

obstacle in any case, and the housing difficulty, often meaning high cost of travelling to be met out of low wages, needs no explanation as an obstacle to place-to-place mobility.

There are many cases of men who are quite prepared to take work for which they are totally unfit, since the suffering caused by the prolonged depression has made them only too eager to snatch at any piece of work they can get. Two Rota Committee members and two trade unionists say that, in their experience nearly every skilled man is willing to accept labouring as an alternative job when he signs on at the Labour Exchange. Skilled men are finding it more difficult to get work than the unskilled, since they are necessarily tied down to a narrower range of occupations.

As regards mobility from town to town, a number of people of widely different experience are of the opinion that the Insurance system is not responsible for any unwillingness of men to seek work elsewhere. The part that benefit plays is quite negligible in view of (1) the housing problem; (2) the character of the work elsewhere (the worker is suspicious when any job has not been filled locally); (3) the low wages generally offered, which do not make the change worth while.

Nevertheless, a social worker reports a considerable amount of migration, but adds that most of it appears to be towards Newcastle rather than away from it.

#### THE EFFECT ON THE WORKER IN EMPLOYMENT.

The Insurance scheme has only partially removed the fear of suffering due to unemployment, as out of work benefits are too small to remove it completely. "Among the men with whom I have come in contact and who have got work after periods of unemployment," says a social worker, "I find a strong desire to retain their jobs. This has also tended to cause men in temporary bad health to stick to their work rather than apply for National Health Insurance as in normal times they would. I have evidence also from some employers that men are working harder and keeping better time than previously."

Except in cases where rates are fixed by Trade Union agreements there has been a fall in the real wages paid to unskilled and casual workers. Employers who engage non-union men are able to obtain all the labour they require at rates which compare very badly with the standard rates paid elsewhere, especially in what are now known as the "sheltered" trades.

#### SURVEY AND CONCLUSIONS.

Whilst it may not be safe to draw sweeping conclusions from the eight reports summarised, they reveal a certain similarity of experience in places of widely different type that compels comment. The investigation covers a composite sample of British industrial areas. Working