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EMPLOYMENT, WAGES, COST OF
LIVING, AND TRADE DISPUTES IN
DECEMBER.

EMPLOYMENT.

EMPLOYMENT in December showed a further improvement prior to the holidays. Among workpeople insured under the Unemployment Insurance Acts in Great Britain and Northern Ireland the percentage unemployed at 21st December, 1923, was 10·7, compared with 11·5 at 26th November and with 11·7 at 22nd October; at 18th December, 1922, the corresponding percentage was 12·6. Among members of Trade Unions from which returns were received the percentage unemployed was 9·7 at the end of December, compared with 10·5 at the end of November. The total number of workpeople registered at the Employment Exchanges as unemployed at 17th December in Great Britain and Northern Ireland was approximately 1,174,000, of whom 889,000 were men and 223,000 were women, the remainder being boys and girls. At 26th November the total was 1,257,000, of whom 945,000 were men and 240,000 were women.

Employment was good in the coal mining industry and in the tinplate, steel sheet, carpet and jute trades; it was fairly good with skilled operatives (except painters) in the building trades, with coachbuilders and coopers, and in certain sections of the metal trades; and fair in the brickmaking, furnishing, millsawing, printing and leather trades. In most of the other large industries it was slack or bad.

Among the principal industries, those which showed most improvement were pig-iron manufacture, iron and steel manufacture, engineering, shipbuilding, and cotton and wool textiles.

After Christmas there was a seasonal decline in employment, and in many cases the customary holiday stoppages were extended. At 7th January, 1924, the number of workpeople registered at the Employment Exchanges as unemployed was approximately 1,266,000, as compared with 1,527,000 at 8th January, 1923.

WAGES.

The total number of workpeople affected by changes in rates of wages reported in December was less than in any month since December, 1920. In the industries for which statistics are available the changes in rates of wages reported as having taken effect during the month resulted in an aggregate reduction of £5,000 in the weekly full-time wages of 73,000 workpeople and in an increase of £4,600 in the weekly wages of 55,000 workpeople.

The reductions occurred mainly in the metal and clothing trades. In the former there was a decrease of over 1½ per cent. on the current rates of iron puddlers and iron and steel millmen in the Midlands, while in the latter the principal reduction affected women employed in the hat, cap and millinery trade in England and Wales, for whom the minimum rates fixed under the Trades Boards Acts were reduced by ½d. per hour.

There were increases of ½d. per hour in the wages of men employed on civil engineering constructional work,

of 1¼ per cent. on the current rates of steel sheet millmen, and of 1s. 2d. and 6d. per week in the wages of men and women respectively in the making-up and packing industry at Manchester.

The changes in wages reported to the Department during 1923 resulted in a net reduction of nearly £480,000 in the weekly full-time wages of over 3,000,000 workpeople and a net increase of nearly £170,000 in the weekly wages of nearly 1,200,000 workpeople. During 1922 there was a net reduction of over £4,200,000 in the weekly full-time wages of over 7,600,000 workpeople and a net increase of about £11,000 in the weekly wages of about 75,000 workpeople.

COST OF LIVING.

At 1st January the average level of retail prices of the commodities taken into account in the statistics prepared by the Ministry of Labour (including food, rent, clothing, fuel, light and miscellaneous items) was approximately 77 per cent. above that of July, 1914, as compared with 77 per cent. a month ago and 78 per cent. a year ago. For food alone the corresponding percentage for 1st January was 75, as compared with 76 a month ago and 75 a year ago; but this decrease was counterbalanced, in the general average for all items of expenditure, by increases in the prices of coal and of cotton goods.

The statistics are designed to indicate the average increase in the cost of maintaining unchanged the pre-war standard of living of working-class families. Accordingly, in making the calculations, the changes in the prices of the various items included are combined in proportions corresponding with the relative importance of those items in pre-war working-class family expenditure, no allowance being made for any changes in the standard of living.

For further particulars and details of the statistics for 1st January reference should be made to the article on page 13.

TRADE DISPUTES.

The number of trade disputes involving stoppages of work, reported to the Department as beginning in December, was 12. In addition, 12 disputes which began before December were still in progress at the beginning of the month. The total number of workpeople involved in all disputes in December (including workpeople thrown out of work at the establishments where the disputes occurred, but not themselves parties to the disputes) was approximately 10,300, as compared with 54,000 (including 40,000 shipyard workers) in the previous month and 7,400 in December, 1922. The estimated aggregate duration of all disputes during December was about 83,000 working days, as compared with 1,016,000 days in November, 1923, and 72,000 days in December, 1922. The number of disputes in progress was smaller than in any month since January, 1917.

The estimated aggregate duration of all disputes reported as in progress during 1923 was about 10,640,000 working days. The total number of workpeople involved in these disputes was nearly 400,000. In the previous year over 550,000 workpeople were involved in disputes having an aggregate duration of approximately 19,850,000 working days.

EMPLOYMENT, WAGES, COST OF LIVING AND TRADE DISPUTES IN 1923.

(1).—GENERAL SUMMARY.

EMPLOYMENT, on the whole, remained bad throughout 1923; but the improvement which began in the previous year continued, with some interruption in the summer, and the proportion unemployed among the 11,500,000 workpeople covered by the Unemployment Insurance Acts was reduced from 12.6 per cent. in December, 1922, to 10.7 per cent. in December, 1923. At the end of the year employment in certain industries, including coal mining, tinplate and steel sheet manufacture, and the carpet trade, was good, and in some others it was fairly good; but in many of the principal industries, including engineering, shipbuilding and the cotton and wool textile trades, it was slack or bad.

There was a further decline, on the average, in rates of wages during 1923, but the reductions were on a much smaller scale than in the two previous years, and in some industries, including coal mining, iron and steel manufacture, and the tinplate and steel sheet trades, there were net increases during the year.

The average level of retail prices fell during the first five months of 1923, but rose again in the latter half of the year. On 1st January, 1924, the cost of maintaining unchanged the pre-war standard of living of working-class families, as indicated by the statistics compiled by the Department, averaged approximately 77 per cent. above the level of July, 1914, compared with 69 per cent. in June and with 78 per cent. at 1st January, 1923.

The number of trade disputes*, causing stoppages of work, reported to have begun in 1923 in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was 611. The total number of workpeople involved in these stoppages (including those workpeople thrown out of work, though not actually on strike or locked out, at the establishments where the disputes occurred) was about 397,000, and a further 2,000 were involved in eighteen disputes in progress in 1923 which began in 1922. The aggregate number of working days lost by these workpeople in 1923 in the course of the disputes was about 10,640,000; this total is much below that recorded for any year since 1918.

(2).—EMPLOYMENT.

At the beginning of 1923 employment in most of the principal industries was bad. Among workpeople insured against unemployment, in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the proportion registered as unemployed in December, 1922, was 12.6 per cent., and among members of those Trade Unions (mainly of skilled workers) which make returns to the Department it was 14.0 per cent. The improvement which had begun in 1922, however, continued during the first half of 1923, and by June the proportions unemployed, both among insured workpeople and among members of Trade Unions making returns, had been reduced to a little over 11 per cent. There was some decline in employment in July and August, but a renewed improvement in the later months of the year, and in December the proportions unemployed had fallen to 10.7 per cent. among insured workers and to 9.7 per cent. among members of those Trade Unions for which returns are received. The average of the monthly percentages unemployed among insured workpeople and among members of Trade Unions making returns were 11.6 and 11.5 respectively, in 1923, as compared with 14.0 and 15.4, respectively, in 1922.

The total number of applicants for employment on the Live Registers of the Employment Exchanges in Great Britain and Northern Ireland at 17th December, 1923, was 1,174,397, of whom 889,390 were men and 223,315 were women, the remainder being boys and girls. At 18th December, 1922, the corresponding total was 1,408,008, of whom 1,129,569 were men and 203,119 were women. As some unemployed persons do not register at the Exchanges, these totals do not fully represent the total numbers unemployed, but they provide a further indication of the improvement in employment among men in 1923.

At the end of the year employment in certain industries, including coal-mining, tinplate manufacture, and the carpet and jute trades, was good, and in some others it was fair. In many industries, however, including engineering, shipbuilding, cotton weaving, and the wool textile industry, it was bad.

The following Table shows for the end of each month the percentage of unemployment, in Great Britain and Northern Ireland (a) among the workpeople (numbering over 11½ millions and working in practically every industry except agriculture and private domestic service) covered by the Unemployment Insurance Act, and (b) in those Trade Unions (with an aggregate membership of about 1,150,000, mainly skilled workers) which pay out-of-work benefit and make regular returns to the Department:—

Date (End of Month.)*	Percentage of Insured Workpeople registered as Unemployed.			Percentage Unemployed in Trade Unions making returns.
	Males.	Females.	Total.	
1922.				
December**	14.3	7.9	12.6	14.0
1923.				
January	14.6	9.0	13.1	13.7
February	13.6	8.4	12.2	13.1
March	12.6	8.5	11.5	12.3
April	12.3	8.7	11.4	11.3
May	12.0	8.9	11.2	11.3
June	12.1	8.9	11.3	11.1
July	12.2	9.5	11.5	11.1
August	12.4	10.1	11.8	11.4
September	12.3	10.0	11.7	11.3
October	12.4	9.8	11.7	10.9
November	12.1	9.7	11.5	10.5
December**	11.2	9.1	10.7	9.7

In December, 1921, over 17 per cent. of insured workpeople and over 16 per cent. of the members of Trade Unions making returns were unemployed.

The following Table gives comparative figures for the period 1900-1923 of the percentage of members unemployed in Trade Unions making returns, showing separately (a) the mean of the twelve monthly percentages for each year, and (b) the percentage for the end of December in each year:—

Year.	Percentage Unemployed.		Year.	Percentage Unemployed.	
	Mean of Year.	End of December.		Mean of Year.	End of December.
1900	2.5	3.5	1912	3.2	2.3
1901	3.3	4.2	1913	2.1	2.6
1902	4.0	5.0	1914	3.3	2.5
1903	4.7	6.3	1915	1.1	0.6
1904	6.0	7.1	1916	0.4	0.3
1905	5.0	4.5	1917	0.7	1.4
1906	3.6	4.4	1918	0.8	1.2
1907	3.7	5.6	1919	2.4	3.2
1908	7.8	9.1	1920	2.4	6.0
1909	7.7	6.6	1921	15.3	16.5
1910	4.7	5.0	1922	15.4	14.0
1911	3.0	3.1	1923	11.5	9.7

A summary of the state of employment during 1923 in some of the principal industries is given below:—

Mining.—In the coal mining industry employment was good during the first half of the year; it declined a little in July, but improved again in September, and continued good throughout the remainder of the year. The number of wage-earners on the colliery books at December, 1923, showed an increase of 4.9 per cent., as compared with December, 1922. At shale mines employment was fair throughout the year. At iron mines employment was bad in Cleveland and fair or moderate in other districts; in February there was some improvement, which was maintained until June, when employment again declined. Towards the end of the year there was an improvement, and the number of workpeople employed in December, 1923, by firms from which returns were received, showed an increase of 15.4 per cent. as compared with December, 1922.

Metal Trades.—In the pig-iron industry employment was bad, on the whole, though the improvement reported during 1922 continued during the first five months of 1923. In June employment declined, but it improved again in November, and at the end of the year the number of furnaces in blast was 204, an increase of 35 on the number at the end of December, 1922. Employment in the iron and steel trades was only moderate in January, but then improved, and was fair in the four succeeding months; in the summer there was a decline, but towards the end of the year an improvement took place, and in December the number of workpeople employed by firms from which returns were received showed an increase of 10.5 per cent. as compared with the corresponding week of the previous year. In the tinplate trade employment, already fairly good in January, improved in March, and was good during the remainder of the year; in the steel sheet trade it was uniformly good.

Employment in the engineering trades, though better than in 1922, was bad, on the whole, throughout the year. There was some improvement during the first six months; but in the latter half of the year employment in some sections of the trade suffered from the effects of the prolonged dispute in the shipbuilding industry. In December, there was a tendency towards improvement. In the shipbuilding and ship-repairing trades the depression of the two preceding years continued during 1923 and employment was very bad. A slight improvement was noticeable in the early months of the year, but the industry was then disorganised by a dispute resulting in a lock-out of platers, riveters, etc., in most of the principal districts. The stoppage began on 30th April and continued until 24th November. In the other metal trades employment was generally moderate, but an improvement was reported during the year, and in December some sections, particularly the brasswork, nut, bolt and nail, stove and grate, and the hollow-ware trades, were fairly well employed.

* In the case of insured workpeople the percentages for December relate to 18th December, 1922, and 21st December, 1923.

Textile Trades.—Employment in the cotton trade continued very depressed except in the section spinning Egyptian cotton, where the operatives were well employed. In the American spinning section and in the weaving section employment was bad throughout the year, though an improvement was reported in the last quarter. The organised short time, to the extent of thirteen hours a week, which had been resorted to at the end of September, 1922, by firms spinning American cotton, was continued until 31st January, and a large amount of short time was worked during February by individual firms. At the end of that month the Employers' Federation recommended their members in the American section to curtail production by 50 per cent. Similar recommendations were made in succeeding months, until the end of November, when they were discontinued.

In the woollen industry employment was fair at the beginning of the year, and showed little change until May; a decline then began, and in the latter half of the year employment was bad. In the worsted trade employment was good in January; a decline began in February, and from June onwards employment was bad. There was a slight improvement, however, both in the woollen and in the worsted trades in December. With hosiery workers employment was fair during the first quarter of the year, but subsequently declined, and in the later months of the year it was bad. The Dundee jute industry was affected by a prolonged stoppage of work, owing to a trade dispute, but employment otherwise was fairly good. In the lace industry employment was bad; in the linen trade it continued slack throughout the year. In the carpet trade employment improved in January, and was generally good during the year; in the textile bleaching, printing, dyeing, etc., trades it was slack.

Clothing Trades.—In the ready-made clothing trade employment was fair or fairly good from January to September, but then declined, and continued slack during the remaining months of the year. In the boot and shoe industry employment was slack on the whole, but varied from month to month and from one district to another; the tendency was towards improvement.

Building and Woodworking.—In the building trades employment was slack at the beginning of the year, but gradually improved. In the later months of the year it was fairly good with skilled operatives, except painters, but slack or bad with painters and unskilled workers. In the furnishing and wood-working trades employment was quiet generally in January, but improved during the four succeeding months; there was some decline during the summer months, but at the end of the year employment was fair generally in the furnishing trades and with mill-sawyers, and fairly good with coachbuilders and with coopers.

Paper, Printing, etc., Trades.—Employment in paper manufacture was fair on the whole during the first half of the year, but declined in July and August; during the remaining months it was moderate. In the printing trades, employment was slack in January, but improved on the whole as the year progressed, and in December it was generally fair; with bookbinders it was slack on the whole, though some improvement was reported towards the end of the year.

Pottery and Glass.—In the pottery trade employment was slack generally, though a gradual improvement was reported throughout the year until December, when there was a slight decline. In the glass trade employment, though better towards the end than during the first half of the year, was bad on the whole.

(3).—CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES.*

There was a further decline in rates of wages during 1923, but the numbers of workpeople whose wages were reduced and the total amount of reduction in wages were much smaller than in 1921 or 1922. In the coal-mining industry, in iron and steel manufacture, and in some smaller industries, the great majority of the workers obtained net increases during the year, and in each of the months July to October the increases reported to the Department exceeded the reductions.

In the industries and services for which statistics are available,† the changes reported in 1923 resulted in an aggregate net reduction of nearly £480,000 in the weekly full-time wages of over 3,000,000 workpeople and in a net increase of nearly £170,000 in those of nearly 1,200,000 workpeople; while 400,000 workers had increases and decreases which left their wages at the same level at the end as at the beginning of the year. In 1922 over 7,600,000 workpeople sustained net reductions amounting to over £4,200,000 a week and about 75,000 received a net increase of about £11,000 a week. In 1921 nearly 7,200,000 workers had their wages reduced by an aggregate of £6,000,000 a week and about 80,000 secured net increases amounting to £14,500 a week.

The following Table shows the numbers of workpeople affected by the changes in rates of wages reported to the Department in 1922 and 1923, and the net amount of the change in their weekly rates of wages, in each of the principal groups of industries. In comparing the figures for different groups it should be observed that, as the changes in the wages of adult men have usually been greater than those affecting women, boys and girls, comparisons of the average amount of change per head, to be deduced from the figures, are affected by the

* The figures given throughout are preliminary and subject to revision. Those for 1922 and earlier years have been revised in accordance with the latest information available.

† The statistics are exclusive of changes affecting agricultural labourers, police, Government employees, domestic servants, shop assistants and clerks. They relate to rates of wages for a full week, assuming full employment, and do not take account of reductions in actual earnings resulting from unemployment. In many cases, changes arranged by individual employers and affecting unorganised groups of workers, are not reported to the Department.

varying proportions of men, women and young persons employed in different industries. It should also be noted that the changes reported consist mainly of those arranged between organised groups of workpeople and employers, and that many changes among unorganised workers, especially those affecting only employees of single firms, are not reported:—

Industry Group.	Approximate Numbers of Workpeople obtaining net increases and sustaining net decreases, respectively, in Rates of Wages.			Total Net Amount of Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in the Weekly Wages of those affected.	
	1922.*		1923.†	1922.	1923.
	Decreases	Increases	Decreases	£	£
Building	510,000	8,000	426,000	- 392,000	- 67,900
Mining and Quarrying	1,037,000	954,000	18,500	- 506,000	+ 121,700
Iron and Steel	239,000	190,000	2,500	- 241,000	+ 31,900
Engineering and Shipbuilding	1,306,000	5,500	156,000	-1,191,000	- 27,450
Other Metal	282,000	31,000	115,000	- 217,000	- 16,350
Textile	1,005,000	1,500	183,000	- 412,000	- 12,500
Clothing	716,000	—	405,000	- 162,000	- 70,600
Transport	935,000	2,750	755,000	- 493,000	- 123,600
Paper, Printing, etc.	203,000	350	112,000	- 72,000	- 12,850
Furniture and Woodworking	93,000	100	38,000	- 49,000	- 9,700
Chemical, Glass, Brick, Pottery, etc.	280,000	1,350	128,000	- 138,000	- 21,850
Food, Drink and Tobacco	290,000	550	245,000	- 77,000	- 32,300
Public Utility Services	396,000	3,000	322,000	- 206,000	- 53,700
Other	181,000	100	111,000	- 55,000	- 14,200
Total	7,633,000*	1,198,200	3,027,000	-4,211,000	- 309,400

Building Trades.—The rates of wages of skilled workers in the building trades were reduced in May by ½d. per hour in London and certain small towns and by 1d. per hour in the larger provincial towns, and those of labourers by amounts ranging from ½d. per hour in London and the small towns to ¾d. in the larger provincial towns. In the same month the rates for plumbers in many districts were further reduced, by ½d. or 1d. per hour, to bring them to the level prevailing for other classes of craftsmen. Later in the year the rates of wages of all classes of workers in a number of districts in the Southern and Eastern Counties were increased, usually by ½d. to 1d. per hour, in consequence of the up-grading of various districts under the grading scheme of the National Wages and Conditions Council.

Mining.—In the coal-mining industry the general level of rates of wages, as measured by the percentage additions to standard rates, remained unaltered during the year in Lancashire, North Staffordshire and Cheshire, North Wales, South Staffordshire and Shropshire, Cumberland, Bristol, the Newbury district of Somerset, and Kent, although in Cumberland the "subsistence wage" fixed for the lower-paid workers was slightly reduced in June. In all these districts rates of wages were at the minimum defined by the Terms of Settlement of the general dispute of 1921. In other districts rates of wages were raised during the year; but in the later months of the year reductions came into operation, except in the Radstock district, and at the end of 1923 the district rates of wages in these coalfields showed increases, as compared with the beginning of the year, ranging from about 0.5 per cent. in South Wales and Monmouthshire, and 0.6 per cent. in Yorkshire and the East Midlands, up to 20 per cent. in Northumberland and 17 per cent. in Durham. In South Wales and Monmouthshire, however, the "subsistence wage" fixed for the lower-paid workers was increased in July in the case of men who were the head or support of a family, this wage being about 5 per cent. higher at the end of the year than at the beginning. In the other districts where the district percentage was raised during 1923 the subsistence wage or allowances in operation at December, 1922, remained unaltered.

Metal, Engineering, and Shipbuilding Trades.—In the case of workers engaged in the smelting and manufacture of iron and steel, whose rates of wages fluctuate in accordance with the selling price of pig iron or of manufactured iron or steel, there were slight reductions in some districts early in the year, but these were followed by increases in all districts until towards the end of the year, when decreases occurred in some cases. In all the principal districts rates of wages were higher at the end than at the beginning of the year, the net increases ranging from ¾ per cent. to 16 per cent. on the rates prevailing at December, 1922.

In the engineering industry there was no general change in rates of wages during the year. In the shipbuilding industry the only general change was the withdrawal in January of the fourth instalment of reductions arranged in 1922, the instalment being 2s. 6d. a week in the case of the higher-paid men and smaller amounts in the case of lower-paid men. There were local reductions in the wages of workers in the engineering and shipbuilding industry at Belfast, and in the ship-repairing industry on the Thames and the Mersey.

* Apart from the workers whose wages were reduced in 1922, about 75,000 workers received net increases.

† In addition to the number of workpeople shown as having had a net increase or a net decrease in wages, there were about 400,000 workpeople whose wages were both increased and decreased during the year, the net effect being that their wages were at the same level at the end as at the beginning of the year.

* Exclusive of a number of insignificant stoppages. (See footnote * on page 28.)

Amongst the principal bodies of workpeople in the other metal trades whose wages were reduced during the year were needle, fishing-tackle, lock, latch and key, pen and bedstead workers in the Midlands, lead smelters, electric cable makers, and heating and domestic engineers. Under the Trade Boards Acts the minimum rates were reduced in the case of workers in the stamped and pressed metal wares trade, the hollow-ware trade, and the pin, hook and eye and snap fastener trade. The principal group of workers whose wages were increased were tinplate workers in South Wales.

Textile Trades.—In the cotton industry, and in the wool textile industry in Yorkshire, there was no general change in rates of wages during the year. There were net reductions, however, in the wool textile industry at Leicester, in the West of England and in Scotland. In the textile bleaching, dyeing, printing and finishing trades in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire and Scotland there were reductions in April and July, and an increase in October, the net effect for the whole year being a small decrease. Workers in the hosiery trade in the Midlands sustained a reduction, followed by an increase later in the year of an equal amount. There were reductions during the year in rates of wages in the silk industry at Macclesfield, Leek, and Brighouse, and in the carpet industry. The minimum rates operative under the Trade Boards Acts were reduced in the jute trade and in the rope, twine and net trade.

Clothing Trades.—In the clothing trades reductions in the minimum rates fixed under the Trade Boards Acts during the year affected workpeople in the wholesale mantle and costume trade, and in the ready-made and wholesale bespoke tailoring trade in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, males in the retail bespoke tailoring trade in Great Britain, and workpeople in the same trade in Northern Ireland, females in the dressmaking and women's light clothing trades in Great Britain, and females in the shirt-making trade in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The reductions ranged usually from 1d. to 2d. per hour in the case of men and from ½d. to 1d. per hour in the case of women. In the boot and shoe repairing trade the minimum rates fixed under the Acts were reduced in June, and later were increased by the same amounts. In the boot and shoe manufacturing industry the minimum time rates of wages, fixed by agreement between the Employers' Federation and the Trade Union, were reduced in June by amounts ranging from 1s. to 4s. a week in the case of men and by 2s. a week in the case of women, but were increased by the same amounts in November, under the operation of a cost-of-living sliding scale.

Transport Services.—In the railway service a large proportion of the men employed in the operation of traffic sustained reductions in July, the amount of reduction ranging, in the majority of cases, from 1s. to 3s. a week. Dock labourers sustained a reduction of 1s. per day or 6d. per half-day in July, and the rates for seamen on monthly articles were reduced by 15s. or 20s. per month in April, and those of men on weekly articles by 5s. to 6s. 6d. per week. In the road transport industry the reductions during the year varied in different districts, the average of the rates of wages of one-horse carters in twelve of the larger towns showing a fall of about 2s. 6d. per week.

Printing and Bookbinding.—The rates of wages of hand compositors on book and jobbing work in the provincial towns of England and Wales were reduced by 3s. 6d. a week in May. In July there was a reduction in London and the provinces of 2s. 6d. a week in the wages of male bookbinders and machine rulers, and of 1s. a week in the wages of women in the printing and bookbinding trades. In Scotland hand compositors and bookbinders sustained a reduction of 2s. 6d. a week in July, and women a reduction of 1s. a week.

Other Industries.—In the furniture-making trades there were net reductions in the rates of wages in most of the principal centres, though in London and certain other districts there were increases towards the end of the year under the operation of cost-of-living sliding scales. The average net reduction in 17 of the largest towns amounted to 1d. per hour, equivalent to about 3s. 6d. per week. There was a general reduction of 2d. per hour in the wages of coopers. In the vehicle-building industry there was no general change during the year.

In the pottery trade in North Staffordshire there was a reduction of 10 per cent. on gross wages in April, and in the heavy chemical trade in England and Wales shift workers sustained a decrease of ½d. per hour in two equal instalments in May and July. Other important bodies of workpeople whose rates of wages were reduced during the year included soap and candle workers, flour mill workers, cocoa, chocolate, sugar confectionery and fruit preserving workers, fanners and curriers, and workpeople engaged in seed crushing. In the milk distributive trade there was a decrease in the minimum rates fixed under the Trade Boards Acts.

In the public utility services one or more reductions were sustained by workers in the great majority of the large towns. Workpeople in the gas industry had their wages reduced generally by 1d. per hour or 8d. per shift. At electricity undertakings there was a total reduction of 1d. per hour in most localities, and in many districts additional local reductions were made. In the non-trading departments of Local Authorities the

amount of reduction varied in different areas, the average reduction for labourers in the large towns being 3s. 9d. per week. In the tramways industry drivers and conductors sustained two decreases each of 1s. a week, followed later in the year by an increase of 1s. a week.

Agriculture.—Among workpeople not included in the statistics given on page 3 agricultural labourers in a few districts sustained reductions, while in other districts wages remained unchanged during the year.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN WAGES.

It will be seen that there was considerable variation in the movement of wages in different industries in 1923. In a number of important industries wage rates remained unchanged during the year. In most cases in which they were changed there was a net reduction during the year; but in the coal-mining industry, in iron and steel smelting, rolling, etc., and in some smaller industries, the rates of wages of the great majority of the workpeople were increased. When allowance is made for the relative importance of the different industries, it appears, on the basis of the available information, that the net reduction in rates of wages during 1923 was equivalent to about 3 per cent. of the rates prevailing at the beginning of the year, and that at the end of 1923 weekly full-time rates of wages averaged about 65 to 70 per cent. above the pre-war level. As previously indicated, these figures relate to rates of wages for a full normal week, and take no account of changes in earnings resulting from alterations in the state of employment, the effect of which varied considerably in different industries.

METHODS BY WHICH CHANGES IN WAGES WERE ARRANGED.

As indicated above, workpeople in some industries obtained increases in wages during 1923, while in other industries they sustained reductions, and in a considerable number of cases the same group of workpeople obtained increases and sustained decreases at different dates during the year. The total of all the increases reported to the Department was equivalent to approximately £454,000 a week, and the total of all the reductions to £763,000 a week, the net effect being a reduction of about £309,000 a week.

