

1915, the Home Secretary gave notice of an Order under Section 73 (4) of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, applying the provisions of the said section to all cases of toxic jaundice occurring in a factory or workshop; the Order would apply to jaundice due to tetrachlorethane, to nitro or amido-derivatives of benzene, or, indeed, to any other poisonous substance.—*The Lancet*.

OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES DUE TO RADIUM

In the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, of Jan. 1st, Professor T. Ordway, of Albany Medical College, has described the effects observed during a year's radium work at the Huntington Hospital. Those who were applying radium in the treatment of patients noticed, after a few weeks, a slight though gradually increasing sensory disturbance in the finger-tips, particularly on the ulnar side of the first phalanx of the thumb and the radial side of the terminal phalanges of the index and middle fingers of each hand. These symptoms began insidiously and consisted of blunting of sensibility of the finger-tips, increased sensitiveness to heat and pressure, amounting at times to pain, and anesthesia of varying degrees. They were out of proportion to the objective changes, which consisted of flattening of the natural ridges on the affected fingers, with consequent changes in the finger prints, thickening of the horny layer of the epidermis with scaling, failure of the finger-tips to resume their normal shape after pressure, a sort of pitting and upgrowth of the cuticle at the base of and underneath the nails, which became extremely brittle and tended to stand off from the fingers. The assistants and nurses were warned of the dangers and told not to handle the emanation tubes with the fingers, but to use forceps. But some handling is unavoidable. For example, a medical practitioner began making routine applications of radium early in November, 1913. These increased in number until the latter part of January, 1914, after which they were few. After some weeks the tips of the thumbs, particularly towards the ulnar side, and of the fore and middle fingers, especially towards the radial side, gradually became numb and deficient in sensibility. There was greatly increased sensitiveness to heat, paresthesia in the form of a peculiar feeling in the finger-tips, and awkwardness in delicate manipulations. Small objects were frequently dropped and there was difficulty in taking pulses. The affected portion of the fingers became smooth and shiny and the ridges almost obliterated. Later the epidermis became thickened, dry, and parchment-like, and on