

(78) offices open at the end of the year — 25 (26) in Ontario alone. Applications for employment were received from 597,783 (547,377) persons, including 116,889 (106,714) women. Vacancies were filled in 468,815 (412,527) cases out of the 545,517 (489,816) notified; 121,333 (111,545) of these placings were for employment not exceeding one week (pp. 79-85).

Factory Inspection in South Africa in 1923¹

There was little change in the industrial situation in South Africa during 1923, though some trades revived a little towards the end of the year (pp. 1-2). There were 4,719 factories on the register of the Factories Division on 21 December, as against 4,656 in 1922 (p. 22). These premises were supervised by a staff consisting of one deputy-chief inspector, one principal woman inspector, three district inspectors, and three men and two women assistant inspectors — less by one assistant inspector than in the previous year² (p. 4).

The district inspectors and assistants paid 9,491 (8,504)³ visits to factories in the course of the year (p. 19). They received 106 complaints (49 relating to hours of work), and found 47 were not justified, while 50 were satisfactorily settled without resort to prosecution (p. 17). Notices to occupiers respecting contraventions were issued in 133 cases (57 respecting hours and Sunday work, and 29 respecting the registration of establishments); and 227 notices were issued to local authorities of various types in respect of hygiene and fire escapes, general cleanliness and sanitary conveniences being the principal subjects dealt with (p. 18). Prosecutions were instituted on 37 (1) charges, and convictions obtained on 36 of them; the largest group related to unauthorised Sunday work (pp. 3, 19).

Though no general statistics are given of the number of women employed, the employment of young persons is discussed at some length (pp. 4-5, 18, 21). There were 667 (650) juvenile candidates for employment; all but eight were granted certificates of fitness (pp. 4, 18). Permits were granted for the employment of 125 (74) juveniles under fourteen years of age, 64 of them being Asiatics in the broom and brush trade, and only 12 in all not Asiatics (pp. 4, 21). In addition, various coloured children under twelve were found working at dried fruit factories, helping their mothers in cutting up fruit; this employment was stopped by the inspectors (p. 4). In the Transvaal and Orange Free State few white children were employed, as the educational requirements kept most of them at school till the age of sixteen (p. 5).

¹ UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA. DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES: *Annual Report of the Factories Division for the Calendar Year 1923*. Pretoria, Govt. Printing Office, 1925. 23 pp.

² For summary of the 1922 report cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. X, No. 2, Aug. 1924, pp. 304-306.

³ The figures in brackets are those for 1922.

The law relating to hours of work was generally well observed, except as regards bakeries in the Transvaal, where nearly a double shift is habitually worked on Fridays. The views of the various districts on night baking differed so much that no general recommendation in favour of a Draft Convention was possible. Bakeries and certain other undertakings worked fairly regular overtime (p. 5). Seasonal exemption from the limitation of hours of work were granted in 114 (118) cases affecting 12,358 (13,119) persons, and permits for Sunday work in 445 (405) cases covering 15,334 (14,374) persons (pp. 6, 20-21). The regulations concerning holidays were generally well observed (p. 6).

During the year 190 (228) accidents involving at least a fortnight's absence from work, 26 (35) of which were fatal, occurred in registered factories; over two-thirds of these accidents affected non-Europeans. The largest number of accidents (47) occurred in the woodworking industry, and the largest group of deaths (10) in sugar-milling (p. 23). It is noted that the proportion of injuries to fingers, hands, and arms is particularly high, and the necessity for educating all concerned in safety methods is emphasised (pp. 10-12).

General cleanliness of premises is reported to have received insufficient attention in many cases, even in well-equipped establishments. Sanitation was found to be defective in many rural districts and in some urban ones. Special attention was paid to the prevention of dust and fumes and to ventilation, in respect of which some progress was made (pp. 12-14). There were great improvements in the provision of washing facilities in the larger factories, but cloakrooms were frequently overcrowded (p. 7).

Owing to the smallness of many factories, effective establishment welfare work was impracticable, and the association of employers for this purpose was therefore encouraged whenever possible. Some good workers' clubs and canteens have been started in this way. The need for hostels is making itself felt in the Eastern Province (pp. 7-9). Maternity grants were applied for in 205 cases and accorded to 193 women, 159 of whom were non-European (pp. 9-10).

A special survey was made in the engineering industry, in respect of type of premises, hygiene, and safety. Buildings (chiefly of iron) were often found to be inconvenient, owing to the haphazard extensions made as trade increased. Ventilation was frequently inadequate, and this, coupled with the use of iron for walls and roof, produced uncomfortably high temperatures, while Europeans were generally too heavily clad for the heat. Improved guarding of machinery was noted, but it was found that shop discipline was not strict enough for safety, and clothing needed regulation to prevent accidents. Changing rooms and lavatories were infrequent; the employers alleged that they were not used where provided, but the workers advanced sound reasons for failure to use such accommodation as was available. Representative meetings of employers were held to confer with the inspectors on possible improvements, and the workers were similarly convened, but fewer of them attended the conferences. It is hoped, however, that a revival of trade will produce more interest in the subjects dealt with (pp. 14-17, 2).