

SECTION 6—HOME AID SERVICE

(a) Administrative Developments

(1) The purpose of the Home Aid Service is to render assistance in homes, particularly in emergency cases, where the housewife is incapacitated due to maternity or sickness. In keeping with other occupations, the Service suffers from the general acute shortage of female workers, and in consequence it has been found impossible to recruit the complement of Aids necessary to extend the scheme's coverage to the full demand from householders. It accordingly still remains necessary to allocate aids in accordance with the relative priority and emergency of the applications received.

(2) During the year efforts were continued to augment the number of Aids employed in order to meet the needs of homes in which domestic assistance was needed. Publicity in the form of radio announcements and newspaper advertisements was arranged with some success. In addition, new Aids were gained from the Department's assisted immigration scheme, and in consequence the average number of Aids employed throughout the year was higher than that for the previous year. During the coming year publicity will be intensified within New Zealand, and the efforts of the Department's officers in the United Kingdom to enrol a greater number of assisted immigrants for the Service in New Zealand will continue.

(3) The two Home Aid hostels at Auckland and Wellington respectively continue to provide comfortable accommodation for Aids in a homely atmosphere appropriate to the nature of their work. The hostels are also used extensively as training centres for inexperienced girls joining the Service to qualify them for the status of certificate-holder—i.e., all-round competency to carry out the normal household duties expected by the householder during the wife's incapacity.

(4) The charge to householders for the services of a Home Aid is fixed at 2s. 3d. per hour—i.e., 18s. per day or £4 10s. for a full week. In cases where the financial circumstances of the householder are such that payment of the full charge would create hardship the Department may reduce the charges in direct relation to the income available and to the degree of hardship assessed. Applications from householders for this relief are individually determined by the Department's district officers.

(5) Aids work normally a forty-hour five-day week, but in special cases it is necessary to arrange for them to "live in" with the household. Their duties are then spread over six days, and their hours are necessarily more flexible and invariably longer.

(b) Activities for the Twelve Months

A table summarizing the activities of the Service for the twelve months ended 31st March, 1949, is included in the Appendix (Table IX), and shows the numbers of Aids employed from month to month, with a summary of cases.

SECTION 7—PERSONNEL ADVISORY SERVICE

(1) In industry there are many problems which affect the relationship between management and workers which have direct bearings on efficiency and smooth running, and which lead to lowered morale, excessive turnover, and a low output if not remedied. Faults in lighting cause eye-strain, headaches, and irritability. Defects in lay-out and organization cause uneven flows of work, which exasperate operatives and undermine the harmony and discipline of a workshop. Because of inadequate procedures in introducing workers to new jobs and in follow-up, workers leave again after a few days or weeks. Faults in the handling of people by supervisory staff "get peoples' backs up." Often such things are difficult to diagnose and more difficult to remedy. They occur in even the best-equipped factories and under managements which are conscientiously doing their best. Hence the place for an expert in this field of personnel problems has