Of the total increase of £454,000 weekly, about £380,000 was accounted for by the operation of sliding scale agreements dependent on selling prices or (in the coal-mining industry) on the proceeds of the industry, and about £50,000 by cost-of-living sliding scales. Of the total reduction of £763,000 weekly, about £220,000 was due to the operation of sliding scales based on selling prices or on the proceeds of the industry, and about £145,000 to cost-of-living sliding scales; the bulk of the remainder being accounted for by agreements made by joint standing bodies of employers and workpeople, or arrived at after direct negotiation between employers and workpeople or their representatives. Reductions resulting from arbitration awards amounted to nearly £70,000 weekly.

Settlements arrived at after stoppages of work accounted for only about £1,000 of the total weekly increase and less than £20,000 of the total weekly decrease.

CHANGES IN WAGES IN THE YEARS 1919-1923.

The following Table shows the total numbers of workpeople in the industries and services for which statistics were available,* whose rates of wages were increased or reduced (so far as reported) in each of the years 1919-1923, and the net amount of increase or decrease in their weekly rates of wages:—

Year.	Approximate Number of Workpeople whose rates of wages were		Total Net Amount of		Net increase (+) or decrease (-) in the rates of wages of those affected.
	Increased.	Decreased.	Increase.	Decrease.	
1919	6,160,000	—	£ 2,432,000	£ —	+ £ 2,432,000
1920	7,720,000	—	4,797,000	—	+ 4,797,000
1921	80,000	7,175,000	14,500	6,041,000	+ 6,026,500
1922	75,000	7,633,000	11,000	4,222,000	+ 4,211,000
1923	1,198,200	3,027,000	168,300	477,700	+ 309,400

(4).—CHANGES IN HOURS OF LABOUR.

The principal change in hours of labour in 1923 affected building trade operatives in a large number of districts in England and Wales. An Arbitrator's Award issued in August provided that the hours of labour in the building industry should be 46½ in the statutory summer period and 44 during the remainder of the year, except in any district in which the employers and operatives should agree to work 44 all the year round. The hours previously in operation in most districts were 44 except in December and January, when they were 41½ per week. Compared with 1922, therefore, there was a general increase of 2½ hours per week in the months of December and January as from 1st December, 1923. There was also an increase in the hours of labour of ironstone miners in Cleveland, from 7 to 8 hours per shift in the case of underground workers, and from 46½ to 49 per week in the case of surface workers. At the Bristol Channel ports there was a change from a 2-shift to a 3-shift system of working in the case of coal trimmers and tipplers. It is estimated

* See footnote † in first column on page 3.

that 334,000 workpeople had their normal working hours increased in 1923 by an average of about one-third of an hour per week and 9,500 had their normal hours reduced by an average of about 1½ hours per week.

(5).—CHANGES IN COST OF LIVING.

During the first five months of 1923 there was a continuous decline in working-class cost of living, but in the second half of the year there was a steady rise. At the end of the year the average increase in the cost of maintaining unchanged the pre-war standard of living of working-class families, as indicated by the statistics compiled by the Department, was 77 per cent. on the level of July, 1914, as compared with 78 per cent. at the beginning of the year, and with 69 per cent. in June.

The index figures showing, for all items of expenditure included in the statistics, the average percentage increase over the pre-war level at the beginning of each month were as stated below:—

All Items: Average Increase over July, 1914.

1923.		1923.	
Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.
January 1st	78	August 1st... ..	71
February 1st	77	September 1st	73
March 1st	76	October 1st... ..	75
March 31st... ..	74	November 1st	75
May 1st	70	December 1st	77
June 1st	69	1924.	
June 30th	69	January 1st... ..	77

Food.

The downward movement in the general index figure in the first half of 1923 and the subsequent upward movement are mainly accounted for by corresponding changes in the prices of food. The following figures show the average changes, month by month, in the retail prices of the principal articles of food comprised within the pre-war working-class dietary:—

Retail Prices of Food: Average Increase over July, 1914.

1923.		1923.	
Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.
January 1st	75	August 1st... ..	65
February 1st	73	September 1st	68
March 1st	71	October 1st... ..	72
March 31st... ..	68	November 1st	73
May 1st	62	December 1st	76
June 1st	60	1924.	
June 30th	62	January 1st	75

The decline in the average level of retail food prices in the first half of the year, and the recovery, were mainly due to changes, largely seasonal, in the prices of eggs, butter and milk. In the first half of the year the prices of potatoes were relatively low, but with the exhaustion of the 1922 crop prices rose, and at the end of the year they averaged about 61 per cent. above those of July, 1914. Sugar and tea also were dearer at the end than at the beginning of the year. The prices of margarine remained almost unchanged—at about the pre-war level—throughout 1923, while those of the remaining articles of food included in the statistics, viz., meat, bacon, fish, flour, bread, and cheese, all showed net reductions in prices during the year.

The following Table shows the average prices of the articles of food included in the statistics at 1st January, 1923, and 1st January, 1924, together with the average percentage increases at those dates as compared with July, 1914:—

Article.	Average Price (per lb. unless otherwise indicated—to the nearest ¼d.)		Average increase as compared with July, 1914.	
	1st Jan., 1923.	1st Jan., 1924.	1st Jan., 1923.	1st Jan., 1924.
	s. d.	s. d.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Beef, British—				
Ribs	1 6	1 5½	80	76
Thin Flank	0 10½	0 10	59	50
Beef, Chilled or Frozen—				
Ribs	0 10½	0 10	42	36
Thin Flank	0 6	0 6½	23	11
Mutton, British—				
Legs	1 8½	1 7½	95	90
Breast	0 11½	0 11	77	68
Mutton, Frozen—				
Legs	0 5½	1 0½	82	76
Breast	0 5½	0 6½	32	27
Bacon (Streaky)*	1 8½	1 4½	83	48
Fish				
Flour per 7 lb.	1 4½	1 2½	121	119
Bread per 4 lb.	0 9	0 8½	57	39
Tea	2 5½	2 6½	59	45
Sugar (granulated)	0 5½	0 6½	186	223
Milk per quart	0 7	0 7	101	98
Butter—				
Fresh	2 1½	2 2½	77	82
Salt	1 1½	2 1	68	76
Cheese*	1 3½	1 3½	79	75
Margarine	0 6	0 6½	— 5	— 5
Eggs (fresh) each	0 3½	0 5½	165	173
Potatoes per 7 lb.	0 5	0 7½	2	61

* See footnotes on page 13.

ITEMS OTHER THAN FOOD.

The average level of *Rents* (including rates) of working-class dwellings was about 50 per cent. above the pre-war level at the beginning of the year, but fell, in consequence of reductions in local rates, to about 47 per cent. above the pre-war level at the end of the year.

Retail prices of *Clothing* were much steadier in 1923 than at any time since 1914. There was a slight reduction, on the whole, in the prices of the articles included in the Department's statistics, from about 125 per cent. above the July, 1914, level at 1st January, 1923, to between 120 and 125 per cent. at 1st January, 1924. The reduction was fairly evenly distributed over the various groups of items included, except certain cotton materials, which showed a rise in prices towards the end of the year.

As regards *Fuel and Light*, the average level of prices of coal fluctuated between 85 and 90 per cent. above the pre-war level during the first eleven months of the year, but rose to about 95 per cent. above that level at the end of December. The price of gas, however, fell from nearly 75 per cent. above the pre-war level at the beginning of the year to between 50 and 55 per cent. at the end of the year. Lamp oil and candles also were cheaper at the end of the year than at the beginning, but matches remained almost unchanged in price.

Among *Other Items* of working-class expenditure, the retail prices of soap, soda, newspapers, and tobacco showed no appreciable change during 1923, but ironmongery, brushes, and pottery were considerably cheaper at the end of the year than at the beginning. Railway fares were reduced on 1st January, 1923, but subsequently remained unchanged, and tramway fares were reduced, in some towns, at various dates.

(6).—TRADE DISPUTES.

The number of trade disputes causing a stoppage of work, reported to the Department as beginning in 1923, in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was 611. In these disputes about 336,000 workpeople were directly involved and 61,000 indirectly involved* (i.e., thrown out of work at the establishments where the disputes occurred, though not themselves parties to the disputes). In addition, about 2,000 workpeople were involved in 18 disputes which began in 1922, and continued into the following year. The total number of workpeople involved in all disputes in progress in 1923 was thus nearly 400,000. The aggregate number of working days lost by these workpeople in the disputes was approximately 10,640,000. Of this total over 5,700,000 working days were lost in the lock-out, lasting nearly seven months, of members of the United Society of Boilermakers and Iron and Steel Shipbuilders from the shipyards of the federated employers.

In 1922 the number of disputes reported as having begun in the year in Great Britain and Northern Ireland was 576; the number of workpeople involved in all disputes in progress was over 550,000; and the total loss of time in these disputes was about 19,850,000 working days, of which over 13,000,000 days were lost through a lock-out in the engineering industry.

It should be noted that these statistics do not cover time lost in establishments or industries other than those where the dispute actually occurred. Thus, in the case of the shipyard dispute the figures relate exclusively to working days lost at the shipyards concerned, and do not include time lost in other industries as a result of the stoppage.

The following Table summarises by industries the number of disputes reported as beginning in 1922 and 1923 in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the number of workpeople involved in all disputes in progress in each of these years, and the aggregate duration of all disputes in 1922 and 1923 respectively:—

Groups of Industries.	1922.			1923.†		
	No. of Disputes beginning in 1922.	Number of Workpeople involved in all Disputes in progress.	Aggregate Duration in Working Days of all Disputes in progress.	No. of Disputes beginning in 1923.	Number of Workpeople involved in all Disputes in progress.	Aggregate Duration in Working Days of all Disputes in progress.
Building	62	8,000	169,000	54	20,000	384,000
Coal Mining	155	118,000	1,246,000	174	180,000	1,165,000
Other Mining and Quarrying	14	8,000	141,000	9	1,000	15,000
Engineering	26	263,000	13,677,000	20	2,000	25,000
Shipbuilding	28	94,000	3,479,000	33	47,000	5,875,000
Other Metal	60	13,000	328,000	49	12,000	96,000
Textile	21	5,000	68,000	33	36,000	1,228,000
Clothing	—	3,000	46,000	24	4,000	28,000
Transport	53	8,000	80,000	58	58,000	1,023,000
Agriculture and Fishing	6	2,000	54,000	8	10,000	263,000
Printing, Paper, etc. ..	14	16,000	275,000	15	6,000	171,000
Woodworking and Furnishing	27	2,000	40,000	18	2,000	42,000
Chemical, Brick, Glass, Pottery, etc.	13	1,000	36,000	26	3,000	93,000
Food, Drink and Tobacco	20	6,000	66,000	20	8,000	147,000
Other Trades	24	3,000	27,000	42	4,000	17,000
Employees of Public Authorities	30	6,000	118,000	28	6,000	70,000
Total	576	556,000†	19,850,000	611	399,000†	10,640,000

* See note * on page 6.

† The figures for 1923 are preliminary and subject to correction.

‡ Of the total number shown, approximately 40,000 in 1922 and 61,000 in 1923 were indirectly involved—i.e., thrown out of work in consequence of the disputes at the establishments where the disputes occurred, though not actually on strike or locked-out.

More than one-half of the disputes beginning in 1923 were occasioned by wages questions. Refusal to accept proposed reductions continued to be the most frequently occurring cause of disputes, although the proportion of such disputes was much smaller than in 1922. Of the remaining disputes, the causes most frequently occurring were questions of Trade Union principle and questions respecting the employment of particular classes or persons.

Principal Disputes.—The principal dispute of 1923 was that involving platers, riveters, caulkers, etc., in federated shipyards. The United Society of Boilermakers and Iron and Steel Shipbuilders refused to accept an agreement governing overtime and night-shift working which had been negotiated between the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation and the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, and about 10,000 members of the Society were locked out on 30th April; the lock-out continued until 24th November, by which date about 30,000 other workpeople had been rendered idle at the shipyards involved. Work was resumed on terms of the agreement, subject to negotiation or arbitration on certain points named by the Society.

A dispute involving jute workers at Dundee began on 23rd February, respecting the number of spinners to be employed on certain spinning frames at one establishment. As the dispute remained unsettled, the Employers' Association imposed a general lock-out, and 29,000 Dundee jute workers were idle from 23rd March to 18th April, and again from 1st to 7th June. The original dispute continued, however, until 29th August. By the terms of the settlement the assistance of a number of extra spinners is given in certain of the spinning flats.

Dock workers at various ports ceased work on 2nd July in opposition to a reduction in minimum wage of 1s. per day, with corresponding reductions in piecework rates, the official cost of living index number having fallen to a point at which, under a national dock workers' agreement of September, 1922, the reduction was to take place. The total number of dock workers eventually involved was about 40,000. Work was resumed on terms of the agreement at various dates in July, except in London, where a number of the men remained idle until 20th August.

Comparative figures for 1909-1923.—The following Table shows the total number of disputes (involving a stoppage of work) reported to the Department as beginning in Great Britain and Northern Ireland in each of the years 1909-1923, together with the number of workpeople involved in these disputes, and the aggregate number of working days lost in all disputes in progress during the year (irrespective of the date of commencement) at the establishments where the disputes occurred. It should be observed, in comparing the figures in this Table with those given in the foregoing Table, relating to 1922 and 1923, that in the following Table the particulars of numbers involved relate to those involved in disputes beginning in each year, whilst in the previous Table they relate to the total numbers involved in all disputes in progress:—

Year.	Number of Disputes beginning in Year.	Number of Workpeople involved in Disputes beginning in Year.*		Aggregate Duration of Working Days of all Disputes in progress during Year.
		Directly.	Indirectly.	
1909	422	168,000	129,000	2,687,000
1910	521	284,000	130,000	9,857,000
1911	872	824,000	128,000	10,155,000
1912	834	1,232,000	230,000	40,891,000
1913	1,459	498,000	168,000	9,804,000
1914	972	326,000	121,000	9,878,000
1915	672	401,000	47,000	2,953,000
1916	532	235,000	41,000	2,446,000
1917	730	575,000	297,000	5,647,000
1918	1,165	823,000	135,000	5,876,000
1919	1,352	2,400,000	191,000	34,969,000
1920	1,607	1,779,000	153,000	26,567,000
1921	763	1,770,000	31,000	85,872,000
1922	576	512,000	40,000	19,850,000
1923	611†	336,000†	61,000†	10,642,000†

The total number of disputes recorded in 1923 showed an increase over that in 1922, but was lower than in any other year since 1916, whilst the number of workpeople involved was considerably less than in any of these years. The aggregate duration of the disputes was much less than in any year since 1918, but owing to the prolonged stoppage in the shipbuilding industry it was greater than in any previous year, among those included in the Table, except 1912, when there was a stoppage of work in the coal mining industry extending over nearly seven weeks.

* Workpeople involved in more than one dispute during the year are counted more than once in the totals for the year. The extent of such duplication is not very considerable except in the coal-mining group in 1921, 1920, 1919, and 1912, in which about 100,000 workpeople in 1921, 300,000 workpeople in 1920, 150,000 workpeople in 1919, and 108,000 workpeople in 1912 were involved in more than one dispute. Disputes involving less than ten workpeople and those which lasted less than one day are omitted from the statistics, except when the aggregate duration (i.e., number of workpeople multiplied by number of working days, allowing for workpeople replaced by others, etc.) exceeded 100 days.

† The figures for 1923 are preliminary and subject to correction.

WAGES, ETC., IN THE RAILWAY SERVICE: NATIONAL WAGES BOARD DECISIONS.

THE National Wages Board, under the chairmanship of Sir William Mackenzie, K.B.E., K.C., issued, on 18th December, its Report* on the claims referred to the Board on 1st, 2nd and 3rd November by the Railway Companies, by the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, and by the Railway Clerks' Association respectively. Ordinarily, decisions are required to be issued within 28 days of the date of reference, but, on account of the Parliamentary General Election and by agreement between the parties, the period for the Board's deliberations was on the present occasion extended.

Before dealing with the specific claims, the Board places on record certain general contentions of the parties.

Under an Agreement of March, 1920, two series of rates were determined for "Conciliation Grades" (comprising, generally speaking, the classes of workpeople engaged in the handling of traffic) known as current rates ("A") and standard rates ("B"). The "B" rates were the agreed standard rates, to be paid whatever the ultimate fall in the cost of living; the "A" rates were to be reduced (until the "B" rates were reached, but not below these) or to be increased, according to variations in the cost of living. For certain grades, the fall in the cost of living since January, 1921, has resulted in the "B" rates already being reached; in other cases the current rates are still above the "B" rates.

The general submission of the railway companies showed that, except as regards locomotive drivers and firemen, the companies' proposals did not touch the existing standard rates of pay ("B" rates) which for "Conciliation Grades" are based on 100 per cent. over the pre-war average rate for the particular grade or group of grades concerned. The companies stated that in grades other than "Conciliation Grades" the present rates are approximately 100 per cent. over pre-war rates. They urged that certain concessions respecting conditions of service had been given which brought earnings, as distinct from rates of wages, considerably over 100 per cent. above the pre-war rates, and therefore railway employees are comparably better off than workers in other industries. They submitted their claim therefore in a sense of "the importance, the great importance, in the national interests, of bringing wages and other conditions of railwaymen more nearly into conformity with the wages and other conditions in industry generally."

On the other hand, the National Union of Railwaymen, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen and the Railway Clerks' Association maintained that the previous settlement which the companies sought to modify was intended to be permanent. It was pointed out by the National Union of Railwaymen that some of the conciliation grades had suffered reductions in weekly wages to the extent of 25s. per week since January, 1921. The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen contended that the rates of wages and conditions of service were still short of those justified by the skill, responsibility and arduous duties of drivers, firemen and cleaners.

The Board reports to the following effect on the several claims:—

Sunday Duty.

Rate.—All time worked between midnight Saturday and midnight Sunday is at present paid at the rate of time-and-a-half, except that double time is paid to platelayers and others employed on Sundays for special work on the permanent way. The companies proposed that all time worked on Sunday should be paid at the rate of time-and-a-half. The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen claimed, on the other hand, that the locomotive grades should be paid double time for Sunday duty. The Board decide that the present practice should be maintained.

Sunday-Monday turns of duty.—Under the existing practice, a turn of duty commencing on Sunday and extending beyond midnight into the Monday is paid as for a Sunday turn of duty. The companies claimed that the rate of time-and-a-half should be paid only from midnight Saturday to midnight Sunday, and the Board uphold this claim.

Minimum payment.—Under the existing conditions, men of the conciliation grades and salaried staff coming on duty on Sunday receive certain minimum payments, which the companies proposed so to revise that payment should be made at rate-and-a-half for time actually worked, with a minimum payment of two hours at rate and a half for each turn of signing on duty.

The Board decide that men of the conciliation grades other than trainmen required to come on duty on Sunday shall be paid at rate and a half for the time on duty, with a minimum payment as for two hours for each time of signing on, provided that a man who books on three times for turns of duty on Sunday shall be paid a day's pay at the ordinary rate, plus half the ordinary rate for the hours worked. A trainman required to come on duty on Sunday shall be paid Sunday rate of time-and-a-half for the actual time on duty, with a minimum payment as for four hours at the Sunday rate for each time of signing on. Men in other than the conciliation grades required to come on duty on Sunday shall be paid for the time worked in accordance with the agreed scale for Sunday duty, provided that a man booking on for one turn of duty shall be paid not less than

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for three hours at the Sunday rate, a man booking on for two turns of duty shall be paid not less than as for five hours at the Sunday rate, and a man booking on for more than two turns of duty shall be paid for not less than eight hours at the Sunday rate.

Night Duty.

The present practice with regard to payment for night duty of conciliation grades is briefly that time and a quarter is paid for all ordinary time worked between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. Clerks continuously engaged on night duty (i.e., commencing before 4 a.m. or ceasing after 10 p.m.) are relieved where possible one turn of duty every ten nights or are given one day's pay at ordinary rate in lieu thereof.

The Board intimate that they regard the present position as a compromise which should be maintained so far as the conciliation grades are concerned. With regard to clerical work, the Board decide that no *prima facie* case exists for assimilating the payment for night work of clerks to that of the other employees, but they feel that some distinction might be drawn between the clerk who becomes a night worker merely by reason of the fact that his turn of duty extends into the night hours, though to a minor extent, and the clerk who is required to work practically all night. The Board understand that the parties will discuss this matter and consider whether any modification of the present arrangement is desirable for the latter class.

Classification of Enginemmen.

The present rates of pay of drivers and motormen range from 12s. to 15s. per day, and of firemen and assistant motormen from 9s. 6d. to 12s. per day, according to length of service. Where the mileage performed during any turn of duty exceeds 120 miles additional payment is made on the basis of 15 miles an hour.

The Board reach the conclusion that the present system of mileage should be retained, but that the basis should be 150 miles per day, mileage in excess of that figure to be paid for on the basis of 15 miles an hour, such system to be applicable to drivers, motormen and firemen. The Board further decide that there is some case for discrimination in the rates of pay of drivers, motormen, firemen and assistant motormen, other than those on mileage; and that for drivers on shunting engines (not performing train miles or working with a brake van), shed yard engines, and preparing or disposal of engines, the scale of daily pay should be:—1st and 2nd years 12s., 3rd and 4th years 13s., 4th year and onwards 14s. Certain safeguards are provided covering men engaged on the above work at present receiving 15s. a day; men promoted from this class to that of drivers with a maximum of 15s. a day and employed at the companies' discretion upon work other than that appropriate to their class; and men not promoted from this class to that of drivers receiving 15s. a day, but engaged temporarily on work other than shunting engines, shed yard engines, or preparing or disposal of engines.

Disposal of Engines.

Time allowances are made to men for disposal of engines, and the companies' proposal was, in effect, that the 15 minutes allowance for booking off, etc., should include certain specified duties, in the absence of which no allowance should be made, and that where certain of the duties are omitted the time allowance should be reduced. The Board hold that the companies' proposals should be conceded.

War Bonus.

The companies proposed that when the cost of living should have fallen to 70 per cent. above pre-war level, the "B" rates should operate throughout and the sliding scale be withdrawn. The Board conclude that the time is not ripe to interfere with the operation of the sliding scale, or the sums which the men continue to enjoy by reason of the excess of the "A" rates over the "B" rates, but such conclusion is not to be regarded as discouraging the parties from examining and revising the present position if they so desire.

Holidays with Pay.

The Board are of the view that the existing agreements under which the conciliation and locomotive grades are entitled after 12 months' service to one week's holiday with pay should remain undisturbed.

Extended Roster.

Under the Board's decision of January, 1922, in the case of the Scottish companies (subsequently extended by agreement to the English companies) permission was given to extend the roster up to nine hours per day where economy would accrue. The Board is not satisfied that that decision should be rescinded.

Allowances for Junior Clerks.

The Railway Clerks' Association claimed that, to meet hardship involved when junior clerks up to 17 years of age live away from home, a supplementary allowance should be made by the companies. The Board feel that the matter is not one in regard to which the companies should be placed under a definite obligation, but they understand that the companies are willing to give consideration to the matter in so far as the present arrangements may result in hardship.

EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO THE ISSUE OF THE DECISIONS.

The Companies, the National Union of Railwaymen and the Railway Clerks' Association have intimated acceptance of the findings of the Board. The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen called a special Conference to discuss the Award. The Conference decided that the question of the

acceptance of the Award should be submitted to a ballot of the members of the Society, and that, in the event of an adverse vote, the Executive Committee were to call a strike. The result of the ballot, as announced on 8th January, showed a large majority against acceptance. On 11th January the Executive of the Society met the General Managers of the Railway Companies, but the latter subsequently announced that they were unable to find any grounds upon which they could properly depart from their expressed intention to carry out the findings of the Board. The General Council of the Trades Union Congress met on 14th January to consider the situation, and decided to adjourn pending further developments, after having arranged for the summoning of the London members of the Council to act as an emergency committee, if and when it be deemed desirable. On the same date the Society's Executive issued a manifesto in which it was stated that the official date for the cessation of work had been sent to the Branch Secretaries.

EMPLOYMENT OF EX-SERVICE MEN.

INDUSTRIAL TRAINING.

At 25th December, 1923, the number of men in training was 10,699, and the number awaiting training 5,163. Since 1st August, 1919, 79,227 men have terminated training.

INTERRUPTED APPRENTICESHIPS.

Up to the 31st December, 1923, 44,712 apprentices have been accepted for training with 17,863 employers, as compared with 44,706 apprentices with 17,859 employers on the 5th September, 1923. Of those accepted, 43,546 had terminated their training and 1,166 were still in training.

The number of men who have received Institutional Training up to 31st December, 1923, is 2,313, this being the same as on the 5th September, 1923.

NATIONAL SCHEME (KING'S ROLL).

On the 31st December, 1923, the names of 28,399 employers were entered upon the King's National Roll.

The undertakings given by these employers under the provisions of the National Scheme for the employment of disabled ex-Service men cover approximately 330,000 disabled ex-Service men.

GRANTS TO UNDERTAKINGS FORMED FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED EX-SERVICE MEN.

The following scheme of grants to undertakings formed for the employment of severely disabled ex-service men has been approved.

GENERAL CONDITIONS.

Undertakings Eligible for Grants.

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant an undertaking must show that its object is the employment of severely disabled ex-Service men who, on account of their war disability, cannot ordinarily expect to obtain employment under normal industrial conditions.

(2) The Minister of Labour will require to be satisfied that the undertaking is needed, and that the men whom it is proposed to employ cannot be absorbed in other employment in the locality. The undertaking must aim at being self supporting and the Ministry of Labour must be satisfied as to the arrangements made for its conduct.

(3) Grants will not be given to undertakings trading for private profit or in respect of individual workmen in private employment, but this condition is not intended to exclude the payment of an approved rate of interest on borrowed moneys.

(4) The undertaking must show that financial assistance is justified, and that it has reasonable prospects of being able to obtain from outside sources the balance of any deficit likely to accrue after deducting the Government grant.

(5) The wages paid to disabled ex-Service employees must have regard to their economic efficiency.

Class of Men Eligible for Grant.

(6) The men who may be taken into account for grant are severely disabled ex-Service men who are in receipt of a disability pension of not less than 50 per cent. or are in receipt of a lower pension, but are suffering from neurasthenia or epilepsy as a war disability, or are in receipt of a pension of less than 50 per cent., but have been approved by the Ministry of Labour as men of the type intended to be aided, that is to say, men who, on account of their war disability, cannot ordinarily expect to obtain employment under normal industrial conditions. In approving men with a pension of less than 50 per cent. as being eligible for grant if employed by an undertaking the Minister will, as a rule, act on the advice of King's Roll Committees.

(7) Grant will as a rule only be paid in respect of men if they are employed by the undertaking whole-time, that is to say to the full extent that the conditions of the undertaking admit. Reasonable periods of absence on account of sickness or other unavoidable cause may be disregarded.

(8) The grant having once been made in respect of any individual employee, will be continued in respect of that employee for a period of one year, provided that he continues in the employment of the undertaking, and will be payable notwith-

standing any change during the year in the man's disability, provided also that any man admitted for the first time during the currency of any year's grant, will only count for the balance of that year's grant without review.

Deficiency Grant.

(9) (a) A deficiency grant will be paid in respect of each severely disabled ex-Service man (other than those in respect of whom Training Grant is being paid) employed during the year for which the grant is current. The rate of the grant will be equal to one-half of the deficiency in the preceding financial year per head of severely disabled ex-Service men employed in that year, as shown by the audited accounts:

Provided that the maximum rate of grant per head in any year shall be £35 and the maximum total amount of the grant one-half of the total deficiency in the previous financial year, as shown by the audited accounts.

