

information, summarized on pp. 7, 10 and 11, that the worst of unemployment was over, and it was known from other sources that distress was less acute.

The immediate problem was to increase the employment for women in London and Lancashire. In London workrooms were opened with a fair measure of success; and great, and ultimately successful, efforts were made to spread out, and place where most needed, the greatly increased quantity of Government contracts. In Lancashire little could be effected immediately.

In October every index in both tables shows a favourable movement. Recruiting had taken as many men as had lost work; short time had become less frequent, and in London (at any rate) it was seldom more than one-quarter's time that was lost; but women's unemployment was still so common as to be serious. The difficulty was by that time small enough to be grappled with, but it was incorrect to assume (as was commonly done) that there was no further problem as regards women and girls.

By December the demand for men could no longer be met and overtime was not uncommon, though short time also existed. In London and in the rest of the United Kingdom more men were accounted for as in employment or with the forces than had been employed in July.<sup>1</sup> It is not clear whence these men came, for the excess would have needed the great part of those who appear in columns 1, 2, 3 (p. 7) as unemployed in July, and as a matter of fact the percentages, &c., in December are little below those in July. Other reserves of labour must have been tapped, unoccupied and partly occupied persons diverted into industry, boys pushed forward, and

<sup>1</sup> Of course, recruiting from other occupations or from the unoccupied does not affect these figures.