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in British Factories, 1932

HEALTH AND INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE

Industrial Diseases and Poisoning in British Factories, 1932

THE report of the chief inspector of factories and workshops in Great Britain for the year 1932 contains a short section on health which replaces the usual detailed report of the Senior Medical Inspector of Factories. This year marks the hundredth anniversary of the appointment of the first Government inspectors of factories following the passage of the Factory Act of 1833, and a large part of the report is therefore given to historical reviews of the development of the department.

Special investigations of health hazards made during the year included a study of the effects of trichlorethylene (which has come into very extended use in dry-cleaning establishments and for degreasing as well as similar close observation of plants in which there was use of carbon-tetrachloride as a cleaning agent. Cases of toxic jaundice from arseniuretted hydrogen evolved from wetting dross containing aluminum arsenide were also investigated. Dust studies were made in a new process of spraying asbestos fiber together with an adhesive to the walls of a railway tunnel, and in the malting industry where there is a clinical picture of bronchitis, peribronchial fibrosis, and emphysema. The investigator in this industry found that other factors than dust, namely, variations in temperature and the strenuous physical effort demanded were contributing causes. A preliminary inquiry was made of workers exposed to the dust of basic slag and talc. Investigations were also carried out in plants manufacturing dry batteries where there was exposure to manganese dioxide and mercurial salts, and of the effects on health of exposure to cellulose lacquers.

The number of cases of disease resulting from the use of the more important industrial poisons reported in 1932 under the factory and lead paint acts are shown in table 1.

TABLE 1.—CASES OF POISONING REPORTED TO THE BRITISH FACTORY INSPECTION SERVICE IN 1932

Disease	Males		Females		Total	
	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
Lead poisoning.....	173	20	9	3	182	23
Mercury poisoning.....	2				2	
Arsenic poisoning.....	1				1	
Carbon-bisulphide poisoning.....	2				2	
Aniline poisoning.....	24				24	
Toxic jaundice.....	3				3	
Epitheliomatous ulceration.....	131	44			131	44
Chromic ulceration.....	65		12		77	
Anthrax.....	15	1	1		16	
Total.....	416	65	22	3	438	68