The normal working of this rule may be illustrated as follows:—

Suppose an undertaking employing, in 1923, twenty severely disabled men has in 1923 a deficiency of £800, i.e., £40 per head, the undertaking would, if otherwise eligible, receive in 1924 a deficiency grant at the rate of half of £40, i.e., £20 per head on the severely disabled men employed in 1924 up to a maximum total payment for 1924 of £400 (i.e., one-half of the previous year's deficiency).

If the deficiency in 1923 were £1,500, i.e., £75 per head of the twenty men employed in that year, grant would be paid in 1924 at the maximum rate of £35 per head up to a maximum total payment for 1924 of £750.

(b) In the case of a new undertaking the grant for the first year will be based on an estimate of the first year's working approved by the Minister, who may require interim statements of accounts to be submitted, before making payment of the second and subsequent quarterly instalments of the deficiency grant. The grant for the second and succeeding year in the case of new undertakings will be based on the deficiency as disclosed in the audited accounts in the preceding financial years.

(c) It is a condition of the payment of deficiency grant that voluntary subscriptions or contributions from other sources are already, or are in the course of being, raised, of an amount equivalent to at least the excess of the deficit over the Government grant.

(d) The deficiency is to be ascertained by taking the net loss from the revenue account, after charging interest on borrowed moneys, depreciation and similar charges; and after crediting interest on investments but not voluntary subscriptions or contributions from other sources.

(e) The Minister of Labour will, as a rule, require that any subscriptions or portion of the contributions not needed for making up the balance of any current or future deficit (after deduction of the Government grant) is invested in Trustee Stocks and the interest thereon used to meet future deficits as provided in paragraph (9) (d) above.

(f) The grant, if approved, will be given for a period of three (3) years in the first instance, and will be subject to re-consideration in the light of the circumstances then existing.

Training Grant.

(10) Where, in the opinion of the Minister of Labour, a period of training or learning is necessary before disabled ex-Service men newly admitted, who are not familiar with the trade or have not already had a course of training, can be expected to earn the normal rate of wages in the undertaking, the Minister may make a training grant at a rate not exceeding 50s. per head per week, for such period as he considers reasonable, to assist the undertaking to meet the expense of Instructor's fees, waste of material and maintenance allowance. The deficiency grant will not be payable in respect of men for whom training grant is paid for the period during which training grant is paid.

Capital Advance to New Undertakings

(11) (a) In exceptional cases the Minister of Labour will be prepared to consider whether the objects of a scheme for establishing a new or enlarging an existing undertaking, can be secured more effectively by advancing at the outset on mortgage a sum not exceeding £25 per head of the number of severely disabled ex-Service men employed.

(b) If an advance is made at the maximum rate of £25 the maximum rate of deficiency grant payable for the first 3 years will be reduced from £35 per annum as provided in paragraph (9) (a) to £25 per annum. If the sum advanced for capital purposes is at a less rate than £25, the maximum of £25 for the deficiency grant will be rateably increased.

(c) Whilst the advance will as a rule be secured by mortgage, the Minister will be prepared to consider an alternative method of securing that the property is used for the purpose for which it was intended, for instance by means of a Trust Deed or by registering a Company with limited objects. If a capital advance has been made to a new undertaking, it will as a rule be regarded as repaid at the end of the third year for which deficiency grant is paid, provided that the number of severely disabled men employed is not less than the number on which the capital grant was based. If within a reasonable time the number of severely disabled ex-Service men employed does not reach the number on which the capital grant was based, the Minister may require the whole or part of the capital advance to be refunded or deducted from any deficiency grant otherwise payable.

(d) No capital advance will be made to an undertaking which has received a capital grant or loan for the same purpose out of moneys provided by Parliament.

General Financial Conditions.

(12) For the purposes of the deficiency grant, only interest on loans raised prior to the date of the deficiency grant may be charged without the approval of the Minister.

(13) The provision made for depreciation and similar charges in the accounts must be approved by the Minister of Labour.

(14) The deficiency grant will be payable quarterly in advance.

(15) Undertakings must be open to inspection by such officer or officers as the Minister of Labour may appoint, and must furnish him with accounts in such form as he may require, duly audited by a Chartered or Incorporated Accountant previously approved by him.

(16) The Minister of Labour may, if he thinks fit, discontinue or reduce at any time a grant made under these Regulations.

UNEMPLOYMENT GRANTS COMMITTEE.

ASSISTANCE TO COMPANIES UNDERTAKING WORKS OF PUBLIC UTILITY.

CERTAIN modifications have been made in the terms* on which State assistance may be granted by the Unemployment Grants Committee to public utility companies putting in hand works which would not at present be undertaken but for the need for relieving unemployment.

The principal alteration is in Clause (5), which now runs:—
(5) Assistance will be limited to a maximum of 50 per cent. of interest at an approved rate on the expenditure, as and when incurred, whether out of capital raised for the purpose or out of existing funds or out of current revenue. Grant will be made for a period of years, which will be dependent mainly on the extent to which the work is being accelerated, and the date at which the works when completed are likely to be reasonably remunerative.

In cases where the period of assistance does not exceed seven years, the Committee may at their discretion commute, if so desired, the annual interest payments by a single lump sum grant representing the present value of the whole of the interest payments.

It has been arranged with the banks that the regulations and requirements under which assistance may be obtained shall be available at their different branches.

EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED EX-SERVICE MEN.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

Two meetings of experts for the study of questions relating to disabled ex-service men have been held at the International Labour Office, Geneva, as the result of a request put forward by representatives of the principal national federations of disabled ex-service men in Great Britain, France, Italy, Poland, Germany and Austria, at a conference held at Geneva in September, 1921. The first of these meetings, which was held on 2nd-4th March, 1922, dealt with the question of the administrative organisation of medical treatment and the supply of artificial limbs. At the second meeting, held on 31st July and 1st-2nd August this year, the problem of finding employment for disabled men was discussed; and the International Labour Office has now published a volume† containing the report submitted by the Office to the experts in preparation for the meeting, the minutes of the proceedings of the meeting, and the resolutions adopted by the experts.

The magnitude of the problem may be judged from the fact that the Office estimates that the total number of disabled ex-service men in all the belligerent countries is something above 10 millions, of whom some 8 millions, of ages ranging from 25 to 45, are paid workers, i.e., normally dependent entirely upon their earnings. The volume under review gives an account of the methods adopted in the different countries to deal with this problem. It contains a detailed survey of the British National Scheme for the employment of disabled ex-service men, and of the legislation and administrative machinery in force in countries, such as Germany, Austria, Poland and Italy, that have adopted, and France, that is proposing to adopt, the principle of imposing legal compulsion on employers to engage a proportion of disabled men. This account is completed by a series of appendices, setting out the texts of the legal enactments referred to and including official reports on the employment of disabled ex-service men in France, Italy and Great Britain.

The experts who attended the conference comprised representatives of both Governments and ex-service men's associations; and the minutes of the proceedings, together with the report drawn up by the Office, therefore offer a complete survey of the present position of disabled ex-service men in the countries named above, as well as a conspectus of official and non-official views on the subject. The chief resolution finally adopted by the experts embodied the principle of compulsory employment; but the representative of the British Ministry of Labour stated that, owing to the special conditions prevailing in this country, and in view of the report of the King's Roll Council, the British Government were not prepared to adopt this principle, and that therefore he could not support the resolution.

* See MINISTRY OF LABOUR GAZETTE for October, 1923 (p. 360).

† Employment of Disabled Men.—International Labour Office. Geneva: 1923. Price 4s. [London Office, 26, Buckingham Gate, S.W. 1.]

PROCEEDINGS OF JOINT INDUSTRIAL COUNCILS AND INTERIM INDUSTRIAL RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEES IN DECEMBER.

DURING the four weeks ended 29th December, 1923, ten meetings of Joint Industrial Councils were reported to the Ministry of Labour.

The Provincial Joint Industrial Council for *Local Authorities Non-Trading Services (Manual Workers)* has determined the grading of the Local Authorities in Middlesex, and of employees in the districts affected. The minimum basic wages to be paid have been fixed accordingly.

By agreement between the two sides of the Joint Industrial Council for the *Glove Making Industry*, a wages question has been postponed until the next meeting in March.

The West Midlands Joint Industrial Council for *Local Authorities Non-Trading Services* has deferred, until the end of March, decision in regard to an application for the termination of a special wage reduction made in March last.

The *Quarrying* Joint Industrial Council has further considered the question of silicosis in view of the Home Office Committee's consideration of the scheme for the refractories industries under the Workmen's Compensation (Silicosis) Act, 1918.

Amongst other questions discussed were:—Non-union labour in certain establishments; methods of paying wages; broken continuity of employment owing to inclement weather; conditions of employment; schedules of salaries, etc.

CO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES IN 1922.

THE following particulars as to the operations of agricultural and fishery co-operative societies in 1922 and previous years have been prepared by the Registrar of Friendly Societies from the statutory Returns furnished annually to his Department under the Industrial and Provident Societies and Friendly Societies Acts. The particulars are exclusive of societies registered in Ireland. The societies are dealt with in three main groups:—(1) *Requirement Societies*, whose principal function is to supply their members with seeds, manures, utensils or other requirements for the carrying on of agriculture, and in the case of fishing societies with fishing tackle, etc.; (2) *Produce Societies*, which are chiefly concerned with the marketing of members' produce; and (3) *Service Societies*, which supply members with some service connected with the industry of agriculture, e.g., threshing. Some societies deal both in requirements and in produce. Usually societies fall readily into one of the three groups, but in exceptional cases, where a society undertakes the sale of produce and requirements to an equal extent, the decision which places it in the one category or the other is necessarily somewhat arbitrary. The societies connected with fishing are at present so few in number, and their operations on so small a scale, that their transactions do not affect materially the total figures given, and they are not, therefore, dealt with separately in the Tables which follow.

(I.) REQUIREMENT SOCIETIES.

The following Tables give particulars of the operations of these societies in Great Britain for the ten years 1913-1922:—

Year.	Number of Societies.	Member-ship.	Sales. *		Profit or Loss (-) on Year.	Wages.
			£	£		
1913	257	27,204	1,583,268	8,851	29,657	29,657
1914	274	29,603	1,816,155	26,539	33,839	33,839
1915	301	33,421	2,653,100	53,257	44,627	44,627
1916	329	38,253	3,616,197	71,148	55,051	55,051
1917	410	54,357	4,323,532	75,821	69,755	69,755
1918	506	77,189	4,596,226	52,512	78,927	78,927
1919	581	94,468	8,995,544	65,608	150,684	150,684
1920	703	117,040	13,351,169	(-) 102,412	329,620	329,620
1921	710	117,605	10,679,709	(-) 147,823	395,610	395,610
1922	636	113,823	8,813,356	(-) 7,519	377,074	377,074

Societies in this group are further sub-divided for the purpose of the Chief Registrar's Annual Report (Part B, Industrial and Provident Societies) into (a) Farmers' (b) Allotment Workers' (c) Agricultural Wholesale and (d) Fishermen's Trading Societies. The Farmers' Societies are the most numerous, and are responsible for the bulk of the business done, as will be seen from the following particulars for 1922:—

	Number of Societies.		Sales.	
	England & Wales.	Scotland.	England & Wales.	Scotland.
Farmers' Societies	215	155	£7,968,846	£369,534
Allotment Workers' Societies	237	—	£171,160	—
Agricultural Wholesale Societies	1	—	£185,829	—
Fishermen's Trading Societies	47	1	£117,986	—

* See reference in next column as to sales of Produce included here.

The 500 societies in this group in England and Wales in 1922 had 2,627 employees, and share, loan and reserve capital amounting to £2,361,000. Excluding the figures for the Agricultural Wholesale Society, whose membership consists wholly of other societies, this capital represented about £20 per member; the 136 societies in Scotland had 124 employees, and capital amounting to £46,000, or about £4 per member.

(II.) PRODUCE SOCIETIES.

The following Tables give similar particulars for produce societies in Great Britain, in each of the years from 1913 to 1922, inclusive:—

Year.	Number of Societies.	Member-ship.	Sales. *		Profit or Loss (-) on Year.	Wages.
			£	£		
1913	124	9,732	840,849	(-)33,070	56,207	56,207
1914	129	10,401	935,552	16,890	37,482	37,482
1915	140	11,943	1,138,001	25,957	36,941	36,941
1916	169	13,701	1,641,359	21,517	43,998	43,998
1917	228	25,394	2,917,867	56,646	71,306	71,306
1918	289	40,697	4,552,383	66,819	107,677	107,677
1919	315	45,779	7,157,444	47,220	185,632	185,632
1920	302	44,201	7,920,488	(-)116,420	261,561	261,561
1921	263	40,309	5,962,385	(-)6,396	247,446	247,446
1922	248	38,395	4,199,533	11,812	200,941	200,941

In 1922 this group comprised 100 dairy societies, 67 egg and poultry societies, 18 fruit and market garden produce societies, 43 farmers' and growers' societies and 20 miscellaneous societies.

The 165 societies in this group in England and Wales in 1922 had 1,117 employees, and share, loan and reserve capital amounting to £911,000, equivalent to nearly £27 per member; the 83 societies in Scotland had 291 employees, and capital amounting to £273,000, or nearly £64 per member. This high figure was mainly due to several large dairy farmers' associations in Scotland.

The sales of various kinds of produce for the years 1921 and 1922 were as shown in the following Table:—

Description of Produce.	England and Wales.		Scotland.	
	1921.	1922.	1921.	1922.
Milk and Dairy	£ 2,696,043	£ 1,615,821	£ 861,474	£ 735,197
Eggs and Poultry	685,623	461,220	53,232	61,330
Live Stock	38,125	20,432	8,139	27,585
Fruit and Market Garden ..	119,506	104,641	490	99
Sundry †	957,013	808,286	1,128	20,513

In addition to their sales of produce these societies in 1922 supplied their members with requirements to the amount of £315,983 in England and Wales, and £30,446 in Scotland. The sales of the requirement societies (group 1), on the other hand, included produce of the following descriptions and values:—

Description of Produce.	England and Wales.		Scotland.	
	1921.	1922.	1921.	1922.
Milk and Dairy	£ 340,490	£ 249,827	£ 195	—
Eggs and Poultry	79,765	45,991	7,895	6,637
Live Stock	698,107	508,990	295	36
Fruit and Market Garden ..	47,445	96,782	675	526
Sundry †	313,609	175,727	1,360	1,309

In addition to the societies classified as "agricultural," 205 industrial societies had farming and dairying departments. In 1922 they employed 3,089 persons, to whom £344,000 was paid in wages, and the value of productions in these departments amounted to £1,512,000. Societies in England and Wales were responsible for about 64 per cent. of these productions.

(III.) SERVICE SOCIETIES.

This group includes not only the Service societies, such as threshing, etc., registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, but also small holdings and allotments societies and credit societies, and in addition certain societies registered under the Friendly Societies Act, viz., cattle insurance societies, agricultural credit societies, and societies for the promotion of horticulture and agriculture. Small holdings and allotments societies are responsible for the bulk of the figures tabulated (see subsequent special Table).

The following Tables give particulars of these societies for the years 1913-1922:—

* See reference below as to Sales of Requirements included here.
† The Sundry Produce represented mainly dead meat in respect of Societies undertaking slaughtering.

GREAT BRITAIN.

Year.	Number of Societies.	Membership.	Profit or Loss (-) on Year.†	Wages.*
1913	355	29,357	£ 2,228	£ 5,044
1914	346	29,954	4,294	5,991
1915	345	31,604	4,031	7,991
1916	353	33,901	5,736	8,399
1917	432	54,680	13,742	10,554
1918	596	93,215	16,712	16,576
1919	750	123,307	26,019	24,932
1920	937	153,046	9,872	30,964
1921	976	168,625	(-3,042)	34,768
1922	981	176,911	10,185	34,003

Societies in this group in England and Wales in 1922 had share, loan and reserve capital amounting to £418,000, equivalent to about £2 8s. per member. This low figure is due to the small holdings and allotments societies, whose capital per member is proportionately very small. The societies in Scotland had capital amounting to £82,000, or £29 per member.

Small Holdings and Allotments Societies.—Additional particulars for small holdings and allotments societies included in this group are given in the following Table:—

Year	Number of Societies	Acreage of Land let as—		Rent payable by—		Value of Land and Buildings owned by Societies.
		Small Holdings	Allotments	Societies	Tenants	
1913	193	12,225	1,532	£ 21,737	£ 28,402	£ 30,673
1914	180	12,597	1,851	26,074	30,156	34,026
1915	178	13,029	1,822	28,633	33,304	34,774
1916	191	13,129	1,780	29,989	34,910	34,299
1917	254	13,161	2,778	31,784	38,989	39,337
1918	406	13,514	4,510	39,108	50,246	51,449
1919	551	13,576	5,916	45,174	57,202	67,125
1920	724	15,723	8,063	59,321	74,579	137,160
1921	763	17,473	9,712	76,201	96,949	187,240
1922	774	17,635	10,013	80,292	104,062	178,524

In 1922 the membership of these societies was 153,109, of whom 101,823, or nearly 67 per cent., were tenants. Their operations for the year resulted in a surplus of £7,223 on the small holdings and allotments departments and of £2,113 on the trading departments. These results were an improvement on those for 1921, when the societies showed losses of £288 on the small holdings and allotments departments and £5,948 on the trading departments. Several of the societies which were responsible for losses in 1921 have since terminated.

Credit Societies were comparatively few in number, and their business was on a small scale. Some development, however, may be expected from the Agricultural Credits Act, which came into operation during 1923.

GENERAL.

The following Table shows the sales in 1922 for all societies (including the industrial societies above mentioned):—

Industry.	Number of cases per 1,000 Persons Employed.			Charge per Person Employed.				
	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.
Shipping	20	23	22	23	s. d. 14 10	s. d. 16 6	s. d. 15 6	s. d. 16 9
Factories	30	33	26	27	7 3	9 3	9 5	8 9
Docks	64	71	68	82	20 5	29 5	33 1	36 10
Mines	123	116	102	192	29 6	37 3	40 9	61 0
Quarries	61	61	59	63	17 4	19 0	20 9	22 10
Constructional Work	32	42	43	52	9 2	13 5	15 6	18 11
Railways	32	33	29	30	9 5	11 8	11 4	11 3
Total	44	46	39	55	10 6	14 4	15 1	18 0

The total sales for 1922 represented in the aggregate a decrease on the value for 1921 of nearly £3,500,000, or 17 per cent. in requirements and 22 per cent. in produce. In the aggregate, societies in 1922 made a profit of £14,000, compared with a loss of £157,000 for the preceding year. This improvement was due to better trading results obtained mainly in the farmers' supply societies and dairy societies; though the Agricultural Wholesale Society still sustained a considerable loss on the year's working.

PROFIT-SHARING.

The returns furnished show that of the 636 Requirement societies in 1922, 38, employing 219 persons, and paying £26,291 in wages, allotted bonuses to their employees amounting to £1,397, or 1s. 1d. in the £ on wages. Of the 248 Produce societies, 13, employing 163 persons, and paying £21,223 in wages, allotted bonuses amounting to £1,187, or 1s. 1d. in the £ on wages. Of the Service societies, 5, paying £6,779 in wages, allotted bonuses to their employees amounting to £206, or 7d. in the £ on wages. Of the 205 departments of Industrial societies, 13, employing 167 persons, and paying wages in these departments amounting to £18,832, allotted bonuses of £240, or 3d. in the £ on wages.

* Exclusive of Wages in respect of Small Holdings and Allotments Societies, Credit Societies, and Societies registered under the Friendly Societies Act, for which particulars are not available.

† Exclusive of Profit or Loss on for Cattle Insurance Societies and Societies formed for the promotion of Horticulture and Agriculture registered under the Friendly Societies Act, for which particulars are not available.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION IN 1922.

THE Home Office have issued a report upon compensation and proceedings under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, and under the Employers' Liability Act, 1880, during the year 1922.* In accordance with regulations issued under Section 12 of the Act of 1906, particulars of compensation paid are supplied by employers in mines, quarries, railways, factories, docks, constructional work, and shipping. These groups embrace a large proportion of the chief industries, but they do not cover the whole field. Besides the various commercial, clerical and domestic employments to which the Act applies, there are several important industries which are not covered by the returns, for example, building, road transport, and agriculture. In the groups of industries included in the statistics an aggregate of 7,205,609 persons were employed, on the average, throughout 1922. Comparative figures of cases, and of compensation paid, for 1921 and 1922, are given in the following statement, together with the corresponding figures for 1911. Irish cases are not included in the figures collected for 1922, but are included in those for previous years.

	1911.	1921.	1922.
Aggregate number of work-people coming within the provisions of the Act employed in industries covered by returns†	7,305,997	7,315,866	7,205,609
Number of cases:—			
Fatal	4,021†	2,385	2,489
Non-Fatal	419,051	283,361	390,423
Total	423,052	285,746	392,912
Payments for compensation:—			
Fatal cases	£ 620,155†	£ 518,064	£ 546,889
Non-Fatal cases	£ 2,436,249	£ 4,991,331	£ 5,948,839
Total	3,056,404	5,509,395	6,495,728

The average amount of compensation paid in fatal cases in 1922 was £220, as compared with £217 in 1921 and £154 in 1911. The average amount paid in 1922 in non-fatal cases was £65 3s. (for lump-sum payments) and £12 9s. (for weekly payment cases), as against £73 and £13 18s. respectively in 1921; the average for all non-fatal cases was £15 5s. in 1922, as against £17 12s. in 1921 and £5 16s. in 1911.

The large increases in 1922 over the figures for 1921 are stated to be almost entirely due to increases in the mining industry. Taking into account the fact that the 1921 figures were to some extent abnormal, owing to a three-months' stoppage in the industry, there has been a remarkable rise during the last few years in the number of cases and in the cost of compensation in this industry. This is illustrated by the following Table, which sets out the number of cases per thousand persons employed and the charge per person employed in each of the seven industries for the years 1919 to 1922:—

Industry.	Number of cases per 1,000 Persons Employed.				Charge per Person Employed.			
	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.
Shipping	20	23	22	23	s. d. 14 10	s. d. 16 6	s. d. 15 6	s. d. 16 9
Factories	30	33	26	27	7 3	9 3	9 5	8 9
Docks	64	71	68	82	20 5	29 5	33 1	36 10
Mines	123	116	102	192	29 6	37 3	40 9	61 0
Quarries	61	61	59	63	17 4	19 0	20 9	22 10
Constructional Work	32	42	43	52	9 2	13 5	15 6	18 11
Railways	32	33	29	30	9 5	11 8	11 4	11 3
Total	44	46	39	55	10 6	14 4	15 1	18 0

It will be seen that the charge per person employed in mines has risen progressively from 29s. 6d. in 1919 to 61s. in 1922. The figures for docks and for constructional work show a similar rise, but the figures for the other industries have remained fairly constant.

The figures given above represent only the actual amount paid to workmen or their dependants, and not the total charge on the industries in respect of compensation. To compute the total charge it would be necessary to take account of the administrative expenses and medical and legal costs of employers, insurance companies, and mutual indemnity associations, the amounts placed in reserve, and the sums set aside by insurance companies as profits.

In the coal mining industry the charge arising under the Act (i.e., the actual payments to workmen or their dependants) works out at about 3-2d. in 1921 and 1922 per ton of coal raised, as compared with 2-4d. in 1920 and 1-8d. in 1919; and, taking £141,365,000 as the amount paid for wages in the industry (the figure supplied by the Mines Department), it would appear that 5-7d. of compensation was paid per £1 of wages in 1922, as compared with 3-3d. in 1921. As regards railways, the information obtained from one large company indicates that the amount of compensation paid per £1 of wages would be about the same as in 1921, which was 1d.

* Cmd. 2707. H.M. Stationery Office; price 6d. net.

† There was a great colliery explosion in this year.

‡ The figure which the employer is asked to give is the average number employed throughout the year.

In certain circumstances, death or disablement from industrial disease (as well as from accidents) may entitle a workman to compensation under the Acts. Of the total number of cases, as shown above, compensation in cases of industrial disease was paid in 25 fatal cases and 13,297 non-fatal cases in 1922. The bulk of the cases occurred in the mining industry, and were chiefly due to miner's nystagmus, beat hand and beat knee. Those diseases, together with beat elbow and inflammation of the synovial lining of the wrist joint and tendon sheaths, numbered 12,647, or 94-9 per cent. of the total number of cases. Miner's nystagmus alone accounted for over 68 per cent. of the total number of cases.

Statistics as to the administration of the Acts show that the total number of cases under the Workmen's Compensation Acts which were taken into court in Great Britain in 1922 was 5,343, and that there were 25,580 cases in which memoranda of agreements and informal arbitrations were registered in the courts. The number of cases under the Employers' Liability Act, 1880, taken into court was 35. This figure shows a slight increase over that for 1921; but, speaking generally, the figures have diminished steadily since 1907, when the number was 583.

FENCING OF MACHINERY AND SAFETY PRECAUTIONS.

Wood-working Machinery.

The long list of accidents (including many fatalities) which are reported year by year as being due to wood-working machinery, affords ample evidence of the need for special precautions and for a specially high standard of fencing in connection with these machines.

Certain precautions have been made compulsory by the Wood-working Machinery Regulations, 1922, which came into force on the 1st January, 1923; and the Home Office have now prepared a pamphlet* to assist occupiers of works in which such machinery is used by supplying information as to available guards, and suggesting methods of working which will minimise the risk of accidents.

Transmission Machinery.

The Home Office have also issued a revised edition† of a pamphlet, originally issued in 1919, dealing with fencing and other safety precautions for transmission machinery in factories. Both pamphlets are illustrated with numerous plates and with illustrations of safety devices, etc., in the text.

TRADE BOARDS ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND), 1923.

The Trade Boards Act (Northern Ireland), 1923, "to consolidate and amend the law relating to Trade Boards in Northern Ireland," was passed by the Parliament of Northern Ireland during the recent Session, and received the Royal Assent on the 27th November, 1923.

The Act of 1923 is the outcome of the Report of the Advisory Committee on Trade Boards, which was set up in November, 1921, under the Chairmanship of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, "to advise the Minister of Labour as to the application of the Trade Boards Acts to Northern Ireland," and embodies practically all the recommendations of that Committee requiring legislative action. It follows more closely the Anti-Sweating Act of 1909 rather than the Amending Act of 1918, the grounds for its application to any specified trade being that the Ministry of Labour "is satisfied that the rate of wages prevailing in any branch of the trade is unduly low as compared with the rates in other employments, and that, having regard to the degree of organisation in the trade, and to the other circumstances of the trade, it is expedient that this Act should apply to that trade." This principle of application is in accordance with the main conclusion of the Dufferin Committee, namely, that as it is an essential duty of the State to prevent "sweating" in industry, "the necessary statutory regulation of wages should be confined to affording protection by giving to the workers a wage which will secure to them an adequate subsistence and which the trade can bear." The Act further provides for the suspension or withdrawal of the application of the Act from any trade in which organisation has become sufficiently satisfactory to ensure such conditions of employment as, in the opinion of the Ministry, render its application to that trade unnecessary.

The principal modifications in the law as it still exists in Great Britain which have been introduced on the recommendations of the Dufferin Committee as being more suited to the industrial interests in Northern Ireland are as follows:—

(1) Provisional Order procedure† instead of Special Order procedure is to be followed in applying the Act to a trade or in suspending or withdrawing its application in the case of a trade to which it has been applied.

(2) The fixing of a piece-work basis time-rate as a protection for piece-workers becomes an obligation on a Trade Board in addition to the duty of fixing a general minimum time-rate.

