

manufacturing methods, together with an understanding of the health hazards involved, is leading to much better conditions. Inspectors report that observance of the regulations relating to bronzing also gives little concern, the only breach being the taking of meals in a room of a printing-works where bronzing was carried out. This type of work, however, appears to be declining.

(2) These two sets of regulations are in process of being revised and reissued in a consolidated form in collaboration with the Health Department.

(d) *Spray Painting Regulations 1940*

Considerable attention has been given during the year to the provision of proper booths for spray-painting work and, although many plants have been found quite satisfactory, requisitions for improvement or remodelling of booths have been necessary in quite a large proportion of cases. Several occupiers have decided to close down their spray-painting operations rather than incur the expense of complying with the regulations. In some instances difficulties over the supply of suitable building-materials for booth linings have held up compliance with requisitions. The plans and specifications of a number of new booths have been submitted to the Department and approved. Instances have been noted of employees objecting on the grounds of inconvenience to the use of respirators which have been provided, and of protective equipment not being kept in good condition, but recognition of the health hazards of spray-painting has generally been satisfactory.

(e) *Accidents in Factories*

(1) In most overseas countries a great deal of effort has been given to the reduction of accidents in industry, and considerable success has been achieved. Since the war ended renewed attention has been given to this problem by employers, safety organizations, and government agencies. For instance, in 1948 the first post-war Conference on Accident Prevention was held in Great Britain; in March of this year President Truman personally sponsored a nation-wide Conference on industrial safety because of his concern at the losses caused by accidents despite the considerable attention given to the subject in the United States for many years; while in 1947 the International Labour Office produced a draft Model Code of Safety Regulations for Factories and a full summary of the safety legislation relating to factories in most of the member countries. Activity in New Zealand falls behind most overseas countries, a fact to which Dr. Davidson drew attention in 1944 when he said: "insufficient attention is paid to accident prevention in New Zealand . . . education by pamphlet and poster is neglected. In the factories, housekeeping is frequently poor; training in accident-prevention, and safety committees, are virtually non-existent; training of new, and maybe youthful, employees on dangerous machines is cursory; the provision of protective footwear is uncommon; and too much reliance is placed on the provision of other safeguards which require for their operation the intelligent co-operation of the workmen."

(2) An attempt to assist in overcoming some of these problems was made in framing the Factories Act, 1946, into which a number of fundamental safe-practice clauses were written. Nevertheless, these are minimum standards whereas many employers regard them as maximum requirements. Moreover, there is a general conviction among safety experts that accidents cannot be fought by regulations alone. Regulations and statutes deal principally with physical and mechanical hazards; most accidents arise from the unsafe practices of workers. It is commonly thought, for instance, that machinery is the major cause of accidents. Table XVI in the Appendix shows that in 1948 machines caused only 22 per cent. of accidents, and many of these were no doubt due rather to employee-faults than mechanical hazards infringing the Act. The largest group was "handling of objects" (34 per cent.). Overseas research indicates that up to 88 per cent. of accidents are caused by persons, and as low as 10 per cent. only by machinery and other physical hazards. While the latter are important because of the increased