advise the Inspector of Factories whenever a claim for compensation in respect of industrial disease is received. This should enable Inspectors to undertake an early check of working conditions and should overcome what has been a defect in the past—viz., delayed advice or no advice of the occurrence of diseases other than those that are notifiable under the Health Act, 1920. Factory Inspectors indicate that industrial dermatitis in various forms is the most prevalent disease arising from occupational conditions. Carrot dermatitis, which was common during the war years, appears to have disappeared, but there have been a number of cases of peach poisoning in jam and canning factories. The use of protective gloves will probably solve this problem. Several cases of tobacco and hop rash were reported, but cleared up on a change of occupation. There were also cases of salt sores which developed at a salt-works; this is being carefully watched as production increases. Closer supervision of the health of workers engaged in electroplating processes and in the metal cutting and welding industry is contemplated by the issue of two sets of new regulations under the Health Act in collaboration with the Health Department. In these industries dangerous and poisonous substances are used, and the operations generate toxic gases under certain circumstances and are subject to other special hazards (see also subsection (c) below).

(12) *Fire-escapes*.—A good deal of attention was given to the means of escape from factory premises in the event of fire, and Inspectors co-operated with local bodies and Fire Boards in the issue of requisitions. Shortage of steel for fire-escapes is an important delaying factor. Many factories are listed for review when the anticipated regulations arising out of the recommendations of the Ballantyne Fire Commission are made.

(13) *New Ideas in Welfare*.—The Department is very interested in the ideas of a number of progressive firms who are experimenting in the use of colour in factory interiors and on machines, &c., adjustable seating for employees, the suitability of various kinds of lighting for different processes and materials, and new heating methods.

(14) *Government-owned Factories*.—Government factories were brought within the provisions of the Factories Act by the 1946 Act, and since then attention has been given to their inspection and to the remedying of deficiencies, especially in relation to safety, health, welfare, and fire-escapes. Inspectors initiate action through the local controlling officers of Departments, and the Head Office of this Department also follows up reports by direct negotiation with the other head offices concerned. Action is being divided into two sections: first, essential alterations immediately needed to comply with minimum provisions of the Act; and second, other improvements to be undertaken within a reasonable time. Some departments have drawn up comprehensive programmes which are being implemented on a gradual basis.