(3) The power to fix guaranteed time-rates and the duty to

* Safety Pamphlet No. 8.—Fencing and Other Safety Precautions for Wood-working Machinery. H.M. Stationery Office; price 1s. net.

† Safety Pamphlet No. 1 (Second Edition).—Fencing and Other Safety Precautions for Transmission Machinery in Factories. H.M. Stationery Office; price 6d. net.

fix special minimum piece-rates on the application of an individual employer are withdrawn.

(4) The power to fix general minimum piece-rates for in-workers is subject to a proviso that the question as to whether such rates shall be fixed shall be determined by agreement between the representative sides of the Board.

(5) In the fixing of general minimum piece-rates for out-workers the rates fixed "shall be not less than the piece-rates which would be paid for the work if done on the employers' premises."

(6) Provision is made for the safeguarding of juvenile workers employed on piece-work by the requirement that during the first six months of their employment in the trade they must receive for piece-work at least the same amount of money as they would have been entitled to if employed on time-work. If employed subsequently on piece-work they must be paid at piece-rates which would comply with the provisions of the Act if paid to a worker other than a juvenile worker employed on the same piece-work operations.

(7) The period within which a Trade Board may receive objections to proposals to fix, vary or cancel rates has been reduced from two months to one month in the case of proposals to fix rates, and to fourteen days in the case of proposals to cancel or vary rates.

(8) The period within which the Ministry shall make an Order confirming the fixing, cancelling or varying of a rate, as the case may be, has been reduced from one month to fourteen days.

(9) Trade Boards may grant permits of exemption from the provisions of the Act in regard to minimum rates to time-workers who are incapable of earning the minimum rates owing to age or other disability, as well as to those suffering from infirmity or physical injury.

(10) The Ministry is empowered to extend the jurisdiction of a Trade Board over two or more trades which in the opinion of the Ministry are of an allied or kindred nature.

(11) The Ministry, on representations from employers or workers in any trade for which a Trade Board has been established, that a district trade committee is necessary or desirable in that trade, may establish a District Trade Committee to which the Trade Board may delegate any of their powers and duties under the Act other than their rate-fixing powers and duties. District Trade Committees are required, however, to make recommendations to the Trade Board as respects minimum rates for the district concerned.

(12) The number of Appointed Members on each Trade Board has been limited to one, who will act as Chairman.

(13) The provisions in regard to legal proceedings have been amended, and follow more closely the procedure under the Factory and Workshop Acts.

WORKING HOURS IN GERMANY: NEW ORDER.*

AS was noted in the last issue of the MINISTRY OF LABOUR GAZETTE, the Orders establishing the eight-hour day for manual and non-manual workers respectively were allowed to lapse on 17th November last. The Government, under the second Emergency Powers Act of 8th December, 1923, issued on 31st December a provisional Order regulating the working hours of manual and non-manual workers, which came into force on 1st January, 1924.

The new Order re-affirms the principles laid down in the two lapsed Orders. Thus the first clause provides that the regular working day, excluding intervals, must not exceed eight hours for non-manual workers, for industrial workers in all industrial undertakings, including mines, in undertakings belonging to the Reich, the Federal States and the Communes, even if these are not carried on for profit, and in industries subsidiary to agriculture which are on an industrial basis. A greater degree of elasticity in the application of the eight-hour day principle is, however, to be noted in the new Order. It is now provided, for example, that in any given factory or works any loss of time on individual working days may be made up on other working days in the same or in the following week after consultation with the works council.

For branches of industry or categories of labour in respect of which a considerable portion of the working day consists of time during which the workers are merely on call, exemptions from the eight-hour day may be permitted by collective agreement, or, if no collective agreement exists, by the Minister of Labour, after consultation with the Employers' Associations and Trade Unions.

The workers in any undertaking may be employed for two hours overtime on 30 days in the year at the discretion of the employer, after consultation with the works council. Also after consultation with the works council, female workers and male workers under 16 may work one hour overtime, and male workers over 16 may work two hours overtime, daily, in the following kinds of work:—

(1) Watching, cleaning and repairing work which is absolutely necessary for the regular continuance of their own or another undertaking.

(2) Work on which the resumption or maintenance of the whole undertaking technically depends.

(3) Loading and unloading of ships in harbour and loading, unloading and moving of railway wagons, if the overtime is necessary to avoid stoppages in transport or to keep within the legal lading period.

(4) Supervising.

* Deutscher Reichsanzeiger, 22nd December, 1923.

If working hours in excess of eight hours daily have been fixed by collective agreement, these shall be applicable to workers for whom the agreement is binding instead of the provisions of the first clause of the Order. Provision is made to prevent the fixing by collective agreements of hours which are contrary to the legal provisions for the protection of workers, especially where women and young persons are concerned.

If working hours are not regulated by collective agreement, the factory or mines inspector may, on the application of the employer, and after consultation with the works council, grant exemptions from the eight-hour day if these are necessary for technical reasons, especially for stoppages of work due to natural phenomena, accidents or other unavoidable disturbances, or on general economic grounds. A permit from the Supreme State Authorities is required if whole branches of industry are concerned, and from the Federal Minister of Labour in cases which relate to two or more States.

For workers in dangerous trades exemptions from the eight-hour day rule will not be granted unless such exemption is absolutely necessary to the public welfare, or unless long experience has proved the overtime to be harmless. In any case it must not exceed half an hour a day.

The Order of 17th July, 1922 (Working Hours in Underground Mining*), is repealed, but the new Order does not fix the length of the shift. It provides that working hours must be reduced by collective agreement for underground mining in places where the heat exceeds 23 deg. Celsius.† In hard coal mining the "regular daily working time" is to be the shift time, and is to be reckoned from the first descent of the cage at the beginning of the shift to its first ascent at the end of the shift, or from the entry of the individual worker into the mouth of the gallery to his exit therefrom.

The above restrictions on working hours shall not apply to temporary work done in emergencies or to avoid spoiling raw materials or finished products.

Penalties are provided for infringements of the Order. Employers who accept voluntary overtime on the part of male workers over 16 shall not be liable to penalty if the overtime is due to special circumstances and is not permanent, providing it is not due to the employer's exploiting the necessity or the inexperience of the worker, and does not clearly involve danger to health.

THE FAMILY WAGE SYSTEM ABROAD.

The article on the *Family Wage System Abroad*, at page 86 of the MINISTRY OF LABOUR GAZETTE for March, 1923, can now be supplemented by the following additional information:—

(a) France.

Three Presidential Decrees, dated 13th July, 1923, have been issued,‡ containing regulations for applying the Act of 19th December, 1922 (which made *permissible* the insertion, in the forms of tender for public works, of a clause requiring the contractors to pay family allowances to those employed on the works). The first of these decrees applies to Government works, and here the insertion of the clause referred to is made compulsory. The other two decrees apply to works carried out for the Departments and the Communes, and the insertion of the "family allowance" clause, in the case of such works, is still *permissive*—i.e., it is left to the local authorities to decide whether the clause shall be inserted in the forms of tender or not. Both for local Government and local authority works (when, in the latter case, the "family allowance" clause has been adopted) the regulations are identical. The contractor must pay family allowances to persons engaged on public works, and, unless he employs at least 2,000 persons and has his own approved family allowance scheme, he must belong to a compensation fund§ which satisfies certain conditions and has been approved by the Minister of Labour. These conditions have been embodied in a Decree of the Minister of Labour dated 28th August, 1923, regarding the establishment of compensation funds among contractors for public works in the Department of the Seine. Subsequent decrees of the Minister of Labour for the other Departments of France closely follow this model, the main difference in each case being in the rates of family allowance laid down. These range from 20, 50 and 90 francs a month in the Department of the Seine, respectively for one, two and three children under 13, plus 40 francs a month for each succeeding child, to 12.50, 27.50, 45 and 65 francs a month, in the Department of Morbihan, respectively for one, two, three and four children under 13, plus 25 francs a month for each succeeding child. The commonest scale appears to be 15 francs (one child), 35 francs (two children), 60 francs (three children) a month, plus 30 francs a month for each succeeding child. The earlier decrees fixed the allowances either on a monthly or a daily basis; all the later decrees give both monthly and daily rates.

* See MINISTRY OF LABOUR GAZETTE, August, 1922, p. 326.

† i.e., 82° Fahrenheit.

‡ *Journal Officiel*, 16th July, 1923.

§ See article in MINISTRY OF LABOUR GAZETTE for March, 1923.

(b) Belgium.*

The family allowance system made rapid strides in Belgium during the latter part of 1923. Early in the year a central committee for the study of the subject (*Comité d'Etudes des Allocations familiales*) was established by the industrial groups that had instituted the system. From a report of the secretary of this committee, presented at a meeting held on 14th November, it appears that, on that date, there were 9 compensation funds in existence, embracing 541 firms, with a total staff of over 96,000 and a monthly disbursement in family allowances of about 657,000 francs. In addition the system had been adopted throughout the coal-mining industry, covering over 150,000 workers, and by the plate glass industry, with some 6,000 workers. The total number of workers employed by firms paying family allowances was thus over 250,000.

According to a report presented at the Third Congress of the National League for the Encouragement of Large Families, held at Brussels on 28th October, these 250,000 workers are distributed over the different industries as follows:—

Industry.	Total number of persons employed in the industry.	Total number of persons covered by family allowance schemes.
Coalmining†	160,000	160,000
Iron and steel	125,000	45,000
Quarrying, cement, building	174,000	23,000
Zinc, copper, lead, nickel, etc.	12,000	12,000
Plate glass†	7,000	7,000
Textiles	165,000	4,000
Total	643,000	251,000

The total number of workers employed in Belgium in private industry is estimated at 1,300,000. It will be seen, therefore, that 18 per cent. of these are included under family allowance schemes.

The amounts paid as family allowances vary from 10 to 52 to 10 to 100 francs a month for one to four children.

The latter scale (i.e., 10, 30, 60, 100 francs a month, plus 40 francs for each succeeding child) is paid by the Family Allowance Compensation Fund for the Liège District (the largest fund, covering 42,655 workers, and with an approximate monthly disbursement of 257,000 francs), and by the coal mining industry generally. In some districts, no allowance in respect of the first child is paid by the coal-mining industry and by the Compensation Fund of the Federation of Zinc, Lead, Silver, Copper and Nickel Foundries. The Compensation Fund for the Renaix District pays no allowances for the first two children. Most of the funds pay maternity allowances varying from 100 francs for the first child, with larger amounts for each subsequent child, to 250 francs for the first child, with smaller amounts for those following.

(c) Austria.

The Austrian Act of 21st December, 1921, on the Abolition of State Food Subsidies (to which reference is made on page 87 of the MINISTRY OF LABOUR GAZETTE for March, 1923) provided that employers should pay to workers an allowance of 1,155 kronen a week in respect of each dependent child under 14, pending the passage of a Children's Insurance Act. Changes in the value of money have rendered this flat rate inadequate; and the varied conditions in the different industries have made it impossible to increase the allowance uniformly for all industries. In order to meet these difficulties the Government have introduced a Children's Bonus Bill,‡ based on the principle that a system of children's allowances, if it is to have a normal development in conformity with the economic capacity of each industry, must be regarded as a pure wage question, and left to be regulated by agreement between employers and workers. The Bill, therefore, provides that workers whose wages are regulated by collective agreement, with the exception of those employed in agriculture and forestry, must receive, in respect of each dependent child under 14, a children's allowance at rates to be laid down in the agreement. If the collective agreement has been concluded by a number of employers or by an employers' association, it must contain provisions for the establishment of a compensation fund, which is to be controlled by a committee composed of equal numbers of representatives of the employers and workers. The Bill also contains provisions for the settlement of disputes over the rates of allowances, etc., by means of the Conciliation Offices, which will decide the dispute by an Award, having binding force, if agreement is not reached. The date of the coming into force of the Bill, if passed, is given as 1st January, 1924, on and from which date all previous legislation still in force concerning the payment of children's allowances was to stand repealed.

* Based on reports in the *Revue du Travail* and on despatches from H.M. Ambassador at Brussels.

† The figures for the coal mining and plate glass industries differ from those previously given. They are estimates in both cases, as also are the other figures in this table.

‡ Text and explanatory memorandum are given in *Amtliche Nachrichten*, 20th November, 1923.

CHANGES IN COST OF LIVING: STATISTICS FOR 1st JANUARY.

Summary: Average Increases since July, 1914.

All Items included	77%
Food only	75%

FOOD.

DURING December there was a fall in the average prices of eggs and bacon, partly counterbalanced, however, by advances in the average prices of butter, milk, fish, sugar and potatoes. The other articles of food included in the statistics showed relatively little movement in prices.

As a net result of all the changes recorded, the average increase over the level of July, 1914, in the retail prices (in Great Britain and Northern Ireland) of the articles of food included in these statistics fell to about 75 per cent. at 1st January, as compared with about 76 per cent. at 1st December.

In the following Table is given a comparison of retail prices in July, 1914, at 1st December, 1923, and at 1st January, 1924:—

Article.	Average Price (per lb. unless otherwise indicated—to the nearest 1d.)			Average Inc. (+) or Dec. (–) at 1st Jan., 1924, as compared with	
	July, 1914.	1st Dec., 1923.	1st Jan., 1924.	July, 1914.	1st Dec., 1923.
Beef, British—	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Ribs	0 10	1 5½	1 5½	+ 0 7½	—
Thin Flank	0 6½	0 10	0 9½	+ 0 3½	– 0 0½
Beef, Chilled or Frozen—					
Ribs	0 7½	0 10	0 9½	+ 0 2½	– 0 0½
Thin Flank	0 4½	0 5½	0 5½	+ 0 0½	– 0 0½
Mutton, British—					
Legs	0 10½	1 7½	1 7½	+ 0 9½	—
Breast	0 6½	0 11	0 11	+ 0 4½	—
Mutton, Frozen—					
Legs	0 6½	1 0½	1 0½	+ 0 5½	—
Breast	0 4	0 6½	0 6½	+ 0 1½	—
Bacon (streaky)*	0 11½	1 5½	1 4½	+ 0 5½	– 0 0½
Flour — per 7 lb.	0 10½	1 2½	1 2½	+ 0 4½	—
Bread — per 4 lb.	0 5½	0 8½	0 8½	+ 0 2½	—
Tea	1 6½	2 6½	2 6½	+ 1 0½	—
Sugar (granulated)	0 2	0 6½	0 6½	+ 0 4½	—
Milk per quart	0 3½	0 6½	0 7	+ 0 3½	+ 0 0½
Butter—					
Fresh	1 2½	2 1½	2 2½	+ 1 0	+ 0 0½
Salt	1 2½	2 0½	2 1	+ 0 10½	+ 0 0½
Cheese†	0 8½	1 3½	1 3½	+ 0 6½	—
Margarine	0 7	0 6½	0 6½	– 0 0½	—
Eggs (fresh) .. each	0 1½	0 3½	0 3½	+ 0 2	– 0 0½
Potatoes .. per 7 lb.	0 4½	0 7½	0 7½	+ 0 3	+ 0 0½

The following Table gives a percentage comparison of the level of retail prices at the same three dates:—

Article.	Average Percentage Increase at 1st Jan., 1924, as compared with July, 1914.			Corresponding figure for 1st December, 1923.
	Large Towns (Populations over 50,000).	Small Towns and Villages.	General Average.	
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Beef, British—				
Ribs	78	74	76	76
Thin Flank	48	52	50	52
Beef, Chilled or Frozen—				
Ribs	36	36	36	38
Thin Flank	6	15	11	14
Mutton, British—				
Legs	89	90	90	90
Breast	69	67	68	70
Mutton, Frozen—				
Legs	81	71	76	77
Breast	26	27	27	29
Bacon (streaky)*	51	46	48	56
Fish	130	108	119	106
Flour	36	42	39	41
Bread	46	45	45	46
Tea	66	68	67	67
Sugar (granulated)	239	217	228	222
Milk	93	98	98	91
Butter—				
Fresh	76	87	82	76
Salt	74	77	76	71
Cheese†	73	76	75	76
Margarine	– 4	– 7	– 5	– 6
Eggs (fresh)	179	168	173	202
Potatoes	72	49	61	58
All above articles of Food (Weighted Percentage Increase).	77	74	75	76

* If this kind is seldom dealt with in a locality, the returns quote the price of another kind locally representative.

† The description of cheese specified for quotation is Canadian or American, but where such cheese is seldom sold in a locality the returns quote the price of another kind locally representative.

RENT, CLOTHING, FUEL AND LIGHT.

As regards *rents*, inquiries into the changes which have taken effect under the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Act, indicate that the average increase in rents of working-class dwellings between July, 1914, and 1st January, 1924, was approximately 47 per cent. Of the total increase, about two-fifths is accounted for by increases on account of rates and water charges and about two-fifths is on account of the landlord's responsibility for repairs, increases on account of the higher level of mortgage interest permitted by the Act falling within the remaining one-fifth.

As regards *clothing*, owing to the wide range of quotations, both now and before the war, to changes in qualities, and in stocks held by retailers, and to variations in the extent to which different articles and qualities have been affected by price-changes, it is impossible to make an exact calculation of the increase in prices; but information as to the movements of prices of men's suits and overcoats, underclothing and hosiery, textile materials and boots, received from retailers in the principal towns, indicates that at 1st January the level of retail prices of articles in this group, taking goods of the kinds purchased by the working classes and so far as possible the same qualities of goods at each date, was slightly higher than a month ago, and between 120 and 125 per cent. higher than in July, 1914. The principal changes in December were increases in the prices of cotton goods.

In the *fuel and light* group there were increases in the prices of coal during December, and at 1st January the average retail price was about 95 per cent. above that of July, 1914. The average price of gas fell slightly to between 50 and 55 per cent. above the pre-war level. The prices of lamp oil, candles and matches showed no appreciable change during the month. Taking the fuel and light group as a whole, the average increase at 1st January was approximately 85 per cent. higher than in July, 1914.

ALL ITEMS.

If the average increases in the cost of all the foregoing items are combined in accordance with their relative importance in pre-war working-class family expenditure, allowance being also made for the increase in the prices of soap, soda, domestic ironmongery, brushware and pottery, tobacco, fares and newspapers (averaging about 80 per cent.), the resultant general average increase for 1st January is approximately 77 per cent.* over the pre-war level, or about the same as a month earlier.

The result of this calculation (in which the same quantities and, as far as possible, the same qualities of each item are taken for 1924 as for 1914) is to show the *average increase in the cost of maintaining unchanged the pre-war standard of living of working-class families* (i.e., the standard actually prevailing in working-class families before the war, irrespective of whether such standard was adequate or not). Owing to the variations in the amounts of increase in the prices of different commodities it is probable that economies or re-adjustments in expenditure have been effected in many families, especially in those cases where incomes have not increased so much as prices. On the other hand, it is probable that the standard of living has been raised in some families in which wages have been increased in greater proportion than prices. No allowance is made in the figures for any such alterations in the standard of living, as to which trustworthy statistics are not available.

SUMMARY TABLE: 1915 TO 1924.

The following Table shows the average percentage increase, as compared with July, 1914, for all items included in the statistics, at the beginning of each month since January, 1915:—

Month (beginning of).	Average Percentage Increase since July, 1914—All Items. (Food, rent, clothing, fuel and light, &c.)									
	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.	1923.	1924.
January ..	10-15	35	65	85-90	120	125	165	92	78	77
February ..	15	35	65-70	90	120	130	151	88	77	—
March ..	15-20	35-40	70	90	115	130	141	88	76	—
April ..	15-20	35-40	70-75	90-95	110	132	133	82	74	—
May ..	20	40-45	75	95-100	105	141	128	81	70	—
June ..	25	45	75-80	100	105	150	119	80	69	—
July ..	25	45-50	80	100-105	105-110	152	119	84	69	—
August ..	25	45-50	80	110	115	155	122	81	71	—
September ..	25	50	80-85	110	115	161	120	79	73	—
October ..	30	50-55	85-90	115-120	120	164	110	78	75	—
November ..	30-35	60	85	120-125	125	172	103	80	75	—
December ..	35	65	85	120	125	169	99	80	77	—

NOTE.

A brief Statement of the method of compiling these statistics was given on page 236 of the July issue of this GAZETTE. A more detailed account was given in the issue of February, 1921.

* If the amount of increased taxation on commodities is deducted, the average increase at 1st January, 1924, is about 5 per cent. less.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

EMPLOYMENT in December showed a further improvement prior to the holidays. Among the principal industries which showed most improvement were pig-iron manufacture, iron and steel manufacture, the engineering, shipbuilding, cotton and wool textile industries. Employment was good in the coal-mining industry, and in the tinplate, steel sheet, carpet and jute trades; it was fairly good with skilled operatives (except painters) in the building trades, with coachbuilders and coopers, and in certain sections of the metal trades, and fair in the brickmaking, furnishing, mill-sawing, printing, and leather trades. In most of the other large industries it was slack or bad. After Christmas there was a seasonal decline, and in many cases the customary holiday stoppages were extended.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS.

Among members of trade unions from which returns were received the percentage of unemployed was 9.7 at the end of December, compared with 10.5 at the end of November and with 14.0 at the end of December, 1922. Among workpeople covered by the Unemployment Insurance Acts, numbering approximately 11,500,000 and working in practically every industry except agriculture and private domestic service, the percentage unemployed at 21st December was 10.7, compared with 11.5 at 26th November and 12.6 at the end of December, 1922. For males alone the percentage was 11.2 at 21st December, as compared with 12.1 at 26th November; for females the corresponding figures were 9.1 and 9.7. The number of workpeople on the Live Registers of the Employment Exchanges at 17th December was approximately 1,174,000, of whom men numbered 889,000 and women 225,000, the remainder being boys and girls. The corresponding total for 26th November was 1,257,000, of whom 945,000 were men and 240,000 were women. At 7th January, 1924, the number of workpeople registered at the Employment Exchanges as unemployed was approximately 1,266,000, as compared with 1,527,000 at 8th January, 1923. (It should be noted that some unemployed persons—e.g., some of those who have not valid claims to unemployment benefit, or who are not insured under the Unemployment Insurance Acts—do not register at the Employment Exchanges, and the Live Register figures, therefore, do not indicate the total number unemployed.)

EMPLOYMENT IN THE PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES.

Mining and Quarrying.—At coal mines employment continued good. The total number of wage-earners on the colliery books at 22nd December was 1,184,545, an increase of 4.9 per cent. as compared with December, 1922. The average number of days worked per week by the pits in the fortnight ended 22nd December was 5.68, as compared with 5.54 in November and 5.56 in December, 1922.

At iron mines employment showed a further slight improvement, but in the Cleveland district many mines were still closed, and those working were mostly on short time; in other districts employment was generally moderate. At the mines covered by the returns received there was an increase of over 15 per cent. in the numbers employed as compared with December, 1922. The average number of days worked per week by the mines in the fortnight ended 22nd December was 5.76, as compared with 5.58 in December, 1922. At shale mines employment continued fair. At limestone quarries employment was fair in the Clitheroe and Weardale districts and fairly good in the Buxton district; at slate quarries it was fair. At the Cleve Hill quarries employment continued bad; at granite quarries in the Aberdeen district it was good; at whinstone quarries in East Scotland it was slack; at china clay quarries it was generally good.

Manufacture of Pig Iron, Iron and Steel, and Tinplate.—Employment in the pig iron industry was moderate, and showed a further slight improvement as compared with the previous month. Of a total of 487 furnaces, the number in blast at the end of December was 204, as compared with 199 at the end of November and 169 in December, 1922. The numbers employed showed an increase of 4.4 per cent. as compared with December, 1922. At iron and steel works employment improved and was moderate on the whole. In the tinplate and steel sheet trade employment continued good. At the end of December 541 mills were reported to be in operation, as compared with 501 in December, 1922.

Engineering, Shipbuilding and other Metal Trades.—Employment in the engineering trades continued bad on the whole, but was distinctly better than in November. The railway and electrical sections were fairly well employed, and the marine and motor sections showed a marked improvement. In textile and marine engineering employment continued bad, with much short time. Employment in the shipbuilding and ship-repairing industries continued very bad, but showed a considerable improvement compared with the previous month. Employment in the other metal trades continued moderate on the whole, but some improvement was reported in certain sections. It was good or fairly good in the brasswork, stove and grate and hollow-ware trades; fair in the nut, bolt and nail, needle and fishing tackle, tube, sheet metal and wire trades; and slack or bad in the metallic bedstead, lock and latch, chain and anchor, jewellery and plated ware, and harness furniture trades.

Textile Trades.—In the cotton trade employment continued good in the Egyptian spinning section; in the American spinning section there was no organised curtailment of production, and, taking the extended Christmas holidays into account, it is estimated that this section worked the equivalent of 70 per cent. of full time during the month. In the weaving section a slight improvement was reported, but employment was still slack. Employment in the woollen and worsted trades, though still bad, showed a general improvement.

Employment in the hosiery trade continued bad on the whole; in the silk trade it was moderate in the Eastern Counties and bad in the Macclesfield, Leek and Congleton district; in the lace trade it was also bad. In the jute trade employment showed an improvement, and was good on the whole; in the linen trade it also showed some improvement. In the carpet trade employment continued good; in the textile bleaching, printing, dyeing, etc., trades it was slack on the whole.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in the tailoring trades was slack on the whole, but was reported as fair in certain districts. In the corset trade it continued slack.

In the felt hat trade employment showed a further decline and was bad. In the boot and shoe trades employment, taking one district with another, was moderate; the Christmas holidays were extended to a week or ten days in most of the principal districts.

Leather Trades.—In the leather trades employment continued fair on the whole in the tanning and currying section and in the portmanteau, trunk and fancy leather section; it continued bad with saddle and harness makers.

Building, Woodworking, etc.—Employment in the building trades was fairly good with skilled operatives except painters, and was slack or bad with painters and unskilled workers. It was very good in most districts with bricklayers, good with masons and plasterers, fairly good with carpenters and joiners, and fair with slaters. In the brick trade employment continued fair generally, and showed a slight improvement as compared with the previous month.

In the furnishing trades employment declined slightly, but was fair on the whole. With coachbuilders, mill-sawyers, and coopers it showed an improvement, and was fairly good; and with brush, basket and packing-case makers employment improved, but was still slack.

Paper Manufacture, Printing and Bookbinding.—Employment in the paper trade was moderate on the whole, and showed some decline as compared with November. With letterpress printers employment generally continued fair; it was very good with stereotypers and bad with machine managers in London. In the lithographic printing and the bookbinding trades employment was reported as bad at Manchester and generally fair at other centres, and a slight improvement was reported in several districts.

Pottery and Glass.—In the pottery trades employment showed a slight decline and was slack generally. It was, however, reported as good in the tile, sanitary earthenware and fireclay sections. In the glass trades employment showed a slight decline and was moderate.

Agriculture and Fishing.—The supply of agricultural labour was sufficient for all requirements, and in some localities unemployment increased with casual unskilled workers, owing largely to weather conditions. In the fishing industry employment showed a decline.

Dock Labour and Seamen.—Employment with dock labourers continued moderate on the whole. With seamen employment continued poor, and at most of the ports large numbers of men were unemployed.

