

a copy of the Regulations made in connection with the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925, and a few examples of peculiar cases dealt with under this Act?

**Mr. N. CHAMBERLAIN:** I am arranging for copies of the Regulations to be made available in the Vote Office. It is proposed to prepare and publish a précis of the more important cases decided by the referees on appeal but in view of the continued pressure on the staff it has not yet been possible to undertake this work.

**Mr. TINKER** asked the Minister of Health the number of widows who have qualified for widows' pensions, the number of children for additional allowance, the number of orphans, and the number of persons whose claims have been allowed for old age pension under the scheme that came into operation in July?

**Mr. CHAMBERLAIN:** On the latest figures available the number of widows to whom pensions have been awarded is 152,466. The number of children included in these awards is estimated at 278,500 but the exact figure is not yet available. Awards have been made in 10,658 orphans' claims, which it is estimated cover, approximately, 13,800 orphans. 35,833 old age pensions have been awarded under the scheme which came into operation on 2nd July last.

#### CANCER RESEARCH.

**Colonel DAY** asked the Minister of Health the amount of money expended during the last three years, from public funds, in connection with cancer research work?

**Mr. N. CHAMBERLAIN:** The expenditure from public funds directly assignable to cancer research during the three years ending 31st March, 1926, amounted to, approximately, £20,000, in addition to the use of a stock of radium worth £50,000, which is the property of the Government. This figure does not include any portion of the salaries of permanent officers of the Ministry of Health who are engaged in this work, nor does it take account of the cost, not readily estimated separately, of the work upon cancer undertaken by the scientific staff of the Medical Research Council at

the National Institute for Medical Research. The Council's expenditure upon research in the more primary parts of the medical sciences, which is as necessary for the solution of the cancer problem as the direct study of the disease itself, has also materially advanced the knowledge of the subject.

#### BOLTON AND LICHFIELD WORKHOUSES (ACCOMMODATION).

**Mr. RHYS DAVIES** asked the Minister of Health whether, seeing that when the workhouse is full it is the duty of the guardians to grant out-relief to destitute persons, he can state the number of persons which have been considered the maxima allowed for the workhouses at Bolton and Lichfield, respectively; and when these standards were laid down?

**Mr. N. CHAMBERLAIN:** I am not aware than any standard of maximum accommodation has been laid down for these institutions, but I will ask the clerks to the guardians to supply the information which the hon. Member desires.

#### SCOTLAND (SHERIFFS SUBSTITUTE).

**Captain W. BENN** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland how many salaried sheriffs substitute there are at the present time; how many of these were advocates at the time of their appointment; and how many were solicitors?

**Sir J. GILMOUR:** The figures asked for are, respectively, 47, 45 and 2.

#### MOTOR TRAFFIC (ACCIDENTS).

**Mr. DUCKWORTH** asked the Minister of Transport whether his Department keeps records of all serious motor accidents; and, if not, whether, in the public interest, arrangements can be made for such lists to be regularly compiled and kept up to date?

**Colonel ASHLEY:** A Return is compiled by the Home Office, and presented annually to Parliament, showing the number of accidents resulting in death or personal injury caused by vehicles of various classes in streets, roads or public places in Great Britain. In addition, the divi-

sional officers of my Department make inquiries into the more serious road accidents which come to their notice in their respective areas, and an analysis of the results of these inquiries is given in the Annual Report on the Administration of the Road Fund. As regards the London traffic area, reports on road accidents are received, as provided in Section 2 of the London Traffic Act, 1924, and a summary of the results of the investigation of these reports will be issued with the Annual Report of the London Traffic Advisory Committee.

#### AGRICULTURE.

##### BEET-SUGAR FACTORIES.

**Major GLYN** asked the Minister of Agriculture how many factories for the manufacture of sugar from beet have been put up in this country; how many have been working this year; how many will be in working order next year; are there any more factories to be put up; and, if so, in what areas and by what date?

**Mr. GUINNESS:** Ten beet-sugar factories are erected, of which nine were working during the last season and 14 factories in all are expected to be ready for the 1926-27 season. Of the five new factories that at Spalding is already completed, and the remainder are being built at Peterborough, Felstead in Essex, Poppleton near York and Cupar, Fife. One or two further factories are contemplated for erection at a later date but definite information is not yet available.

**Major GLYN** asked the Minister of Agriculture how much capital has now been subscribed to sugar-beet factory companies in Great Britain; what is the total cost of all the factories so far constructed complete with machinery; how many acres were there under beet in 1925 and how many in 1926; and what steps it is proposed to take to ensure that promises of factories being put up to serve certain districts will be carried out, in view of the fact that on such promises many farmers have made their arrangements?

**Mr. GUINNESS:** The subscribed capital of the 10 factories already erected amounts to £2,500,507. The total cost of these factories including machinery was £3,900,000. The area under beet in 1925 was 56,200 acres. The figures of the 1926

acreage will be available shortly, but from information supplied by the factory companies the acreage is estimated to be about 128,500 acres. With regard to the latter part of the question, I understand that in areas where factories have been proposed but are not yet being erected, any beets grown under contract will be worked in existing factories.

##### SMALL HOLDINGS.

**Mr. RILEY** asked the Minister of Agriculture the total acreage of land acquired by county and county borough councils under the Small Holdings Act of 1908, from the commencement of the Act down to July, 1914; the total cost of such land; and the amount spent upon equipping the land for small holdings, including the provision of houses and other buildings?

**Mr. GUINNESS:** I am unable to give the figures for the exact period stated by the hon. Member. The total area acquired under the Act of 1908 down to the 31st December, 1914, was 198,268 acres, of which 139,478 acres were purchased for £4,601,692, and 58,810 acres were leased for rents amounting to £74,186. The total amount of loans sanctioned for equipment and adaptation during the same period was £911,859. The actual expenditure cannot be stated, but the difference would be very small.

##### SHEEP SCAB (LEGAL DECISION).

**Mr. MURROUGH WILSON** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether his attention has been drawn to the ruling by the Judge in the King's Bench Divisional Court in regard to a sheep scab case near Barnard Castle and what steps he proposes to take in order to remedy the hardship which the Court stated undoubtedly to be created?

**Mr. GUINNESS:** Yes, Sir; my attention has been drawn to the case in question. Veterinary inspectors of the local Authority and of the Ministry are highly qualified and have exceptional opportunities for becoming skilful in diagnosing the scheduled diseases. Their diagnoses are so rarely called in question that, while I deplore the hardship involved in this case, I do not think any modification of the existing procedure is rendered necessary. It is essential that prompt action should be taken in combating animal diseases if the spread of