

- (c) Where a medical committee certifies, as mentioned below, that the worker is fit for work, or where the worker without sufficient justification refuses or neglects to submit himself for examination by such committee :
- (d) Where the worker has agreed to the discontinuance :
- (e) By judgment of a Court of competent jurisdiction.

If a doctor certifies after examining the worker that he is fit for work, the worker may, and if required by his employer shall, submit himself for examination to a committee of three doctors, who shall give a written certificate as to the worker's fitness for work, and such certificate is to be conclusive as to the facts certified.

SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT, 1919, AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ACT, 1936.

ACCOMMODATION.

The Agricultural Workers Act came into force on the 1st October, 1936, and, in respect of accommodation provisions, replaced the Agricultural Labourers' Accommodation Act, 1908, as amended. Thereafter the regulations under the repealed statute were revised and reissued on 3rd February, 1937. Visits to accommodation covered by this statute were made, 155 inspections being recorded and 123 requisitions for improvements served. These inspections were principally of accommodation at sawmills, although inspections were also made at flaxmills, on dairy-farms, and other farms and stations.

Mention was made in last year's report of the appointment of a special officer for this work. His activities, since taking up duty, have been confined to inspection of sawmill workers' accommodation, and during the shearing season to those districts where inspection of shearers' quarters was most needed. As a result of his visits, together with those of Inspectors of Factories, 173 inspections of shearers' quarters were made, 153 requisitions requiring improvements being served.

REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT ON DAIRY-FARMS.

The new feature introduced by the Agricultural Workers Act, 1936, was the regulation of the remuneration of workers on dairy-farms and the conditions of their employment. With the introduction of a guaranteed price for butterfat the Government sought to improve the conditions on dairy-farms, and in respect of the employees introduced this measure following discussions with representatives of the interests concerned. Wages based on age were fixed, provision being inserted for revision following alteration of the guaranteed price, while, as it was found impracticable to fix hours by reason of the seasonal nature of the work and the necessity for constant attendance during the season, special holiday arrangements were provided for. Other sections dealt with the issue of underrate permits, females being specially provided for, and the prohibition of the employment of children under fifteen years.

REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT IN ORCHARDS AND ON FARMS AND STATIONS.

Under the Agricultural Workers Act power was taken to extend the provisions relating to remuneration and conditions of employment on dairy-farms to any other specified class or classes of agricultural workers, with modifications where necessary. Such extensions have been made in the case of agricultural workers in orchards from 1st February, 1937, and in the case of agricultural workers on farms and stations used for the commercial production of wool, meat and/or grain (including seed) from 1st May, 1937. These extensions were decided upon following discussions and agreement between the organizations representing the employers and workers involved.

During the year the Department has dealt with numerous inquiries from farmers and workers in regard to the provisions of the Act and regulations. Two hundred and eighty-four complaints were received and investigated. Sixteen breaches were discovered by Inspectors in the course of usual inspection activities. One hundred and fifty-two warnings were issued, but no prosecutions were considered necessary.

SCAFFOLDING AND EXCAVATION ACT.

During the year 5,475 notices of intention to erect buildings and scaffoldings and to commence excavations were received (previous year, 5,025) and 10,087 inspections were made.

There were 48 prosecutions, convictions being recorded in 46 cases, and fines amounting to £58 15s. being imposed.

The number of accidents to workers during the year ending 31st December, 1936, was 284 (of which 2 were fatal). It should be mentioned that the total includes not only accidents to workers on scaffolding or in connection with gear or excavations, but also all other accidents occurring in connection with building operations. Taking into consideration the hazardous nature of the work and the number of workers involved, the number of accidents due to falls from scaffolds, ladders, or roofs is small—viz., 66. The number of accidents according to occupations were—labourers, 137; carpenters, 80; unclassified, 67.

Information as to the time lost and compensation paid shows in regard to the cases in which details are available that a total of 6,579 days were lost and compensation to the amount of £4,614 12s. 7d. was paid.

The following are particulars of the fatal accidents reported :—

A carpenter was engaged on preparatory work in connection with the erection of a working platform when he missed his footing and fell on to a concrete floor 12 ft. below, sustaining fatal head injuries.

A plumber was engaged on repair work on a roof when a gust of wind caught a sheet of iron he was carrying and blew him over. He fell through a skylight on to a concrete floor about 20 ft. below, suffering fatal injuries.

In the following cases the accidents were to persons who were not "workers" within the meaning assigned to that term by the Workers' Compensation Act, 1922.

A painter who was working on a share basis was discovered lying at the foot of a 24 ft. ladder with his skull fractured. It was not known whether he fell from the ladder or merely fell