The following Table shows the percentages unemployed (a) among members of those Trade Unions from which returns are obtained, and (b) among workpeople covered by the Unemployment Insurance Acts in Great Britain and Northern Ireland month by month since January, 1922:—

Date. (End of Month.)	Percentages unemployed among	
	Trade Unions making Returns.	Insured Workpeople.*
1922.		
January	16.8	17.2
February	16.3	16.6
March	16.3	15.6
April	17.0	15.4
May	16.4	14.2
June	15.7	13.3
July	14.6	12.8
August	14.6	12.4
September	14.0	12.3
October	14.2	12.7
November	14.0	12.6
1923.		
January	13.7	13.1
February	13.1	12.2
March	12.3	11.5
April	11.3	11.4
May	11.3	11.2
June	11.1	11.3
July	11.1	11.5
August	11.4	11.8
September	11.3	11.7
October	11.7	11.7
November	10.5	11.6
December	9.7	10.7

* The percentages, prior to June, 1923, for insured workpeople have been revised in accordance with more complete information which has become available as to the total number of insured workpeople.

TRADE UNION PERCENTAGES of UNEMPLOYED.

TRADE Unions with a net membership of 1,139,932, in branches covered by the returns received, reported 110,743 (or 9.7 per cent.) of their members as unemployed at the end of December, 1923, compared with 10.5 per cent. at the end of November, 1923, and 14.0 per cent. at the end of December, 1922.

Trade.	Member-ship of Unions reporting at end of Dec., 1923.	Unemployed at end of December 1923.*		Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) in percentage Unemployed as compared with a	
		Number.	Per-centage.	Month ago.	Year ago.
Building	126,538	4,986	4.1	- 0.2	- 3.4
Coal Mining	142,188	739	0.5	- 0.4	- 6.3
Engineering and Shipbuilding	371,903	69,719	18.7	- 2.9	- 8.2
Miscellaneous Metal	50,970	5,198	10.4	+ 1.7	- 0.7
Textiles:—					
Cotton	59,968	4,516	7.5	..	+ 0.5
Woolen and Worsted	12,247	266	2.2	- 1.0	+ 1.0
Other	58,175	2,148	3.7	- 0.5	- 0.2
Printing, Bookbinding and Paper	98,076	4,236	4.3	+ 0.4	- 1.8
Furnishing	23,783	1,530	6.4	+ 0.8	+ 1.5
Woodworking	43,663	2,106	4.8	+ 0.1	- 2.2
Clothing:—					
Boot and Shoe	76,287	4,191	5.5	..	+ 0.7
Other Clothing	43,246	2,479	5.7	+ 2.4	+ 1.9
Leather	5,856	532	9.1	+ 0.2	+ 0.7
Glass	1,178	25	2.1	..	- 0.6
Pottery	28,000	7,500	26.1	+ 1.1	+ 5.1
Tobacco	4,746	792	16.7	+ 0.8	- 14.6
Total	1,139,932	110,743	9.7	- 0.8	- 4.3

UNEMPLOYMENT IN INSURED TRADES.

THE percentage unemployed among workpeople insured under the Unemployment Insurance Act in Great Britain and Northern Ireland was 10.7 per cent. (males 11.2 per cent., females 9.1 per cent.) at 21st December, as compared with 11.5 per cent. (males 12.1 per cent., females 9.7 per cent.) at 26th November, and 12.6 (males 14.3 per cent., females 7.9 per cent.) at 18th December, 1922. Tables showing the numbers unemployed in the principal industries appear on pages 22 and 23.

SUMMARY OF EMPLOYERS' RETURNS.

INFORMATION as to the state of employment in certain industries in December, derived from returns furnished by employers and employers' associations, is summarised below. Further details are given on pages 16 to 21.

(a) CERTAIN MINING AND METAL TRADES.

Trade.	Workpeople included in the Returns for Dec., 1923.	Dec., 1923	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a	
			Month ago.	Year ago.
			Days.	Days.
Coal Mining	1,184,545	5.68	+0.14	+ 0.12
Iron	7,867	5.76	+0.66	+ 0.18
Shale	4,209	5.97	+0.04	+ 0.17
			Number.	Number.
Pig Iron	—	204	+ 5	+ 35
Tinplate and Steel Sheet	—	541	+ 2	+ 40
			Per cent.	Per cent.
Iron and Steel	80,823	436,665	+ 5.3	+ 13.8

(b) OTHER TRADES.

Trade.	Number of Workpeople Employed.		Total Wages Paid to all Workpeople.		
	Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a	Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a	
	Month ago.	Year ago.	Month ago.	Year ago.†	
	Per cent.	Per cent.	£	Per cent.	
Textiles:—					
Cotton	83,701	+ 1.9	- 1.5	150,922	+ 5.4
Woolen	15,858	+ 0.8	+ 0.2	31,585	+ 4.2
Worsted	23,257	- 0.1	- 5.4	55,255	+ 5.4
Other	51,039	+ 3.4	+ 1.2	118,934	+ 8.1
Boot and Shoe	12,345	- 0.8	+ 2.9	22,979	- 0.8
Pottery	7,864	+ 0.2	+ 25.2	18,831	+ 3.4
Brick	—	—	—	—	+ 51.1
Total	200,064	+ 0.9	- 0.2	398,487	+ 5.6

* Short time and broken time are not reflected in the figures. In the mining and textile industries a contraction in the demand for labour is generally met by short-time working. Persons on strike or locked-out are excluded.
† The percentage is based on returns relating to woodworkers and plumbers, and as regards woodworkers, who constitute the bulk of the membership, the returns relate to the end of October.
‡ In addition to those shown, who were totally unemployed, a large number of the members of the unions reporting were "paid off part of each week, or alternate weeks or fortnights" or on "temporary stoppage benefit."
§ The returns for the tobacco trade are supplied by unions whose members are mainly cigar makers.
¶ Comparison of earnings is affected by changes in rates of wages.

EMPLOYMENT CHART.

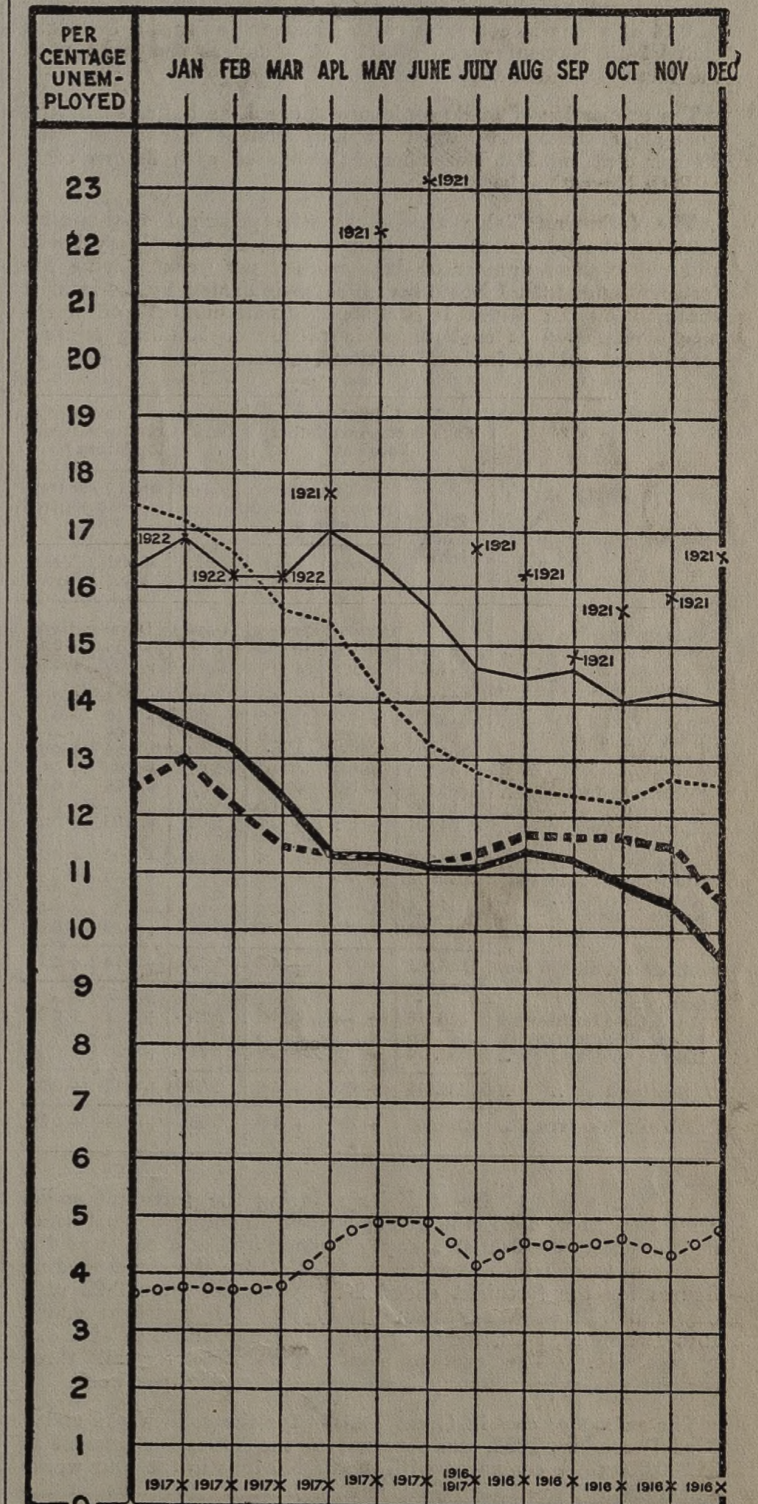
(1) PERCENTAGE UNEMPLOYED AT THE END OF EACH MONTH AMONG MEMBERS OF TRADE UNIONS MAKING RETURNS:—

Thick Curve ————— = 1923.
Thin Curve ————— = 1922.
Chain Curve - - - - - = Mean of 1913-22.

× The crosses indicate the maximum and minimum percentages of Trade Union members unemployed, in the months named, during the years 1893-1922.

(2) PERCENTAGE UNEMPLOYED AMONG WORK-PEOPLE INSURED AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT UNDER THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT:—

Thick Dotted Curve - - - - - 1923.
Thin Dotted Curve - - - - - 1922.



NOTE.

The figures relate to Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Trade Union returns are furnished by various Trade Unions which pay unemployment benefit to their members. Persons on strike or locked out, sick or superannuated, are excluded from the figures. Detailed figures are given in the previous column.

The figures for insured workpeople are briefly explained, and are analysed in detail, on pages 22 and 23.

DETAILED REPORTS ON EMPLOYMENT IN SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES.

NOTE.—The numbers of workpeople given in the following Tables represent the numbers covered by the Returns received and (except as regards coal mining) not the total numbers employed in the various industries. The comparisons of numbers employed and wages paid at different dates relate to the same firms at each date, and cover all the wage-earners, irrespective of age, sex, or occupation, employed by these firms. In comparing the earnings in different industries, it should be remembered that any averages calculated from these figures will be affected not only by the variations in the state of employment and in rates of wages, but also by differences in the proportions of males and females, of adults and juveniles, and of skilled and unskilled workers in the respective industries. The particulars given relate to Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

COAL MINING.

DURING December employment in the coal mining industry continued good, and showed a slight improvement as compared with the previous month and a considerable improvement as compared with a year ago.

The total number of wage-earners on the colliery books at 22nd December showed an increase of 0.4 per cent. as compared with the previous month, and of 4.9 per cent. on a year ago.

The average weekly number of days worked by the mines during the fortnight ended 22nd December was 5.68, an increase of 0.14 of a day as compared with the average for the fortnight ended 24th November and of 0.12 of a day as compared with the fortnight ended 16th December, 1922.

The proportion of workpeople unemployed, as indicated by the unemployment books lodged at Employment Exchanges, was 2.4 per cent. on 21st December, as compared with 2.6 per cent. at 26th November last.

The following Table shows, for the principal coal-mining districts, the total number of wage-earners on the colliery books and the average number of days worked per week* during the fortnight ended 22nd December, 1923, as indicated by the returns obtained by the Mines Department. Small numbers of workpeople employed at coal mines in raising or handling mineral other than coal are included in these totals.

Districts.	Total Number of Wage Earners on Colliery Books at		Average Number of Days worked per Week by the Mines.*			
	22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a Month ago.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Days.	
						Year ago.	Month ago.	Year ago.
ENGLAND AND WALES:	64,135	+ 0.2	+ 6.2	5.34	- 0.13	- 0.13
Northumberland ..	174,159	+ 0.4	+ 6.9	5.44	+ 0.09	+ 0.08
Durham ..	11,904	+ 0.9	+ 3.4	5.69	+ 0.21	+ 0.10
Cumberland and Westmorland ..	113,632	+ 0.2	+ 7.3	5.55	+ 0.06	- 0.04
South Yorkshire ..	69,630	+ 0.6	+ 4.5	5.66	+ 0.08	—
West Yorkshire ..	105,325	+ 0.7	+ 6.6	5.89	+ 0.25	+ 0.74
Lancs. and Cheshire ..	65,710	+ 0.4	+ 4.2	5.81	+ 0.08	+ 0.06
Derbyshire ..	66,100	+ 0.2	+ 4.7	5.57	+ 0.08	+ 0.05
Notts. and Leicester ..	21,912	- 0.4	+ 1.5	5.97	—	+ 0.10
Warwick ..	34,894	+ 0.5	+ 2.2	5.82	+ 0.03	+ 0.30
North Staffordshire ..	36,036	+ 0.8	+ 5.4	5.98	+ 0.08	+ 0.26
South Staffs., † Worc. and Salop ..	15,032	+ 0.3	+ 5.6	5.88	+ 0.05	+ 0.44
Glouc. and Somerset ..	1,887	- 1.9	+ 5.4	5.70	+ 2.86	+ 0.01
Kent ..	18,344	+ 0.9	+ 4.8	5.94	+ 0.35	+ 0.51
North Wales ..	244,851	+ 0.2	+ 4.6	5.86	+ 0.30	+ 0.08
South Wales and Mon. ..	1,043,531	+ 0.3	+ 4.8	5.70	+ 0.14	+ 0.14
SCOTLAND:	15,890	+ 0.6	+ 4.2	5.56	+ 0.21	+ 0.05
Mid & East Lothians ..	30,950	+ 0.7	+ 5.4	5.50	+ 0.01	- 0.03
Fife and Clackmannan ..	94,174	+ 0.9	+ 5.9	5.61	+ 0.15	+ 0.03
Rest of Scotland ..	141,014	+ 0.8	+ 5.6	5.58	+ 0.12	+ 0.02
Scotland ..	1,184,545	+ 0.4	+ 4.9	5.68	+ 0.14	+ 0.12
GREAT BRITAIN ..						

For the whole of Great Britain during the fortnight ended 22nd December, 1923, the average weekly number of coal-winding days lost was 0.09 of a day, of which 0.05 of a day was due to transport difficulties and to want of trade; the corresponding figures for the fortnight ended 24th November were 0.22 of a day and 0.18 of a day respectively; for the fortnight ended 16th December, 1922, they were 0.21 of a day and 0.19 of a day respectively. The average non-winding time for all three periods was approximately one-quarter of a day per week.

The output of coal in Great Britain for the four weeks ended 22nd December, 1923, was returned to the Mines Department at 25,290,000 tons, compared with 22,467,200 tons in the four weeks ended 24th November, 1923, and with 22,413,100 tons in the four weeks ended 23rd December, 1922.

The exports of coal, including coal shipped for the use of steamers engaged in the foreign trade, and the coal equivalent of coke and manufactured fuel, amounted in December, 1923, to 8,094,311 tons, compared with 8,924,404 tons in November, 1923.

* The figures in this and the following article show the number of days (allowance being made in all the calculations for short days) on which coal, iron, &c., was got from the mines included in the returns. It is not necessarily implied that all the persons worked every day the mines were open. Mines not working are omitted in computing the average number of days worked.

† Including Cannock Chase.

IRON AND SHALE MINING.

Iron Mining.

EMPLOYMENT at iron mines showed a further slight improvement during December. In the Cleveland district, however, many mines still remained closed, and those which were working were mostly on short time. In other districts employment was generally moderate.

The percentage of workpeople unemployed in iron ore and ironstone mining and quarrying, as indicated by the unemployment books lodged at Employment Exchanges, was 19.4 on 21st December, compared with 21.1 on 26th November.

The following Table summarises the information received from those employers who furnished returns:—

Districts.	Number of Workpeople employed at Mines included in the Returns.			Average No. of Days worked per week by the Mines.*		
	Fortnight ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a Month ago.		Fortnight ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a Month ago.	
		Per cent.	Per cent.		Days.	Days.	Days.
Cleveland ..	2,736	- 7.6	+ 28.5	5.73	+ 0.73	+ 0.84
Cumberland and Lancashire ..	3,842	+ 6.5	+ 10.1	5.82	+ 0.80	- 0.18
Other Districts ..	1,289	+ 15.8	+ 10.6	5.64	+ 0.02	+ 0.08
GREAT BRITAIN ..	7,867	+ 2.4	+ 15.4	5.76	+ 0.66	+ 0.18

Shale Mining.

Employment continued fair during December. At mines employing 4,209 workpeople in the fortnight ended 22nd December there was practically no change in the numbers employed compared with the previous month, but a decrease of 3.7 per cent. compared with December, 1922. The average number of days* worked per week by the mines was 5.97 in December, 1923, 5.93 in November, 1923, and 5.80 in December, 1922.

PIG IRON INDUSTRY.

EMPLOYMENT during December was moderate, and showed a further slight improvement as compared with November.

The percentage of workpeople unemployed, as indicated by the unemployment books lodged at Employment Exchanges, was 11.4 on 21st December, compared with 11.8 on 26th November.

Returns received by the National Federation of Iron and Steel Manufacturers from 83 firms employing 20,931 workpeople at the end of December showed an increase of 21 per cent. compared with the number employed at the end of November, and an increase of 4.4 per cent. as compared with December, 1922.

The total number of furnaces in blast at the end of December as indicated by the returns collected by the Federation was 204, showing an increase of 5 as compared with November, and an increase of 35 as compared with December, 1922.

The following Table shows the total number of furnaces in blast according to returns collected by the Federation:—

District.	Total Number of Furnaces	Number of Furnaces in Blast at end of			Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) in Dec., on a	
		Dec. 1923.	Nov. 1923.	Dec. 1922.	Month ago.	Year ago.
ENGLAND AND WALES:						
Durham and Cleveland ..	115	47	43	37	+ 4	+ 10
Cumberland and W. Lancs.	48	12	13	17	- 1	- 5
Other parts of Lancs. and Yorks., including Sheffield.	38	17	16	13	+ 1	+ 4
Derby, Leicester, Notts. and Northants.	73	39	39	30	..	+ 9
Lincolnshire ..	22	19	17	11	+ 2	+ 8
Staffs., Shropshire, Worcester and Warwick.	58	16	16	17	..	- 1
South Wales and Monmouth.	33	10	11	8	- 1	+ 2
Total England and Wales	385	160	155	133	+ 5	+ 27
Scotland ..	102	44	44	36	..	+ 8
Total ..	487	204	199	169	+ 5	+ 35

* See footnote in previous column.

The production of pig iron in December amounted to 626,900 tons, as compared with 598,200 tons in November, and 533,700 tons in December, 1922.

IRON AND STEEL WORKS.

DURING December employment improved at iron and steel works, and was moderate on the whole. In all departments except puddling forges, and in all districts except the Leeds and Bradford area, increases were reported in the numbers employed; the greatest improvement during the month was recorded in rolling mills, in which employment was generally fair. Employment showed a marked improvement as compared with a year ago.

The percentage of workpeople unemployed, as indicated by the unemployment books lodged at Employment Exchanges, was 17.1 on the 21st December, as compared with 20.0 on the 26th November.

According to returns from firms covering 80,823 workpeople, the volume of employment during the week ended 22nd December (as indicated by the number of workpeople employed at each works, combined with the number of shifts during which work was carried on in each case) increased by 5.3 per cent. as compared with the previous month, and by 13.8 per cent. as compared with a year ago. The average number of shifts during which the works were open in the week ended 22nd December was 5.4, as compared with 5.3 in November, and 5.2 in December, 1922.

The following Table summarises the information received from employers who furnished returns for the three periods under review:—

DEPARTMENTS.	No. of Workpeople employed by firms making returns.		Aggregate number of Shifts.*		
	Week ended 22nd Dec. 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a Month ago.	Week ended 22nd Dec. 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a Month ago.	
					Per cent.
Open Hearth Melting Furnaces ..	9,000	+ 3.1	+ 17.4	51,911	+ 2.8
Puddling Forges ..	4,202	- 1.0	- 11.0	29,592	+ 1.1
Rolling Mills ..	30,302	+ 6.6	+ 15.0	158,249	+ 10.5
Forging and Pressing ..	3,372	+ 5.8	+ 16.8	17,577	+ 8.1
Founding ..	8,270	+ 0.3	+ 16.2	45,160	- 0.7
Other Departments ..	7,511	+ 5.5	+ 10.1	41,178	+ 4.9
Mechanics, Labourers, etc. ..	18,166	+ 1.5	+ 3.3	104,088	+ 2.3
Total ..	80,823	+ 3.8	+ 10.5	436,665	+ 5.3
DISTRICTS:					
Northumberland, Durham and Cleveland ..	14,745	+ 2.9	+ 7.7	80,303	+ 3.4
Sheffield and Rotherham ..	19,928	+ 2.9	+ 8.2	105,793	+ 2.9
Leeds, Bradford, etc. ..	2,302	- 3.4	+ 5.3	12,834	- 3.1
Cumberland, Lancs. and Cheshire ..	8,508	+ 12.8	+ 38.0	46,054	+ 13.2
Staffordshire ..	8,298	+ 7.6	+ 0.0	44,332	+ 6.6
Other Midland Counties ..	4,442	+ 2.1	+ 9.2	24,004	+ 2.3
Wales and Monmouth ..	9,798	+ 1.1	+ 12.1	53,963	+ 1.8
Total, England and Wales ..	65,021	+ 4.0	+ 10.5	367,283	+ 4.2
Scotland ..	12,802	+ 2.7	+ 10.4	69,382	+ 11.1
TOTAL ..	80,823	+ 3.8	+ 10.5	436,665	+ 5.3

The production of steel ingots and castings, as returned to the National Federation of Iron and Steel Manufacturers, amounted in December to 653,300 tons, compared with 749,500 tons in November and with 546,100 tons in December, 1922. The decrease in the month's output is ascribed to the intervention of the Christmas holidays.

TINPLATE AND STEEL SHEET TRADES.

EMPLOYMENT in these trades continued good during December, and a shortage of skilled millmen was again reported.

At the end of the month 541 tinplate and steel sheet mills were reported to be in operation at the works for which information is available, compared with 539 in November, and with 501 in December, 1922.

The percentage of workpeople unemployed, as indicated by the number of unemployment books lodged at Employment Exchanges was 3.6 on 21st December, 1923, as compared with 3.8 on 26th November.

* The figures relate to the number of shifts during which the works were in operation, allowance being made for the numbers of men employed. No account is taken of the time lost by individuals owing to absenteeism, &c., and it is not implied that the number of shifts shown was actually worked by all the men employed.

The following Table shows the number of mills in operation at the works covered by the returns received at the end of December, 1923, together with the increases and decreases as compared with November, 1923, and December, 1922:—

Works.	Number of Works Open		Number of Mills in Operation	
	At end of Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago.	At end of Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago.
Tinplate ..	79	+ 1	413	+ 3
Steel Sheet ..	15	-	128	- 1
TOTAL ..	94	+ 1	541	+ 2

The exports of tinned and galvanised plates and sheets in December, 1923, amounted to 92,460 tons, or 24,834 tons less than in November, 1923, but 1,531 tons more than in December, 1922.

SHIPBUILDING.

EMPLOYMENT in the shipbuilding and ship-repairing industries continued very bad during December. It showed a considerable improvement compared with the previous month, especially in the most important shipbuilding districts, but work had not been fully resumed at shipyards which were involved in the recent dispute.

On the North East Coast employment was very bad, but men were gradually re-engaged, and at the end of the month a decided improvement was shown in comparison with the end of November. On the East Coast, the Thames and the South Coast employment remained slack, but showed some improvement on the whole. The improvement formerly reported at the Bristol Channel ports was maintained until towards the end of the month, when employment showed a tendency to decline. There was a decided improvement on the Mersey, many skilled workmen being absorbed. There was also an improvement at Barrow.

On the Clyde employment was still very bad, but showed a considerable improvement, and further improvement is anticipated as soon as the initial stages in the building of new ships are sufficiently advanced to allow of the engagement of classes of men required for later stages of the work. On the East Coast of Scotland there was a similar improvement, with further improvement anticipated.

At Belfast employment continued bad, and showed little change at the end of the month, compared with the end of November.

The following Table shows the numbers and percentages of insured workpeople unemployed at 21st December, 1923, and the increase or decrease as compared with 26th November, 1923:—

Divisions.	Total number of insured workpeople unemployed at 21st Dec., 1923.	Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with 26th Nov., 1923.	Percentage Unemployed at 21st Dec., 1923.	Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in percentage as compared with 26th Nov., 1923.
London ..	4,004	- 578	28.3	- 4.0
South Eastern ..	1,267	- 49	13.4	- 0.6
South Western ..	6,186	- 836	19.9	- 2.7
Midlands ..	116	- 2	23.2	- 0.4
North Eastern ..	31,940	- 7,766	43.1	- 10.7
North Western ..	11,554	- 1,965	32.2	- 5.5
Scotland ..	28,559	- 7,539	39.8	- 10.5
Wales ..	3,808	+ 231	29.9	+ 2.3
Northern Ireland ..	6,343	- 101	28.0	- 0.4
GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND	93,077	- 18,535	34.2	- 6.8
Males ..	92,752	- 18,522	34.5	- 6.9
Females ..	325	- 13	8.1	- 0.3

SHIPBUILDING IN THE QUARTER ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1923.

ACCORDING to Lloyd's Register Quarterly Shipbuilding Returns, the gross tonnage of merchant vessels under construction in Great Britain and Ireland at the end of December, 1923, amounted to 1,395,181 tons, as compared with 1,271,195 tons at the end of September, 1923, and 1,468,599 tons at the end of December, 1922. These figures include a considerable amount of tonnage (about 164,000 tons at the end of December, 1923) on which work had been suspended; when allowance is made for this, the tonnage actually under construction at the end of 1923 amounted to 1,231,000 tons. The average tonnage building during the twelve months immediately preceding the war was 1,890,000 tons.

A considerable increase is shown in the tonnage commenced during the quarter, viz., 244,506 tons, as compared with 111,860 tons during the previous quarter.

The above figures are exclusive of warships and of merchant vessels under 100 tons gross.

ENGINEERING.

EMPLOYMENT in this industry during December, although still bad on the whole, was distinctly better than in the previous month, and showed a tendency towards further improvement. In marine engineering it was considerably better than in November, when the recent dispute in the shipbuilding industry was in progress, but the percentage unemployed in this section was still very high. In textile engineering it continued bad, with much short time. In general engineering it was bad, but improving. The motor section showed a marked improvement, especially on light motor cars. The railway and electrical sections continued fairly well employed.

The following Table shows the numbers and percentages of insured workpeople unemployed at 21st December, 1923, and the decrease as compared with 26th November, 1923; no district showed an increase:—

Divisions.	Number of Insured Workpeople Unemployed at 21st December, 1923.					TOTAL.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with 26th Nov., 1923.
	Engi- neering, Iron and Steel Founding.	Stove, Grate, &c., and General Iron Founding.	Electri- cal Engi- neering.	Marine Engi- neering and Marine Boiler Making.	Con- structional Engi- neering.		
London ..	11,657	381	339	112	141	12,630	- 1,449
South Eastern ..	5,481	436	253	164	71	6,385	- 417
South Western ..	3,184	148	62	648	48	4,088	- 264
Midlands ..	14,139	4,440	1,088	59	618	20,415	- 1,433
North Eastern ..	29,884	2,743	452	8,967	980	43,026	- 4,192
North Western ..	35,661	1,371	1,123	514	125	38,794	- 4,231
Scotland ..	21,339	2,831	148	3,712	761	28,791	- 2,304
Wales ..	704	206	12	15	34	971	- 76
Northern Ireland ..	1,784	380	5	664	4	2,837	- 152
GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.	123,834	12,934	3,482	14,875	2,812	157,937	- 14,518
Males ..	121,590	12,219	3,299	14,835	2,782	154,425	- 14,415
Females ..	2,244	715	183	40	30	3,512	- 103

Divisions.	Percentage Unemployed at 21st December, 1923.					TOTAL.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) in percentage as compared with 26th Nov., 1923.
	Engi- neering, Iron and Steel Founding.	Stove, Grate, &c., and General Iron Founding.	Electri- cal Engi- neering.	Marine Engi- neering and Marine Boiler Making.	Con- structional Engi- neering.		
London ..	12.3	9.4	4.9	22.0	8.5	11.7	- 1.3
South Eastern ..	12.6	12.6	3.3	4.7	8.9	10.9	- 0.7
South Western ..	8.9	11.1	2.3	10.3	8.9	8.8	- 0.5
Midlands ..	15.2	13.2	5.2	3.4	11.7	13.2	- 0.9
North Eastern ..	20.9	23.3	7.9	31.2	14.2	21.9	- 2.1
North Western ..	22.9	17.6	7.0	19.0	6.9	21.1	- 2.2
Scotland ..	23.0	13.6	7.3	21.2	12.4	20.7	- 1.6
Wales ..	8.9	10.4	3.4	30.0	8.9	9.1	- 0.7
Northern Ireland ..	21.5	35.5	4.5	11.4	20.0	18.6	- 0.9
GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.	18.3	15.1	5.6	22.2	11.8	17.3	- 1.6
Males ..	19.1	15.6	5.9	22.6	12.1	18.1	- 1.7
Females ..	5.7	10.4	4.1	3.6	3.6	5.8	- 0.2

On the North-East Coast employment was still very bad, but there were signs of a gradual revival in both marine and general engineering. At Darlington employment was fair on locomotive and other work; on the Tyne also it continued fair in the locomotive and electrical sections. In Lancashire and Cheshire, in textile machinery works, conditions remained bad, much short time being worked. The railway, electrical and motor sections were still fairly well employed, though there were many suspensions of electrical workers in the Preston district. General engineering was still depressed, though some works were fully employed, and in the Manchester district there was a slight improvement on the whole. At Liverpool employment was bad, the usual Christmas holidays being extended at many works. At Bolton the holidays were extended at textile machinery works, but not, as a rule, at general engineering works.

In Yorkshire employment continued bad, but showed an improvement. It continued fair on railway and electrical work, and good with printing machinery makers at Otley. In the Nottingham, Derby, and Leicester district conditions were quiet, but showed an improvement, especially in the textile machinery section. At Derby the railway works were well employed, but short time was reported at motor works. In Lincolnshire employment was still slack, and rather worse than in November. At Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Coventry, and Redditch there was a further marked improvement in the motor section, employment being good for the time of the year, especially on light motor cars. At Coventry several firms were on overtime, and there was a scarcity of juvenile labour. At Wolverhampton the Christmas holidays were fairly short, but

at Birmingham one large motor works was closed for an extended period. In general engineering the improvement formerly reported in this district was maintained, though many workpeople were still unemployed or on short time; in the railway and electrical sections employment continued fairly good.

In the Eastern Counties employment was still fair at Norwich, Ipswich, and Chelmsford, but bad at other centres, and showed little or no improvement on the whole. In the London district it remained moderate on the whole: it showed considerable improvement in the motor section, and was good with makers of wireless and other electrical small parts; in general and heavy engineering it was still slack. In the Southern Counties there was a slight general improvement. On railway work at Swindon and Wolverton employment continued good; at motor works there was an improvement in the Bristol district, but a temporary decline at Oxford. In South Wales the state of employment showed considerable fluctuation, but there was some improvement on the whole.

In Glasgow and the West of Scotland conditions remained very bad, but were better than in the previous month. A further improvement was anticipated when work in the shipyards becomes further advanced. In the East of Scotland, also, an improvement was reported, though employment was still slack. At Belfast conditions remained bad, little improvement being reported.

WOOLLEN AND WORSTED TRADES.

EMPLOYMENT in these trades during December, though still bad, was better than in November in both sections of the trade. Some firms closed down for a week at Christmas, but, on the other hand, some firms only closed for two days, owing to pressure of work.

The percentage of workpeople unemployed, as indicated by the unemployment books lodged at Employment Exchanges, was 9.9 on the 21st December, as compared with 11.1 on the 26th November.

During December a slight improvement was reported in the wool sorting and combing and worsted spinning sections of the trade with firms dealing mainly with cross-bred wools. No improvement, however, was reported in the woollen spinning section. In the weaving section some improvement was also reported, and employment was better in the dress goods trade of Bradford, Keighley and Silsden. A more noticeable improvement was reported in employment in the Bradford coating trade and the Halifax, Leeds and Huddersfield fine cloth men's wear trade. A slight improvement was reported in the Morley low woollen trade and in the low woollen section of the Leeds trade. There was little change in employment in the Heavy Woollen District or in the Colne and Holme valleys; but an improvement was reported in the Calder Valley, in the rug and blanket trade in the Dewsbury district, and in the rag and shoddy trade.

In the Rochdale, Saddleworth and Yeadon districts employment in the fannell trade showed a slight seasonal falling off; in the Stockport district a reduction was reported in the hours worked.

In Scotland employment showed little change prior to Christmas, and of 4,160 workpeople covered by the returns over 20 per cent. were on short time in the week ended 22nd December; a slight improvement was reported towards the end of the year.

The following Table summarises the information received from those employers who furnished returns for the three periods under review:—

Departments.	Number of Workpeople.		Total Wages paid to all Workpeople.	
	Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago.	Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago.
Wool Sorting ..	387	+ 0.8	893	+ 4.1
Spinning ..	3,718	+ 0.7	7,362	+ 2.7
Weaving ..	6,267	+ 1.5	11,267	+ 5.0
Other Departments ..	4,804	+ 0.3	10,022	+ 2.2
Not Specified ..	882	+ 1.8	2,051	+ 17.1
TOTAL ..	15,858	+ 0.8	31,585	+ 4.2

Districts.	Per cent.		£		Per cent.	
	Per cent.	Per cent.	£	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Huddersfield District ..	+ 1.0	+ 2.1	3,448	+ 11.6	+ 3.9	+ 5.8
Leeds District ..	+ 2.2	+ 8.6	3,353	+ 3.0	+ 5.8	+ 8.6
Dewsbury and Batley District ..	+ 1.3	+ 8.7	3,703	+ 2.7	+ 5.8	+ 8.6
Other Parts of West Riding ..	+ 0.1	- 1.0	4,550	+ 6.4	+ 5.8	+ 8.6
Total, West Riding ..	+ 1.1	+ 4.1	15,062	+ 5.8	+ 5.8	+ 8.6
Scotland ..	+ 0.5	- 4.8	8,203	+ 1.9	- 1.9	- 8.6
Other Districts ..	+ 0.7	- 0.0	8,330	+ 7.8	- 1.9	- 8.6
TOTAL ..	+ 0.8	+ 0.2	31,585	+ 4.2	- 1.9	- 8.6

* Comparison of earnings is affected by changes in rates of wages.

WORSTED INDUSTRY.

Departments.	Number of Workpeople.		Total Wages paid to all Workpeople.	
	Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago.	Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago.
Wool Sorting ..	4,214	- 1.5	10,533	+ 7.5
Combing ..	14,850	+ 0.2	23,141	+ 4.0
Spinning ..	5,343	+ 1.0	11,106	+ 6.9
Weaving ..	2,881	- 1.6	7,231	+ 3.0
Other Departments ..	1,969	+ 0.4	3,255	+ 10.3
Not Specified ..	29,257	- 0.1	55,266	+ 5.4

Districts.	Per cent.		£		Per cent.	
	Per cent.	Per cent.	£	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Bradford District ..	- 0.1	- 7.2	30,927	+ 5.9	- 12.1	- 12.1
Keighley District ..	+ 0.2	- 1.7	9,389	+ 3.0	- 3.5	- 3.5
Halifax District ..	+ 0.1	- 8.2	4,669	+ 15.0	- 19.2	- 19.2
Huddersfield District ..	- 1.0	- 11.5	4,605	+ 1.9	- 25.6	- 25.6
Other Parts of West Riding ..	+ 0.1	+ 7.1	4,370	+ 3.9	+ 7.3	+ 7.3
Total, West Riding ..	- 0.1	- 5.7	53,660	+ 5.5	- 11.4	- 11.4
Other Districts ..	+ 1.3	+ 0.9	1,606	+ 2.6	- 1.1	- 1.1
TOTAL ..	- 0.1	- 5.4	55,266	+ 5.4	- 11.2	- 11.2

Returns from firms in the woollen section employing 14,458 workpeople in the week ended 22nd December showed that about 25 per cent. of these workpeople were on short time to the extent, on the average, of 10 hours in that week. In the worsted section returns from firms employing 25,903 workpeople in the same week showed that about 23 per cent. of these workpeople were on short time to the extent of 10 hours on the average.

The imports (less re-exports) of raw wool (sheep or lambs) were 27,061,600 lbs. in December, 1923, compared with 8,082,600 lbs. in November, 1923, and 33,329,100 lbs. in December, 1922.

The exports of woollen and worsted yarns were 3,246,600 lbs., compared with 3,196,700 lbs. in November, 1923, and 3,657,300 lbs. in December, 1922.

The exports of woollen and worsted tissues were 19,134,300 square yards, compared with 16,849,600 square yards in November, and 17,428,900 square yards in December, 1922.

The exports of blankets were 180,857 pairs, 161,204 pairs and 74,048 pairs in December, 1923, November, 1923, and December, 1922, respectively.

COTTON TRADE.

DURING December there was no organised curtailment of production in this trade, and many firms in the spinning section worked full time during the first three weeks of the month. The usual holidays of two days were, however, extended generally to a week or more in the Oldham district, and an extended stoppage of varying length was made by individual firms in other districts. It was estimated, however, that, even with this extended stoppage at Christmas, the American spinning section worked about 70 per cent. of full time during the month, while the Egyptian spinning section again worked practically full time. In the weaving section there was a slight improvement during the month; but this section of the industry was still slack, and the holidays at Christmas were extended in some cases.

The percentage of workpeople unemployed, as indicated by the unemployment books lodged at Employment Exchanges, was 12.0 on the 21st December, as compared with 15.2 on the 26th November.

In the Oldham, Ashton and Stockport districts employment in the spinning section was better than in November, and better also than a year ago. Many firms worked full time during the first three weeks of December; but, thereafter, in accordance with a recommendation of the Oldham Master Cotton Spinners' Association, the Christmas holiday in the Oldham district was extended to at least a week, instead of the usual two days. In the weaving section in the Oldham district employment was very slack, except with velvet and fustian weavers, with whom employment was reported as fair.

At Bolton and Leigh employment continued good in the spinning section; with weavers it continued fair. In the Bury and Rochdale district employment remained bad. In the principal weaving centres employment was slightly better than in November. At Blackburn employment was described as better than it has been for eight or nine months, and most of the firms closed for the recognised holidays (Christmas Day and New Year's Day) only. About 16,000 or 17,000 looms were reported to be idle during December, as compared with about 19,000 during the previous month. At Burnley there was also a further slight improvement, the production of the looms being estimated at about 65 per cent. of the normal output. At Preston several firms worked without a break for three weeks before Christmas; but about three-quarters of the mills closed for a week or longer at Christmas. In Darwen over 2,000 weavers were reported to be unemployed.

* Comparison of earnings is affected by changes in rates of wages.

The following Table summarises the information received from those employers who furnished returns for the three periods under review:—

Departments.	Number of Workpeople.		Total Wages paid to all Workpeople.	
	Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago.	Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago.
Preparing ..	11,585	+ 2.8	19,335	+ 4.7
Spinning ..	21,738	+ 2.2	37,763	+ 4.0
Weaving ..	34,932	+ 2.2	60,642	+ 7.1
Other ..	7,756	+ 0.1	18,238	+ 4.8
Not specified ..	7,630	- 0.2	14,894	+ 3.6
TOTAL ..	83,701	+ 1.9	150,922	+ 5.4

Districts.	Per cent.		£		Per cent.	
	Per cent.	Per cent.	£	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Ashton ..	+ 5.6	+ 8.5	7,208	+ 12.6	+ 15.0	+ 15.0
Stockport, Glossop and Hyde ..	+ 6.1	+ 1.9	12,440	+ 9.9	+ 12.9	+ 12.9
Oldham ..	+ 1.8	+ 1.3	19,837	+ 4.3	+ 6.0	+ 6.0
Bolton and Leigh ..	- 3.3	+ 1.9	21,325	- 0.3	+ 2.4	+ 2.4
Bury, Rochdale, Heywood, Walsden, and Todmorden ..	+ 2.1	+ 2.7	14,173	+ 9.8	+ 5.7	+ 5.7
Manchester ..	+ 16.5	- 11.3	8,874	+ 10.9	- 11.3	- 11.3
Preston and Chorley ..	- 0.8	- 5.3	11,541	+ 7.1	- 0.6	- 0.6
Blackburn, Accrington and Darwen ..	- 5.1	- 0.1	15,027	+ 2.3	+ 3.9	+ 3.9
Burnley, Padiham, Colne and Nelson ..	+ 5.8	- 4.1	23,255	+ 7.9	+ 1.3	+ 1.3
Other Lancashire Towns ..	+ 1.7	- 18.7	5,410	+ 1.5	- 14.1	- 14.1
Yorkshire Towns ..	+ 1.9	- 0.3	7,372	+ 5.0	+ 2.3	+ 2.3
Other Districts ..	- 2.4	- 0.9	4,460	- 7.4	- 6.5	- 6.5
TOTAL ..	+ 1.9	- 1.5	150,922	+ 5.4	+ 2.3	+ 2.3

Returns from firms employing about 9,000 workpeople in the Oldham district showed that during the four weeks ended 22nd December about 73 per cent. of these workpeople were on full time, and about 10 per cent. were working half time, while nearly 17 per cent. were working short time but more than half time.

In the other districts, taken collectively, nearly 20 per cent. of the workpeople reported on were on short time, to the extent of 16 hours a week on the average, in the week ended 22nd December. The districts most affected were Bury, Rochdale, Todmorden, Heywood and Ashton-under-Lyne.

The imports (less re-exports) of raw cotton (including cotton linters) were 234,899,000 lbs. in December, 1923, compared with 167,597,800 lbs. in the previous month and with 195,833,100 lbs. in December, 1922.

The exports of cotton yarn were 11,136,500 lbs. in December, 1923, compared with 14,519,500 lbs. in November, 1923, and 11,711,600 lbs. in December, 1922.

The exports of cotton piece goods were 323,100,000 square yards, as compared with 349,697,400 square yards in the previous month, and with 360,517,300 square yards in December, 1922.

BOOT AND SHOE INDUSTRY.

EMPLOYMENT during the first three weeks of December was better than in November. During the week immediately preceding the Christmas stoppage, in particular, many factories in the principal Midland centres were on full time, and some overtime was worked. This, however, was partly due to temporary pressure such as often occurs in the boot and shoe industry before a holiday; and the general state of employment at the end of 1923, taking one district with another, was only moderate, though better in almost every case than at the end of 1922. The Christmas holidays were very generally extended to a week or ten days in most of the principal districts.

The percentage of workpeople unemployed, as indicated by the unemployment books lodged at Employment Exchanges, was 9.8 on the 21st December, as compared with 9.6 on the 26th November.

In London employment remained bad. There was continued improvement at Leicester, less short time being worked. At Northampton there was still much short time, and employment was only moderate. Employment continued slack at Kettering, but was slightly better than in November. In the Wellingborough, Hinckley and Rushden districts employment improved, and was fairly good; a little overtime was occasionally worked. At Leeds there was little change, some firms being on full time, others on short time. At Stafford a slight improvement was reported, and full time was generally worked.

There was not much change in the position at Norwich, where many operatives were unemployed, and short time was still worked. At Bristol employment was fair, and slightly better than in November; while in the Kingswood district employment was fairly good. At Street practically all the operatives were reported to be working short time, and employment was generally bad, and worse than in November.

* Comparison of earnings is affected by changes in rates of wages.

At Arbroath employment continued bad, with much short time in operation; at Edinburgh it was quiet, and not so good as in the previous month. Elsewhere in Scotland employment was generally fair.

The following Table summarises the information received from those employers who furnished returns for the three periods under review :-

Districts.	Number of Workpeople.			Total Wages paid to all Workpeople.		
	Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a		Week ended 22nd Dec., 1923.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a	
		Month ago.	Year ago.		Month ago.	Year ago.
England and Wales :-		Per cent.	Per cent.	£	Per cent.	Per cent.
London	1,888	- 1.3	- 0.7	4,319	+ 3.3	- 3.0
Leicester	8,361	+ 1.6	- 2.2	21,824	+ 13.2	+ 4.4
Leicester Country District	2,509	+ 0.7	...	5,879	+ 2.9	+ 6.9
Northampton	6,697	- 0.3	+ 4.1	15,926	+ 5.4	+ 13.0
Northampton Country District	8,150	+ 0.0	+ 5.6	19,769	+ 9.9	+ 16.8
Kettering	3,173	- 0.1	+ 6.1	8,978	+ 14.7	+ 27.7
Stafford and District	2,564	+ 0.4	+ 4.4	5,619	+ 4.2	+ 15.7
Norwich and District	4,015	+ 1.8	- 5.8	8,223	+ 9.0	- 0.4
Bristol, Kingswood and District	2,377	- 0.3	- 1.2	5,213	+ 11.9	+ 4.2
Leeds and District	1,830	+ 1.4	- 2.5	4,132	+ 1.0	- 2.4
Lancashire (mainly Rossendale Valley)	4,320	- 0.6	+ 0.5	8,097	+ 2.8	- 14.6
Birmingham and District	1,014	+ 0.2	- 2.1	2,143	+ 6.4	+ 18.8
Other parts of England and Wales	1,564	+ 1.4	+ 6.6	3,226	+ 4.2	+ 11.2
England and Wales	48,462	+ 0.4	+ 1.2	113,408	+ 8.2	+ 7.5
Scotland	2,577	+ 0.1	+ 1.4	5,496	+ 6.7	+ 6.5
United Kingdom	51,039	+ 0.4	+ 1.2	118,904	+ 8.1	+ 7.4

Returns from firms employing over 35,000 workpeople in the week ended 22nd December showed that nearly 36 per cent. of these workpeople worked short time in that week, to the extent of about 12 hours a week, on an average.

The exports of boots and shoes in December, 1923, amounted to 99,763 dozen pairs, or 20,537 dozen pairs less than in November, 1923, but 33,161 dozen pairs more than in December, 1922.

PAPER MANUFACTURE, PRINTING, AND BOOKBINDING.

EMPLOYMENT in the paper trade was moderate on the whole; it was bad in the wrapping section, and generally showed some decline on the previous month, a number of mills working intermittently.

With letterpress printers employment generally continued fair; the General Election and Christmas trade caused an improved demand in the early part of the month, but towards the end of the month a decline was reported in London and at other centres. Employment was reported as very good with stereotypers in London and bad with machine managers. In the lithographic printing and the bookbinding trades employment was reported as bad at Manchester, and generally fair at other centres; a slight improvement was reported in several districts.

The following Table summarises the returns received from trade unions :-

Districts.	No. of Members of Unions at end of Dec., 1923.	Percentage Unemployed at end of			Increase (+) or Decrease (-) on a	
		Dec., 1923.	Nov., 1923.	Dec., 1922.	Month ago.	Year ago.
Printing	76,755	4.0	3.5	6.2	+ 0.5	- 2.2
Bookbinding	14,588	3.5	3.8	6.3	- 0.3	- 2.8

BUILDING TRADE.

EMPLOYMENT in the building trade during December showed very little variation on the whole as compared with the previous month, and remained fairly good with skilled operatives, except painters, and slack or bad with unskilled workers; in the painting and decorating section of the trade it declined, as usual at this season of the year, and was very bad. It was reported as very good with tradesmen (except painters) in several districts, including Lancaster, Harrogate, Luton, Eastbourne, Woking and Bournemouth; and as good in a considerable number of other districts, a little overtime being worked in some cases. On the other hand, it was very quiet or slack at a few centres, and bad weather conditions caused a certain amount of irregular time to be worked.

As regards individual occupations, employment continued very good in most districts with bricklayers, good with masons and plasterers, fairly good with carpenters and joiners, and fair with slaters, with whom there was a slight decline; in many districts a shortage of these classes of skilled operatives, especially brick-

layers, was again reported. With plumbers employment showed a further slight improvement and was generally fair; it declined again with painters, and was very bad in most districts. With builders' labourers employment remained very slack on the whole.

The following Table shows the numbers and percentages of workpeople insured under the Unemployment Insurance Acts who were unemployed at 21st December, 1923, and the increase or decrease in the percentage as compared with 26th November :-

DIVISIONS.	Estimated Number of Insured Workpeople.	Total No. of Insured Workpeople Unemployed at 21st Dec., 1923.	Percentage Unemployed.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a as compared with 26th November, 1923.	Estimated Number of Insured Workpeople.	Total No. of Insured Workpeople Unemployed at 21st Dec., 1923.	Percentage Unemployed.	Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a as compared with 26th November, 1923.
Great Britain and Northern Ireland	125,010	5,106	4.1	+ 0.3	57,170	1,164	2.0	+ 0.3
Carpenters.								
London	22,990	748	3.3	+ 0.3	9,050	169	1.9	+ 0.4
S. Eastern	18,010	519	2.9	+ 0.5	11,030	212	1.9	+ 0.6
S. Western	18,040	419	2.3	+ 0.2	6,220	100	1.6	+ 0.5
Midlands	12,590	505	4.0	+ 0.6	9,520	195	2.0	+ 0.3
N. Eastern	15,690	865	5.5	...	8,510	148	1.7	- 0.1
N. Western	16,900	675	4.0	+ 0.2	7,400	183	2.5	+ 0.6
Scotland	15,740	1,009	6.4	+ 0.4	2,630	113	4.3	- 0.4
Wales	4,660	175	3.8	+ 0.2	1,900	30	1.6	+ 0.2
N. Ireland	2,390	191	8.0	+ 1.3	910	14	1.5	+ 0.8
Bricklayers.								
London	22,990	748	3.3	+ 0.3	9,050	169	1.9	+ 0.4
S. Eastern	18,010	519	2.9	+ 0.5	11,030	212	1.9	+ 0.6
S. Western	18,040	419	2.3	+ 0.2	6,220	100	1.6	+ 0.5
Midlands	12,590	505	4.0	+ 0.6	9,520	195	2.0	+ 0.3
N. Eastern	15,690	865	5.5	...	8,510	148	1.7	- 0.1
N. Western	16,900	675	4.0	+ 0.2	7,400	183	2.5	+ 0.6
Scotland	15,740	1,009	6.4	+ 0.4	2,630	113	4.3	- 0.4
Wales	4,660	175	3.8	+ 0.2	1,900	30	1.6	+ 0.2
N. Ireland	2,390	191	8.0	+ 1.3	910	14	1.5	+ 0.8
Masons.								
London	1,860	48	2.6	- 1.2	530	25	4.7	+ 0.2
S. Eastern	510	22	4.3	+ 1.8	120	7	5.8	+ 0.8
S. Western	5,330	136	2.6	- 0.2	140	5	3.6	+ 1.5
Midlands	860	38	4.4	+ 1.0	380	34	8.9	+ 1.5
N. Eastern	3,050	77	2.5	+ 0.5	880	36	4.1	+ 0.6
N. Western	2,570	75	2.9	- 0.5	770	48	6.2	- 0.2
Scotland	5,300	290	5.5	+ 1.8	2,210	116	5.2	+ 1.7
Wales	2,400	71	3.0	+ 0.8	50	...	...	...
N. Ireland	390	22	5.6	+ 1.8	120	12	10.0	+ 1.7
Slaters.								
London	1,860	48	2.6	- 1.2	530	25	4.7	+ 0.2
S. Eastern	510	22	4.3	+ 1.8	120	7	5.8	+ 0.8
S. Western	5,330	136	2.6	- 0.2	140	5	3.6	+ 1.5
Midlands	860	38	4.4	+ 1.0	380	34	8.9	+ 1.5
N. Eastern	3,050	77	2.5	+ 0.5	880	36	4.1	+ 0.6
N. Western	2,570	75	2.9	- 0.5	770	48	6.2	- 0.2
Scotland	5,300	290	5.5	+ 1.8	2,210	116	5.2	+ 1.7
Wales	2,400	71	3.0	+ 0.8	50	...	...	...
N. Ireland	390	22	5.6	+ 1.8	120	12	10.0	+ 1.7
Plasterers.								
London	3,810	72	1.9	- 0.5	31,690	9,855	31.1	- 0.3
S. Eastern	1,700	43	2.5	+ 0.6	17,400	3,732	21.4	+ 3.9
S. Western	1,720	68	4.0	+ 1.2	12,610	2,474	19.7	+ 3.0
Midlands	1,380	89	6.4	- 1.2	10,200	2,728	26.7	+ 6.4
N. Eastern	2,070	95	4.6	+ 1.1	10,130	3,183	31.5	+ 7.5
N. Western	2,190	91	4.2	- 0.7	12,830	3,623	28.2	+ 6.6
Scotland	1,850	125	6.8	+ 1.1	8,300	2,029	24.4	+ 1.6
Wales	1,040	27	2.6	- 0.1	2,620	536	20.5	+ 3.4
N. Ireland	310	12	3.9	+ 1.0	1,080	394	36.5	+ 8.8
Painters.								
London	3,810	72	1.9	- 0.5	31,690	9,855	31.1	- 0.3
S. Eastern	1,700	43	2.5	+ 0.6	17,400	3,732	21.4	+ 3.9
S. Western	1,720	68	4.0	+ 1.2	12,610	2,474	19.7	+ 3.0
Midlands	1,380	89	6.4	- 1.2	10,200	2,728	26.7	+ 6.4
N. Eastern	2,070	95	4.6	+ 1.1	10,130	3,183	31.5	+ 7.5
N. Western	2,190	91	4.2	- 0.7	12,830	3,623	28.2	+ 6.6
Scotland	1,850	125	6.8	+ 1.1	8,300	2,029	24.4	+ 1.6
Wales	1,040	27	2.6	- 0.1	2,620	536	20.5	+ 3.4
N. Ireland	310	12	3.9	+ 1.0	1,080	394	36.5	+ 8.8
Labourers.								
London	6,830	449	6.6	+ 0.1	60,930	8,151	13.4	- 2.1
S. Eastern	3,930	111	2.8	- 0.4	43,650	3,732	8.5	+ 0.5
S. Western	3,370	131	3.9	+ 0.5	31,390	3,453	11.0	+ 0.4
Midlands	3,320	200	6.0	- 0.6	27,800	3,957	14.2	+ 0.2
N. Eastern	4,420	362	8.2	- 1.7	29,070	4,444	15.3	...
N. Western	5,840	345	5.9	- 1.5	31,580	5,509	17.4	- 1.5
Scotland	5,510	382	6.9	- 0.7	15,080	2,795	18.5	...
Wales	720	43	6.0	+ 1.0	8,910	1,181	13.3	+ 0.9
N. Ireland	500	35	7.0	- 0.4	6,060	1,464	24.2	- 0.8
Plumbers.								
London	6,830	449	6.6	+ 0.1	60,930	8,151	13.4	- 2.1
S. Eastern	3,930	111	2.8	- 0.4	43,650	3,732	8.5	+ 0.5
S. Western	3,370	131	3.9	+ 0.5	31,390	3,453	11.0	+ 0.4
Midlands	3,320	200	6.0	- 0.6	27,800	3,957	14.2	+ 0.2
N. Eastern	4,420	362	8.2	- 1.7	29,070	4,444	15.3	...
N. Western	5,840	345	5.9	- 1.5	31,580	5,509	17.4	- 1.5
Scotland	5,510	382	6.9	- 0.7	15,080	2,795	18.5	...
Wales	720	43	6.0	+ 1.0	8,910	1,181	13.3	+ 0.9
N. Ireland	500	35	7.0	- 0.4	6,060	1,464	24.2	- 0.8
Other Occupations.								
London	23,260	4,693	20.2	- 2.4	160,950	24,210	15.0	- 1.2
S. Eastern	12,050	2,988	24.8	- 2.7	108,400	11,366	10.5	+ 0.7
S. Western	10,230	2,952	28.9	- 2.2	87,040	9,688	11.1	+ 0.4
Midlands	11,820	2,969	25.5	- 3.6	77,670	10,705	13.8	+ 0.5
N. Eastern	11,000	2,948	26.8	+ 0.4	84,820	12,164	14.3	+ 0.8
N. Western	13,350	3,676	27.5	- 0.9	93,430	14,225	15.2	+ 0.2
Scotland	9,250	2,691	29.1	+ 2.4	65,870	9,550	14.5	+ 0.8
Wales	3,860	797	20.6	- 1.1	26,170	2,860	10.9	+ 0.6
N. Ireland	1,010	538	53.3	- 15.3	12,770	2,682	21.0	- 0.5
ALL OCCUPATIONS.								
London	23,260	4,693	20.2	- 2.4	160,950	24,210	15.0	- 1.2
S. Eastern	12,050	2,988	24.8	- 2.7	108,400	11,366	10.5	+ 0.7
S. Western	10,230	2,952	28.9	- 2.2	87,040	9,688	11.1	

UNEMPLOYMENT IN INSURED INDUSTRIES.

The statistics here presented show, industry by industry, the numbers of persons insured under the Unemployment Insurance Acts, and the number and percentage of such persons who were unemployed on 21st December, 1923. "Unemployed" as used in these statistics does not necessarily mean that the person is definitely without a job. Persons who on 21st December, 1923, were not at work because they were suspended, "stood off," "furloughed," or on systematic short time, are counted in the statistics as "unemployed."

Under the Unemployment Insurance Acts, substantially all persons for whom Health Insurance contributions have been paid, except outworkers and persons employed in agriculture and private domestic service, must be insured against unemployment. Employees of local authorities, railways and certain other public utility undertakings, members of the police forces, and persons with rights under a statutory superannuation scheme may, in certain circumstances, be exempted. Persons employed otherwise than by way of manual labour at a rate of remuneration exceeding in value £250 per annum are exempted, as are also juveniles under sixteen years of age.

The statistics take account only of persons insured under the Acts. Such persons number approximately 11,500,000 in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This figure is computed annually, and is obtained from a count of the unemployment books which must be held by all insured persons, and which are exchanged at the beginning of each insurance year in the early weeks of July. In arriving at the estimated number of current books regard is paid not only to those books actually exchanged, but also to those which are likely to be exchanged in the course of the insurance year. The issue of new books between the exchange of books and the date of the estimate is also included, and at the same time allowance is made for wastage by deaths, emigration, leaving industry, etc.

Every insured person claiming unemployment benefit must

lodge his unemployment book at an Employment Exchange when making a claim. It is possible therefore to obtain from a count of the lodged books a record of unemployment in insured trades. The figures given of numbers unemployed are not, however, confined to persons in receipt of benefit. They include:—

- (a) Insured persons unemployed and in receipt of benefit;
- (b) Insured persons not in receipt of benefit, but known to be unemployed by reason of their maintaining registration at an Employment Exchange or otherwise;
- (c) Insured persons who are not in receipt of benefit and are not maintaining registration, but whose unemployment books remain lodged at Employment Exchanges. Provided there is no definite evidence of employment these are counted in the statistics for two months after the insured person's last attendance at an Exchange.

Concurrently with the exchange of insurance books in the middle of July opportunity was taken to revise the classification of insured workpeople so as to bring it, so far as practicable, into conformity with the industrial grouping adapted in connection with the 1921 census of population. At the same time the industrial classification was amended. Previously it had not been on a strictly industrial basis, but in some cases had followed an occupational grouping. At the last exchange of books all unemployment books were classified according to the industry of the employer, or, in the case of unemployed persons, of the last employer. As the composition of the several industrial groups has undergone modification the statistics subsequent to June 1923, are not strictly comparable with those prior to that date.

Insured persons who have lost their employment owing to a stoppage of work due to a trade dispute at the premises at which they were employed are not generally eligible for benefit, and are not included in the figures. Persons who were not at work owing to sickness are also not included.

INDUSTRY.	NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES UNEMPLOYED.												
	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PERSONS IN INSURED INDUSTRIES AT JULY, 1923. (GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.)			NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYMENT BOOKS REMAINING LODGED AT 21ST DECEMBER, 1923. (GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.)			PERCENTAGE UNEMPLOYED AT 21ST DECEMBER, 1923.			INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) AS COMPARED WITH 26TH NOVEMBER, 1923. (GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.)			
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
Fishing	23,600	530	24,130	4,303	93	4,396	18.2	17.5	18.2	17.7	+ 5.8	+ 10.5	+ 5.9
Mining Industry:—													
Coal Mining	1,258,650	8,200	1,266,850	29,895	398	30,293	2.4	4.9	2.4	2.4	- 0.2	-	- 0.2
Iron Ore and Ironstone Mining and Quarrying	19,670	50	19,720	3,824	3	3,827	19.4	6.0	19.4	19.3	- 1.8	-	- 1.7
Lead, Tin and Copper Mining	5,000	70	5,070	909	5	914	18.2	7.1	18.0	18.0	+ 0.5	+ 4.2	+ 0.5
Stone Quarrying and Mining	32,060	270	32,330	1,998	18	2,016	6.2	6.2	6.1	+ 0.1	+ 3.4	+ 0.1	
Slate Quarrying and Mining	8,000	20	8,020	143	2	145	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	+ 0.5	+ 0.0	+ 0.5
Other Mining and Quarrying	24,960	1,680	26,640	1,663	173	1,836	6.7	10.9	6.7	+ 0.1	+ 0.4	+ 0.1	
Clay, Sand, Gravel and Chalk Pit Digging	12,520	170	12,690	817	22	839	6.5	12.9	6.6	6.4	+ 0.1	- 1.2	+ 0.1
Non-Metalliferous Mining Products:—													
Coke Ovens and By-Product Works	15,070	200	15,270	805	41	846	5.3	20.5	5.5	5.5	- 0.6	+ 4.5	- 0.5
Artificial Stone and Concrete Manufacture	10,090	660	10,750	1,885	69	1,954	18.7	10.5	18.2	18.2	+ 2.0	+ 0.3	+ 1.9
Cement, Limekilns and Whiting Works	16,080	620	16,700	1,606	39	1,645	10.0	6.3	9.9	9.6	+ 0.8	+ 0.3	+ 0.8
Brick, Tile, etc.	54,340	7,500	61,840	4,288	378	4,666	7.9	11.7	8.4	8.2	- 0.3	- 0.3	- 0.3
Pottery, Earthenware, etc.	35,760	36,390	72,150	4,395	6,171	10,566	12.3	17.0	14.6	14.7	+ 2.0	+ 4.4	+ 3.2
Glass Trades:—													
Glass (excluding Bottles, Optical and Scientific Glass) Manufacture	22,880	4,990	27,870	2,882	343	3,225	12.6	6.9	11.6	11.6	+ 0.1	- 0.1	+ 0.1
Glass Bottle Making	14,950	1,650	16,600	2,939	128	3,067	19.7	7.8	18.5	18.2	- 1.4	- 2.7	- 1.5
Ammunition, Explosives, Chemicals, etc.:—													
Chemicals Manufacture	80,430	24,940	105,370	9,116	1,586	10,702	11.3	6.4	10.2	10.1	- 0.7	- 0.1	- 0.6
Explosives Manufacture	13,960	5,120	19,080	1,626	553	2,179	11.6	10.8	11.4	11.1	- 0.9	+ 0.4	- 0.6
Paint, Varnish, Japan, Red and White Lead Manufacture	10,920	2,950	13,870	500	164	664	4.6	5.6	4.8	4.7	- 0.2	- 0.3	- 0.3
Oil, Grease, Glns, Soap, Ink, Match, etc., Manufacture	57,530	21,620	79,150	4,307	1,429	5,736	7.5	6.6	7.2	7.3	- 0.5	- 0.2	- 0.5
Metal Manufacture and Secondary Processes:—													
Pig Iron Manufacture (Blast Furnaces)	29,310	240	29,550	3,355	10	3,365	11.4	4.2	11.4	11.4	- 0.5	- 1.2	- 0.4
Puddling Furnaces, Iron and Steel Rolling Mills	210,150	4,480	214,630	36,348	235	36,583	17.3	6.4	17.1	17.0	- 3.0	-	- 2.9
Manufacture of Brass, Copper, Zinc, Tin, Lead, etc.	38,510	4,000	42,510	5,117	435	5,552	13.3	10.9	13.1	13.1	- 1.4	- 0.5	- 1.3
Manufacture of Tin Plates	25,560	4,330	30,190	949	148	1,097	3.7	3.4	3.6	3.6	- 0.1	- 0.3	- 0.2
Iron and Steel Tube Making	23,900	1,450	25,350	3,587	181	3,768	15.0	12.5	14.9	14.8	- 0.7	- 0.7	- 0.7
Wire, Wire Netting, Wire Rope Manufacture	20,650	3,940	24,590	2,104	311	2,415	10.2	7.9	9.8	9.8	- 0.7	+ 0.1	- 0.6
Engineering and Ironfounding:—													
Engineering: Engineers' Iron and Steel Founding	635,260	39,660	674,920	121,580	2,244	123,824	19.1	5.7	18.3	18.3	- 1.7	-	- 1.7
Stove, Grate, Pipe, etc., and General Iron Founding	79,020	6,890	85,910	12,219	715	12,934	15.5	10.4	15.1	14.8	- 1.7	+ 0.1	- 1.5
Electrical Engineering	50,570	11,710	62,280	2,999	483	3,482	5.9	4.1	5.6	5.6	- 0.9	- 0.5	- 0.8
Marine Engineering and Marine Boiler Making	65,760	1,110	66,870	14,335	40	14,375	22.6	3.6	22.2	23.3	- 2.8	- 2.0	- 2.9
Constructional Engineering	22,940	840	23,780	2,782	30	2,812	12.1	3.6	11.8	11.8	+ 0.4	+ 0.5	+ 0.4
Construction and Repair of Vehicles:—													
Construction and Repair of Motor Vehicles and Aircraft	174,590	19,830	194,420	18,199	1,234	19,433	10.4	6.2	10.0	10.0	- 1.2	- 0.7	- 1.1
Construction and Repair of Carriages, Carts, etc.	25,540	2,400	27,940	3,483	192	3,675	13.6	8.0	13.2	13.0	- 1.8	- 0.2	- 1.5
Railway Carriage, Wagon, and Tram-car Building	50,560	1,280	51,840	2,611	41	2,652	5.2	3.2	5.1	5.1	+ 0.2	+ 0.9	+ 0.1

UNEMPLOYMENT IN INSURED INDUSTRIES.—continued.

INDUSTRY.	NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES UNEMPLOYED.												
	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PERSONS IN INSURED INDUSTRIES AT JULY, 1923. (GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.)			NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYMENT BOOKS REMAINING LODGED AT 21ST DECEMBER, 1923. (GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.)			PERCENTAGE UNEMPLOYED AT 21ST DECEMBER, 1923.			INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) AS COMPARED WITH 26TH NOVEMBER, 1923. (GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.)			
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
Shipbuilding and Ship Repairing	268,520	4,010	272,530	92,752	325	93,077	34.5	8.1	34.2	35.0	- 6.9	- 0.3	- 6.8
Metal Trades:—													
Electrical Wiring and Contracting	11,010	860	11,870	1,014	25	1,039	9.2	2.9	8.8	8.6	- 1.4	+ 0.7	- 1.2
Electrical Cable, Wire and Electric Lamp Manufacture	48,480	24,360	72,840	3,854	1,770	5,624	7.9	7.3	7.7	7.7	- 0.7	- 0.7	- 0.7
Hand Tool, Cutlery, Saw, File Making	22,760	7,340	30,100	3,534	705	4,239	15.5	9.6	14.1	14.1	- 2.4	- 0.5	- 1.9
Bolts, Nuts, Screws, Rivets, Nails, etc., Manufacture	17,510	12,730	30,240	2,286	1,781	4,067	13.1	14.0	13.4	13.4	- 1.7	- 1.1	- 1.5
Brass and Allied Metal Wares Manufacture	20,450	12,000	32,450	3,776	2,070	5,846	18.5	17.3	18.0	18.0	- 1.1	- 1.4	- 1.2
Heating and Ventilating Engineering	5,340	420	5,760	226	12	238	4.2	2.9	4.1	4.3	- 0.9	+ 1.2	- 0.7
Watches, Clocks, Plate, Jewellery, etc., Manufacture	29,380	20,450	49,830	3,171	1,716	4,887	10.8	8.4	9.8	9.8	- 0.6	+ 1.1	+ 0.1
Other Metal Industries	107,180	60,310	167,490	11,219	6,858	18,077	10.5	10.8	10.8	10.8	- 0.8	+ 0.1	- 0.5
Textile Trades:—													
Cotton Industry	211,010	365,280	576,290	21,348	47,688	69,036	10.1	13.1	12.0	13.0	- 2.7	- 3.4	- 3.2
Woolen and Worsted Industry	119,630	153,700	273,330	12,151	15,008	27,159	10.2	9.8	9.9	9.9	- 1.5	- 0.9	- 1.2
Silk Industry	14,320	23,820	38,140	1,355	2,306	3,661	9.5	9.7	9.6	9.6	+ 1.2	+ 0.6	+ 0.8
Linon Industry	25,700	56,370	82,070	3,964	8,407	12,371	15.4	14.9	15.1	15.5	- 2.0	- 1.7	- 1.7
Jute Industry	14,190	27,340	41,530	1,953	2,249	4,202	13.8	8.2	10.1	10.1	+ 1.4	- 0.6	-
Hemp Spinning and Weaving, Rope, Cord, Twine, etc., Making	7,620	12,540	20,160	813	1,769	2,582	10.7	14.1	12.8	11.6	- 1.9	- 1.7	- 1.8
Hosiery Industry	19,990	71,380	91,370	1,506	6,153	7,659	7.5	8.6	8.4	8.4	- 0.8	- 0.3	- 0.4
Lace Industry	9,330	12,240	21,570	2,113	1,438	3,551	22.8	11.7	16.5	16.5	- 4.8	- 2.6	- 3.5
Carpet Industry	11,220	14,540	25,760	395	652	1,047	3.5	4.5	4.1	4.0	- 0.7	- 1.8	- 1.3
Other Textile Industries	13,480	29,940	43,420	1,382	4,377	5,759	10.3	14.6	13.3	13.0	- 1.1	- 1.2	- 1.1
Textile, Bleaching, Printing, Dyeing, etc.	85,560	31,400	116,960	11,201	3,332	14,533	13.1	10.6	12.4	13.0	- 2.1	- 4.2	- 2.7
Leather and Leather Goods:—													
Tanning, Currying and Leather Dressing	33,230	8,590	41,820	3,500	853	4,353	10.5	9.9	10.4	10.4	- 1.0	- 0.8	- 0.9
Saddlery, Harness and Other Leather Goods Manufacture	16,800	12,550	29,350	1,824	1,091	2,915	10.9	8.7	9.9	9.9	- 0.8	+ 1.5	+ 0.1
Clothing Trades:—													
Tailoring	65,910	120,300	186,210	8,036	15,007	23,043	12.2	12.5	12.4	12.2	+ 0.1	- 1.1	- 0.7
Dress and Mantle Making and Millinery	12,250	104,160	116,410	992	9,844	10,836	8.1	9.5	9.3	9.0	-	+ 0.2	+ 0.1
Hat and Cap (including Straw Plait) Manufacture	13,810	20,830	34,640	2,400	2,261	4,661	17.4	10.9	13.5	13.5	-	- 1.8	- 1.1
Blouses, Shirts, Collars, Underclothing, etc., Making	6,640	60,880	67,520	364	5,559	5,923	5.5	9.1	8.8	8.8	- 0.4	- 0.5	- 0.4
Other Dress Industries	12,470	20,470	32,940	1,270	2,561	3,831	10.2	12.5	11.6	11.6	- 0.3	- 0.	

MINISTRY OF LABOUR EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES.*

THE number of persons remaining on the "live registers" of Employment Exchanges in Great Britain and Northern Ireland—i.e., of applications for employment outstanding from workpeople—at 31st December, 1923, was 1,288,822,† of whom 954,197 were men, 36,602 boys, 263,827 women, and 34,196 girls. Compared with 26th November, there was an increase of 32,092. In the men's and women's departments there were increases of 9,362 and 24,225 respectively; while in the case of juveniles there was a decrease of 1,495. During the period 27th November-31st December the number of vacancies filled by Employment Exchanges was 96,110, of which 65,501 were for men, 19,469 for women, and 13,140 for juveniles.

The following Table summarises the work of the Exchanges during the period ended 31st December, 1923. The number of applications by employers, and the number of vacancies filled, shown for the week ended 31st December, relate to the period from and including 18th December:—

Week ended	Applications by Employers.	Vacancies Filled.	Applications outstanding at end of week.	
			From Workpeople (Live Register) †	From Employers.
26th November, 1923	24,462	21,806	1,256,730	16,792
3rd December, 1923	25,366	22,036	1,232,887	16,843
10th " " "	26,136	22,427	1,216,528	17,852
17th " " "	25,507	25,394	1,174,397	18,055
31st " " "	31,993	28,253	1,288,822	17,960

The increase of 114,425 in the number on the Live Register at 31st December, compared with 17th December, was to a great extent due to the dislocation caused by the Christmas and New Year holidays. The corresponding increase in the Live Register at the end of 1922 was 133,527.

A detailed analysis of the figures in the above table is not yet available, but statistics for the four weeks ended 3rd December are dealt with below.

Applications from Workpeople.—The total number of 537,635 applications from workpeople during the four weeks ended 3rd December showed a daily average of 22,401. Of this daily average, men accounted for 14,493, women for 5,871, and juveniles for 2,037.

Vacancies Notified.—During the four weeks ended 3rd December there were 91,887 vacancies notified, representing a daily average of 3,829. Of this daily average, 2,260 were for men, 940 for women, and 629 for juveniles.

Vacancies Filled.—The total number of vacancies filled during the period was 79,661—a daily average of 3,319, as compared with 2,845 during the preceding statistical month. Of this daily average, men accounted for 2,054, women for 714, and juveniles for 551. The corresponding figures for the previous month were: Men, 1,599; women, 676; and juveniles, 570.

Juveniles.—During the period, 24,140 applications were received from boys and 24,737 from girls. The number of vacancies notified for boys was 7,700, and 6,871 vacancies were filled. In the case of girls, 7,407 vacancies were notified, and 6,363 were filled. Of the total vacancies filled by juveniles, 16.5 per cent. were filled by applicants who obtained their first situation since leaving school.

Statistics relating to **Building Trades** (men) and to **Domestic Service occupations** (women) for the four weeks ended 3rd December have been summarised under the principal occupations, and the outstanding features are dealt with below.

In the building trades 6,683 vacancies were notified for men, and 5,769 vacancies were filled. The principal occupations concerned were:—Carpenters, 1,930 vacancies notified and 1,656 filled; bricklayers, 875 vacancies notified and 620 filled; painters, 1,099 vacancies notified and 998 filled; and builders' labourers, 1,269 vacancies notified and 1,226 placings.

The number of men on the "live register" in the building trades was 88,732† at 3rd December, compared with 80,810† at 5th November.

The number of vacancies notified for women in domestic service during the four weeks ended 3rd December was 11,504. Of this number, 5,102 were for resident domestic servants, 2,508 for non-resident domestic servants, 2,764 for charwomen, and 617 for waitresses; other domestic occupations accounting for 513.

Of the 7,608 vacancies filled, 2,408 were placings in resident domestic service, 1,897 as non-resident, 2,457 as charwomen and 476 as waitresses.

The total number of women remaining registered on 3rd December for work in domestic service was 37,279, compared with 37,859 on 5th November.

The figures above, except those in the first three paragraphs, are exclusive of dock labourers and coal porters. The number of casual jobs found for men in these occupations during the period of four weeks ended 3rd December was 2,193.

* The figures relate to Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The figures for Great Britain alone, as already published in the Press, show that on 31st December, 1923, there were on the Live Registers 927,000 men, 253,000 women, and 70,000 juveniles, compared with 1,165,000 men, 235,000 women, and 85,800 juveniles at 1st January, 1923.

† The figures exclude workpeople on systematic short time, but include workpeople "suspended" or "stood off."

The following Table shows for each of the Employment Exchange administrative areas and for the principal towns therein the number of persons remaining on the "live registers" at the Employment Exchanges in Great Britain and Northern Ireland at 31st December, 1923. In certain cases, e.g., Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Liverpool, Glasgow, etc., the figures cover more than one Exchange Area:—

Area.	Number of Persons remaining on the Live Registers at 31st December, 1923.				Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with 26th Nov., 1923.
	Men.	Women.	Juveniles.	Total.	
London	141,689	35,750	11,884	189,323	- 880
South Eastern Division..	58,892	9,992	5,122	73,906	+ 5,364
Brighton	2,814	732	449	3,995	- 67
Chatham	3,213	422	504	4,139	- 193
Ipwich	2,847	560	249	3,656	+ 299
Norwich	4,754	693	307	5,754	+ 214
Rest of South Eastern	45,264	7,485	3,613	56,362	+ 5,111
South Western Division..	61,901	11,850	5,161	78,912	+ 1,207
Bristol	11,591	3,351	1,064	15,996	+ 640
Plymouth	4,695	891	562	6,148	- 542
Portsmouth	6,484	721	610	7,815	- 64
Reading	1,725	109	293	2,127	+ 234
Southampton	5,681	549	378	6,608	+ 1,435
Swindon	573	120	65	718	- 117
Rest of South Western	31,152	5,639	2,193	38,984	+ 2,481
Midlands Division	115,202	37,720	7,164	160,086	+ 6,782
Birmingham	28,199	9,227	1,075	38,501	+ 89
Coventry	3,074	476	52	3,602	- 909
Leicester	4,015	832	159	5,006	- 23
Cradley Heath	2,561	610	237	3,308	- 2
Derby	2,627	1,344	101	4,072	- 222
Leicester	1,842	465	68	2,375	- 163
Nottingham	5,997	2,126	241	8,364	+ 115
Smethwick	3,397	1,171	314	4,882	+ 123
Stoke-on-Trent	8,536	6,263	443	15,242	+ 4,729
Walsall	4,357	755	769	5,881	+ 199
West Bromwich	2,206	420	138	2,764	+ 116
Wolverhampton	5,631	1,903	270	7,804	+ 370
Rest of Midlands	42,960	12,178	3,297	58,435	+ 2,380
North Eastern Division..	187,323	36,904	11,153	235,380	- 7,807
Barnsley	1,026	291	76	1,393	- 35
Bradford	6,670	3,824	226	10,720	+ 1,963
Darlington	2,544	186	119	2,849	+ 121
Dewsbury	895	369	103	1,367	- 45
Doncaster	391	178	57	626	- 59
Gateshead	6,111	669	471	7,251	+ 253
Grimsby	2,158	267	242	2,667	- 2
Halifax	4,022	1,234	80	5,336	+ 347
Hartlepool	6,788	308	235	7,331	- 274
Huddersfield	3,578	2,320	252	6,150	+ 469
Hull	8,747	1,217	852	10,796	- 1,014
Leeds	14,538	3,459	721	18,718	- 225
Lincoln	3,449	405	284	4,138	+ 267
Middlesbrough	8,882	304	301	9,487	- 799
Newcastle-on-Tyne	16,222	1,247	941	18,410	+ 1,186
Rotherham	1,972	265	200	2,437	+ 265
Sheffield	22,606	2,470	1,336	26,412	+ 1,067
South Shields	6,144	422	314	6,880	- 338
Stoughton-on-Tees	6,429	163	194	6,791	- 1,167
Sunderland	12,815	828	551	14,194	+ 3,028
York	2,138	319	546	3,003	+ 447
Rest of North Eastern	50,918	10,154	2,712	63,844	- 908
North Western Division	199,715	37,997	18,666	256,378	+ 35,947
Accrington	2,420	284	494	3,198	+ 1,002
Ashton-under-Lyne	3,246	1,780	354	5,380	+ 163
Barrow	4,488	421	641	5,550	- 569
Birkenhead	5,858	552	352	6,762	- 336
Blackburn	4,182	469	927	5,578	+ 635
Blackpool	1,215	872	215	2,302	+ 374
Bolton	6,763	1,687	488	8,938	+ 831
Burnley	4,269	5,504	426	10,199	+ 1,381
Bury	2,413	217	295	2,925	+ 1,346
Chorley	1,479	844	145	2,468	+ 268
Liverpool	40,953	7,921	3,039	51,913	+ 1,278
Manchester	24,106	7,897	1,636	33,639	- 110
Newton	1,562	837	119	2,518	+ 588
Oldham	17,053	9,121	1,268	27,442	+ 10,000
Preston	5,160	6,680	300	12,220	+ 3,211
Rochdale	6,320	4,714	611	11,645	+ 2,946
St. Helens	1,887	325	219	2,431	+ 123
Salford	8,244	5,637	1,447	15,428	+ 1,227
Stockport	4,211	3,080	420	7,711	+ 1,478
Warrington	2,339	466	171	2,976	+ 68
Wigan	1,739	4,670	728	7,137	+ 1,470
Rest of North Western	47,670	26,424	4,539	78,633	+ 11,174
Scotland Division	132,401	26,574	8,858	167,833	- 7,285
Aberdeen	6,434	1,105	277	8,816	- 23
Clydebank	3,001	263	232	3,496	- 871
Dunfermline	5,894	1,858	209	7,961	- 1,009
Edinburgh	9,740	1,822	722	12,284	- 144
Glasgow	59,496	10,791	4,540	74,827	- 3,638
Greenock	7,654	794	266	8,714	- 2,269
Motherwell	1,518	167	117	1,802	- 251
St. Helens	4,945	913	208	5,766	- 431
Paisley	35,019	8,861	2,287	46,167	+ 1,451
Rest of Scotland	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .
Wales Division	29,992	2,363	1,916	34,271	- 1,653
Cardiff	5,624	685	427	6,736	+ 1,011
Llanelli	242	205	55	502	+ 20
Newport	2,152	190	140	2,482	- 197
Swansea	2,160	152	164	2,476	- 258
Rest of Wales	19,614	1,421	1,130	22,365	- 2,508
Northern Ireland	27,082	10,757	874	38,713	+ 207
Belfast	17,203	7,175	572	24,950	+ 237
Londonderry	1,659	674	50	2,423	- 164
Lurgan	384	99	11	494	+ 19
Lisburn	666	145	18	829	- 278
Newry	913	307	29	1,249	+ 76
Rest of Northern Ireland	6,212	2,356	194	8,762	+ 217
Total Gt. Britain and Northern Ireland ..	954,197	263,827	70,798	1,288,822	+ 32,092

CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

[Based on Returns from Employers and Workpeople.]

Rates of Wages.

In the industries covered by the Department's statistics* the changes in rates of wages reported to have come into operation in December in Great Britain and Northern Ireland resulted in an aggregate reduction of £5,000 in the weekly full-time wages of 73,000 workpeople, and in an increase of £4,600 in the weekly wages of 55,000 workpeople. The total number of workpeople affected by all the changes reported is the smallest recorded by the Department in any month since December, 1920.

The groups of industries principally affected are as shown below:—

Group of Industries.	Approximate Number of Workpeople affected by		Amount of Changes in Weekly Wages.	
	Increases.	Decreases.	Increases.	Decreases.
Building and Construction of Works	16,000	1,600	£ 1,700	£ 250
Metal	14,000	45,000	750	2,000
Clothing	25,000	—	2,500	—
Other	25,000	1,400	2,150	250
Total	55,000	73,000	4,600	5,000

In the building and construction of works group, the principal change was an increase of 1d. per hour in the wages of men employed on civil engineering constructional work.

In the metal group there was a decrease of 2½ per cent. on the standard rates (equivalent to over 1½ per cent. on current rates) of iron puddlers and iron and steel millmen in the Midlands. Steel sheet millmen had their wages increased by 2 per cent. on standard rates (equivalent to about 1½ per cent. on current rates). Farriers in London and in various towns in Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire received an increase of ½d. per hour.

The principal change in the clothing group affected women employed in the hat, cap and millinery trade in England and

Wales, for whom the minimum rates fixed under the Trade Boards Acts were reduced by ½d. per hour.

In trades other than the above, there were increases in the wages of workpeople employed in the making-up and packing industry at Manchester, amounting to 1s. 2d. and 6d. per week in the case of men and women respectively. A large number of workpeople employed in the non-trading services of various local authorities in the Midlands also received increases, varying from 10d. to 1s. 3½d. per week.

Of the decreases taking effect in December, one, amounting to about £2,500 per week, took effect under Trade Board orders; six, amounting to over £1,900 per week, took effect under sliding scales based on selling prices; four, amounting to nearly £100 per week, were arranged by arbitration; and the remaining seven cases, amounting to £500 per week, were arranged by direct negotiation between the parties, or by individual action on the part of employers. Reductions preceded by disputes causing stoppages of work accounted for about £240 per week. Of the increases in wages, 17, amounting to £3,000 per week, took effect under cost of living sliding scales; three, amounting to £2,100 per week, were arranged by joint standing bodies of employers and workpeople (including £1,900 under cost of living scales, incorporated above); three, amounting to £1,200 per week, took effect under sliding scales based on selling prices or the proceeds of the industry; and the remaining five cases, amounting to £200 per week, were arranged by direct negotiation.

Hours of Labour.

The adoption of a normal working week of 44 hours in the building trade, under the terms of an arbitrator's award issued last August, involved an increase of 2½ hours per week in December in those towns in which a week of 41½ hours was worked during the months of December, 1922, and January, 1923.

Changes in Wages and Hours in 1923.

A special article dealing with these changes appears on pages 3 to 5.

PRINCIPAL CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES REPORTED DURING DECEMBER, 1923.

Industry.	Locality.	Date from which change took effect.	Classes of Workpeople.	Particulars of change. (Decreases in italics.)
BUILDING AND ALLIED TRADES.	London	12 Nov.	French polishers employed in the building and shop-fitting industry and motormen employed by master builders	Rate of 1s. 7½d. per hour adopted.
		1st week in Dec.	Decrease of 4s. per week for horse carmen, assistant horsekeepers and stablemen, drivers of motor vehicles of 2 tons to 5 tons, and steam wagon drivers, and of 2s. per week for drivers of motor vehicles of 15 cwt. to 2 tons, and for steam wagon mates remaining unchanged. Rates after change: carmen—one-horse 54s.; two-horse, 58s.; assistant horsekeepers and stablemen, 54s.; motor drivers—up to 15 cwt., 52s.; 15 cwt. to 2 ton, 62s.; 2 ton to 5 ton, 68s.; steam wagon drivers, 68s.; mates 18 years and over, 57s.	
	Manchester,			

PRINCIPAL CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES REPORTED DURING DECEMBER, 1923—(continued).

Industry.	Locality.	Date from which change took effect.	Classes of Workpeople.	Particulars of change. (Decreases in italics.)
OTHER METAL TRADES.				
Tinplate Manufacture	South Wales and Monmouthshire	1 Oct.	Cold roll operatives and women, boys and girls employed in the finishing department (excluding pickling staff)	Increase in base rates of 3d. per day for those on datal rates, and of 10 per cent., with a minimum advance of 3d. per day, for those on other than datal rates.*
Light Castings Manufacture	Falkirk and Luton	3 Dec.	Patternmakers (members of the United Patternmakers' Association)	Increase of 10 per cent. in base rates, with a minimum advance of 3d. per day.*
Galvanising	England and Wales†	3 Dec.	Workpeople employed in galvanising departments (excluding process of annealing)	Increase of 2 per cent. on standard rates, making wages 66 per cent. above the standard.
Farriery	London	1st full pay in Dec.	Farriers	Increase of 2d. per hour for timeworkers, and of 2s. per week for pieceworkers. Time rates after change: firemen, 7s. 10d.; doormen, 7s. 10d.
	Various towns in Yorkshire‡	3 Dec.	Farriers	Increase of 2s. per week. Rates after change: firemen, 7s. 6d.; doormen, 7s. 6d.
	Liverpool and Birkenhead, Manchester, Hanley and Stoke-on-Trent	1 Dec.	Farriers	Increase of 2d. per hour. Rates after change: firemen, 1s. 6d. per hour or 7s. 5d. per week; doormen, 1s. 6d. per hour or 7s. 6d. per week.
Farriery	Other large towns in Lancashire and Cheshire¶	3 Dec.	Farriers	Increase of 2d. per hour. Rates after change: firemen, 1s. 6d. per hour or 7s. 6d. per week; doormen, 1s. 5d. per hour or 6s. 6d. per week.
	Smaller towns in Lancashire and Cheshire,** with Kendal and High Peak District			Increase of 2d. per hour. Rates after change: firemen, 6s. 8d. per week; doormen, 6s. 8d. per week.
TEXTILE TRADES.				
Making up and Packing	Manchester ...	Pay preceding 1st pay day in Jan.	Workpeople employed in the making-up and packing industry	Increase of 1s. 2d. per week for men 21 and over, and of 6d. per week for women 18 and over. Rates after change: Men—hydraulic packers and makers-up (prints), 6s. 8d.; makers-up (greys), 6s. 1d.; cloth lookers, 5s. 11d.; markers-off, stampers and pressers-off, 5s. 2d.; hoistmen, plaiters, cutters and lappers, 5s. 4d.; general warehousemen, 5s. 7d.; porters, 4s. 8d. Women—markers-off, 3s. 11d.; cutters, 3s. 2d.; stitchers, plaiters, tiers-up, etc., 3s. 9d.; general hookers, 3s. 4d.; d'hoote hooks, 2s. 7d.
CLOTHING TRADES.				
Hat, Cap, and Millinery	England and Wales	31 Dec.	Female workers employed in the hat, cap and millinery trade	Decrease in the minimum time rate fixed under the Trade Boards Acts of 3d. per hour for workers other than learners, and of 3d. per hour in the piecework basis time rate for all workers. Minimum time rate after change for workers other than learners, 7d. (See also p. 35.)
TRANSPORT TRADES.				
Canal Service	Liverpool to London and Manchester to Birmingham††	19 Dec.	Canal boatmen	Decrease of 2½ per cent. on rates paid at 1st January, 1923. (See Decision No. 853 on p. 465 of the December GAZETTE.)
Dock Labour	Belfast	26 Nov.	Dock labourers, etc., on foreign going boats	Decrease of 1s. per day. Rate after change for dock labourers, 15s. 6d. per day.
AGRICULTURE AND FISHING.				
Agriculture	Denbighshire and Flintshire	30 Oct.	Male agricultural labourers ...	Rates previously agreed upon with effect from 1st Mar. 1923, extended up to 30th April, 1924—viz., adult stockmen and horsemen for a week of 61 hours, 33s.; other adult workers for a week of 50 hours, 27s. 1d.; proportionate rates for those 15 and under 21 years.
PAPER, PRINTING AND ALLIED TRADES.				
Newspaper Distribution	London	Pay day in week ending 17 Nov.	Men employed by contractors to drive motor vans for members of the Federation of Wholesale Newsagents or the Associated Wholesale Newsagents, Ltd.‡‡	Extra payment given by the newsagents in addition to the usual rate of wages standardised at a minimum of 8s. per week, such payment to be reduced to 4s. where the number of hours worked for the newsagent does not exceed half the standard number of hours and to be increased in proportion to the number of hours worked in excess of the standard.‡‡‡ Minimum weekly rates adopted of 83s. 6d. for motor drivers,‡‡‡ 79s. for carmen, and 70s. for auto-cycle drivers.
Printing	London	Pay day in week ending 8 Dec.	Motor drivers, carmen, and auto-cycle drivers employed by master printers	
	Manchester ...	1st pay day in Dec.	Engineers, fitters and turners, electrical fitters and assistants, employed in certain morning and evening newspaper offices	Decrease of 5s. per week. Minimum rates after change: daywork—electricians (mechanics) and engineers, 100s.; electricians' assistants, 85s.; nightwork—electricians (mechanics) and engineers, 130s.; electricians' assistants, 95s.
FURNITURE AND WOODWORKING TRADES.				
Picture Frame Making	Glasgow	Week beginning 1 Dec.	Picture frame makers	Decrease of 3d. per hour (1s. 6½d. to 1s. 6d.).
Packing Case Making	Nottingham ...	3 Dec.	Packing case makers	Decrease of 1d. per hour (1s. 4d. to 1s. 3d.).

* The increases shown are subject to the current sliding scale percentage addition on base rates of 13½.
 † Certain firms—members of the Galvanising Conciliation Board.
 ‡ This change took effect under an arrangement whereby wages fluctuate in correspondence with the Ministry of Labour index number of retail prices.
 § This change took effect under an arrangement whereby wages fluctuate in correspondence with the Ministry of Labour index number of retail prices.
 ¶ Including Barnsley, Bradford, Dewsbury, Halifax, Huddersfield, Hull, Kighley, Leeds, Rotherham, Sheffield and Todmorden.
 ** Including Accrington, Altrincham, Ashton, Blackburn, Blackpool, Bolton, Burnley, Bury, Chorley, Colne, Lancaster, Leigh, Middleton, Nelson and District.
 †† Including Rossendale, Southport, Stockport, St. Helens, Warrington, Widnes and Wigan.
 ‡‡ Including Alsgar, Bentham, Cheadle, Chester, Clitheroe, Congleton, Crewe, Furness District, Garstang, Kirkham, Knutsford, Macclesfield, Middlewich, Nantwich, Northwich, and Tarporley.
 ‡‡‡ The particulars given relate to a large firm whose boats ply between the points named.
 ††† These rates were agreed upon by the Local Conciliation Committee set up under the Corn Production Acts (Repeal) Act, 1921. They are subject to the following deductions:—Full board and lodging—seven days, 14s.; six days, 12s. 6d.; board only—seven days, 12s.; six days, 10s. 3d.
 §§ The extra payment referred to applies to men who are members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, and is embodied in an agreement between the Union and the two Employers' Associations named above.
 ¶¶ The above rates were agreed upon between the London Master Printers' Association and the National Union of Printing, Bookbinding, Machine Ruling and Paper Workers. It was further agreed that, where a driver is a member of the Paper Workers' Union, the firm is to have the option of sending another member of the Society with the van, whose rate shall be the porters' rate of 71s. per week.

PRINCIPAL CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES REPORTED DURING DECEMBER, 1923—(continued).

Industry.	Locality.	Date from which change took effect.	Classes of Workpeople.	Particulars of change. (Decreases in italics.)
FURNITURE AND WOODWORKING TRADES—(continued).				
Furniture Manufacture	High Wycombe	Pay day in week ending 29 Dec.	Journeyman	Increase* of 3d. per hour. Rates after change: those engaged on skilled processes, 1s. 6½d.; Windsor, cane and cheap rush-bottom chairmakers, packers, markers-out and benders, 1s. 6d.
	Nottingham ...	1 Dec.	Caners	Increase* of 3d. per chair on bedroom chairs bored 21 and 23 (8½d. to 9d.) and of 3d. per hour on Manchester rockers, etc. (8½d. to 9d.).
Baking and Confectionery	Certain towns in Yorkshire†	Pay day in week ending 29 Dec.	Matters	Increase* of 3d. per chair on ordinary chairs (9d. to 9½d.), and of proportionate amounts on children's and kindergarten chairs.
	London	Pay day in week ending 5 Jan., 1924	Apprentices and learners ...	Increase* of from 3d. to 10d. per week. Rates after change: first six months, 10s. 9d., increasing to 16s. 11d. during fourth six months and to 32s. 10d. during eighth six months.
Basket Making	Lancashire and Cheshire‡	24 Dec.	Upholstresses and female french polishers	Increase* of 3d. per hour. Rates after change: french polishers, 10d.; upholstresses, 8d.
	South Shields ...	6 Dec.	Adult male workers employed by private traders	Increase* of 1s. 6d. per week. Minimum rates after change: forehands, 70s.; doughmixers and ovenmen, 65s.; tablehands, 60s.
FOOD, DRINK, AND TOBACCO TRADES.				
MISCELLANEOUS TRADES.				
Basket Making	London	Pay day in week ending 5 Jan., 1924	Basket makers	Bonus of 40 per cent. on 1916 list increased* to 45 per cent. Rate after change for timeworkers, 1s. per hour plus 45 per cent.
	Lancashire and Cheshire‡	24 Dec.	Skip and basket makers	Increase* of 5 per cent. on Lancashire price list, making wages 100 per cent. and 90 per cent. above the list for timeworkers and pieceworkers respectively. Rate after change for timeworkers, 8d. per hour plus 100 per cent.
PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES.				
Non-Trading Services of Local Authorities	Various towns in West Midlands§	Pay period immediately preceding the 1st pay day in Jan.	Manual workers	Increase* of 1s. per week. Rates after change: general labourers, 34s.; scavengers and refuse collectors, 33s. plus 15s. per week bonus in each case.
	Cambridge	2 Nov.	Able-bodied manual workers ...	Increase* of 1s. 3½d. per week for Zone A1, 1s. 3d. for A2, 1s. 2d. for B1, 1s. 1d. for B2, 1s. for B3, 11d. for C1, and 10d. for C2. Minimum weekly rates after change for general labourers and scavengers: Zone A1 areas, 50s. 10d.; Zone A2, 49s. 5d.; Zone B1, 46s. 8d.; Zone B2, 43s. 11d.; Zone B3, 41s. 3d.; Zone C1, 37s. 7d.; Zone C2, 35s. 11d.
Non-Trading Services of Local Authorities	Luton	1 Nov.	Manual workers	Increase of 1d. per hour for labourers, and of 1d. per hour for tradesmen. Rates after change: labourers, scavengers and refuse collectors, 31d.; tradesmen (paviors and masons), 1s. 3½d. per hour.
	Peterborough ...	1 Oct.	General labourers and horse drivers	Increase of 1d. per hour for skilled men, and of 3d. per hour for unskilled men. Rates after change: general labourers, 1s. 0½d.; scavengers, 9d. to 1s.; refuse collectors, 1s.
Non-Trading Services of Local Authorities	Ayr	15 Dec.	Manual workers employed in non-trading and waterworks departments	Decrease of 1s. 9d. per week (45s. to 43s. 3d.).
	Fife County Council (Dumfriesshire District) Glasgow	22 Oct.	Tractor and roller drivers, roadmen, scavengers, carters and refuse collectors	Increase* of 1s. per week. Rates after change: scavengers and roadmen, 50s. and 51s.; refuse collectors, 51s.; waterworks' labourers, 45s. 48s. and 49s. 6d.
Non-Trading Services of Local Authorities	Perth	1st full pay day in Dec. Nov.	Paviors and settmakers	Increase* of 2s. per week. Rates after change: tractor and roller drivers, 65s.; roadmen, 58s.; scavengers, 53s.; carters and refuse collectors, 60s. 6d.
	Perth	1st full pay day in Dec. Nov.	Manual workers	Increase* of 4d. per hour for paviors (1s. 8d. to 1s. 8½d.), and of 1d. per 110 stones for settmakers (4s. 9d. to 4s. 10d. per 110 stones).
Non-Trading Services of Local Authorities	Perth	1st full pay day in Dec. Nov.	Manual workers	Increase* of 1s. per week. Rates after change: road labourers, 55s.; scavengers and sweepers, 56s. 6d. per week.

CHANGES IN HOURS OF LABOUR REPORTED IN DECEMBER, 1923.

Industry.	Locality.	Date from which change took effect.	Classes of Workpeople.	Particulars of change. (Decreases in italics.)
Building	Great Britain||	1 Dec.	Building trade operatives ...	Normal weekly hours of labour in December and January increased to 44 (as compared with 41½ in most districts in December, 1922, and January 1923).||
Baking and Confectionery	Ballymena	17 Dec.	Bakers and confectioners ...	Decrease of 2 hours per week (51 to 49).

* The change took effect under an arrangement whereby wages fluctuate in correspondence with the Ministry of Labour index number of retail prices.
 † Including Bradford, Barnsley, Bridlington, Dewsbury, Doncaster, Hull, Halifax, Huddersfield, Leeds, Sheffield and Wakefield.
 ‡ Including Ashton-under-Lyne, Blackburn, Bolton, Heywood, Knutsford, Leigh, Liverpool, Manchester, Northwich, Oldham, Preston, Rochdale, Stockport and Warrington.
 § The Authorities affected are those which follow the wages agreements of the West Midlands Joint Industrial Council for Local Authorities and include the following: Zone A1, Birmingham; Zone A2, Burton-on-Trent, Stoke-on-Trent, Walsall, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton; Zone B1, Leamington, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Nuneaton, Rugby, Stafford, Willenhall; Zone B2, Audley (1s. increase), Brierley Hill, Leek (pays rates 5s. above minimum), Lichfield, Lye and Wolleasote, Shrewsbury, Sedgley, Stone (1s. increase), Warwick; Zone B3, Ambicote, Tettenhall; Zone C2, Shifnal R.D.C.
 ¶ This arrangement follows an Arbitrator's Award of 20th August, 1923 (see September GAZETTE, p. 324). While complete information is not available for all districts, it is understood that a week of 44 hours in December and January is now generally observed in the principal centres, subject to the provisions in the Award relating to cases where artificial light cannot be provided. In December, 1922, and January, 1923, the recognised hours were 41½ per week except in the case of plumbers in various districts (principally in the North of England, Yorkshire, Lancashire and the Midlands), and in the case of all classes of labour in certain localities (including Liverpool, North Staffordshire and various districts in Scotland), where 44 hours per week were worked.

CHANGES IN WAGES TAKING EFFECT IN JANUARY, 1924.

The following groups of workpeople are affected by changes already reported as having been arranged to take effect in January:—
Increases—Coal miners in Yorkshire and the East Midland area, Scotland and the Forest of Dean; railway servants; workpeople employed in the seed-crushing and oil milling industry; brush and broom makers (under Trade Board Order) and omnibus workers in London. **Decreases**—Coal miners in Northumberland and Durham; blastfurnacemen in Cleveland and West Cumberland; iron and steel workers in South Wales and Monmouthshire; and cloggers in Lancashire.

TRADE DISPUTES.*

Number, Magnitude and Duration.—The number of trade disputes involving a stoppage of work, reported to the Department as beginning in December in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was 12, as compared with 38 in the previous month, and 21 in December, 1922. In these new disputes about 4,700 workpeople were directly involved, and 3,600 indirectly involved (i.e., thrown out of work at the establishments where the disputes occurred, though not themselves parties to the disputes). In addition, about 2,000 workpeople were involved, either directly or indirectly, in 12 disputes which began before December and were still in progress at the beginning of that month. The number of new and old disputes was thus 24, involving about 10,300 workpeople, and resulting in a loss during December of about 83,000 working days. The number of disputes in progress was smaller than in any month since January, 1917. The number of workpeople involved in disputes and the number of working days lost were also lower than in any month during the same period except November and December, 1922, when slightly lower figures were recorded.

Causes.—Of the 12 disputes beginning in December, 9, directly involving 4,500 workpeople, arose out of questions respecting wages, and 3, directly involving 200 workpeople, from other causes.

Results.—Settlements were effected during December in the case of 9 new disputes, directly involving 1,900 workpeople, and 5 old disputes, directly involving 1,100 workpeople. Of these new and old disputes, 6 were settled in favour of the workpeople, 4 in favour of the employers, and 4 were compromised. In the case of one dispute, directly involving 100 workpeople, work was resumed pending negotiations.

The following Table analyses the disputes in progress in December, in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, by groups of industries, and indicates the number of workpeople involved (whether directly or indirectly) at the establishments concerned, and the approximate time lost during the month in all disputes in progress:—

Groups of Industries.	Number of Disputes in progress in December.			Number of Workpeople involved in all Disputes in progress in Dec.	Aggregate Duration in Working Days of all Disputes in progress in Dec.
	Started before 1st Dec.	Started in Dec.	Total.		
Mining & Quarrying	2	2	4	5,400	62,000
Metal, Engineering and Shipbuilding	2	3	5	4,000	13,000
Other Trades..	8	7	15	900	8,000
Total, Dec., 1923 ..	12	12	24	10,300	83,000
<i>Total, Nov., 1923</i> ..	<i>15</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>54,000†</i>	<i>1,016,000†</i>
<i>Total, Dec., 1922</i> ..	<i>23</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>7,100</i>	<i>72,000</i>

Trade Disputes in 1922 and 1923.—A special article dealing with disputes in 1923, and giving comparative statistics for previous years, appears on pages 5 and 6.

PRINCIPAL TRADE DISPUTES IN PROGRESS DURING DECEMBER, 1923.

Occupations and Locality. †	Approximate Number of Workpeople Involved.		Date when Dispute		Cause or Object. ‡	Result. ‡
	Directly.	Indirectly. ‡	Began.	Ended.		
MINING AND QUARRYING:—						
Coal miners, etc.	908	..	12 Nov.	1 Dec.	Against proposed reduction in piece-work rates for coal getting.	Proposed reduction accepted.
			4 Dec.	..	Dispute respecting wages, alleged victimisation and other grievances.	No settlement reported.
			13 Dec.	15 Dec.	Dispute respecting wages to be paid in alleged abnormal working places.	Amicable settlement effected.
METAL, ENGINEERING, AND SHIPBUILDING:—						
Enginemen, firemen and tinplate workers—Llanelli.	20‡	750	3 Dec.	3 Dec.	For reinstatement of a dismissed workman.	Work resumed on advice of Trade Union officials.
Fitters, smiths and tinplate workers—Neath and Briton Ferry.	37	3,000	3 Dec.	4 Dec.	For advance in wages.	Work resumed on advice of Trade Union officials.

* Disputes involving less than 10 workpeople, and those which lasted less than one day, have, as usual, been omitted from the statistics, except when the aggregate duration (i.e., number of workpeople multiplied by number of working days, allowing for workpeople replaced by others, etc.) exceeded 100 days.
 † A dispute was in progress in November, 1923, involving about 40,000 shipyard workers.
 ‡ The occupations printed in italics are those of workpeople "indirectly involved," i.e., thrown out of work at the establishments where the disputes occurred but not themselves parties to the disputes. The statements of cause and result do not apply to these persons.
 ‡ Estimated number.

PRICES AND WAGES IN THE IRON TRADE.

In certain sections of the iron and steel industry rates of wages are adjusted, from time to time, under "sliding scale" agreements in accordance with the changes in the selling prices of specified iron and steel products, as indicated by results of periodical "ascertainties." The results of recent ascertainties of the selling prices of iron are given below:—

Product and District.	Price according to last Audit.*		Inc. (+) or Dec. (–) of last Audit* on		
	Period covered by last Audit.	Average Selling Price Per Ton.	Previous Audit.	A Year ago.	
Pig Iron:		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
Cumberland ..	Sept.-Oct.	101 9½	– 7 5	+ 14 5½	
(Hematite mixed numbers.)	Oct.	103 10½	– 3 0½	+ 9 10½	
Northamptonshire ..	July-Sept.	89 7½	+ 1 2½	+ 18 1	
Nottinghamshire ..	July-Sept.	93 8½	– 0 11½	+ 13 3½	
North Lincolnshire ..	July-Sept.	91 8½	+ 5 11½	+ 13 10½	
West of Scotland ..	July-Sept.	105 4	– 4 10	+ 11 1	
(All classes of Pig Iron.)					
Manufactured Iron:					
North of England ..	Sept.-Oct.	222 1	– 6 10	+ 13 5	
(Bars and angles.)					
West of Scotland ..	Sept.-Oct.	242 1½	– 0 9½	+ 21 2½	
(Rounds, squares, flats, tees, angles, hoops and rods.)					

Pig Iron.—The decrease in the ascertained price of Cumberland pig iron for the months September-October resulted in a
 * Stated to the nearest farthing.
 † No ascertainment was made for this period.

reduction of 9½ per cent. on standard rates in the wages of blast-furnacemen in West Cumberland and North Lancashire, and of 6d. per shift in the bargain price and of 4½d. per shift in the minimum wage of iron ore miners in the Furness district. The September ascertainment for Cumberland resulted in a decrease of 3d. per shift in the bargain price and minimum wage for iron ore miners in that county, and 2½d. per shift for limestone quarrymen; further decreases of 4d. per shift in the bargain price and minimum wage of iron ore miners and of 3d. per shift in the wages of limestone quarrymen took effect as the result of the October ascertainment. The Northamptonshire ascertainment resulted in an increase of 1½ per cent. on standard rates for blastfurnacemen, ironstone miners and limestone quarrymen in that county. The wages of blastfurnacemen in Nottinghamshire and parts of Derbyshire, and ironstone miners in Leicestershire and adjoining districts of Lincolnshire were reduced by 1½ per cent. on standard rates as the result of the fall in the ascertained price of Nottinghamshire pig iron. In North Lincolnshire the wages of blastfurnacemen and ironstone miners and quarrymen were increased by 7½ per cent. as the result of the increased ascertained price of pig iron for that district. The West of Scotland ascertainment resulted in a decrease of 4 per cent. on standard rates in the wages of blast-furnace workers in that district.

Manufactured Iron.—In the North of England the wages of puddlers and millmen were reduced by 5 per cent. on standard rates, with effect from 26th November, in consequence of the fall in the ascertained price of manufactured iron in that district. In the West of Scotland a reduction of 2½ per cent. on standard rates took effect from 26th November as the result of the decreased ascertained price.

BUILDING PLANS APPROVED.

RETURNS have been received from 143 Local Authorities in Great Britain giving the estimated cost of buildings for which plans were passed in December, 1923. The summarised figures for December are given in the following Table, together with similar figures relating to plans passed in these localities during the whole of 1923.

In the 143 localities to which the figures relate, plans were passed in December for buildings of an estimated cost of £4,486,000, compared with an average of about £3,900,000 in the preceding eleven months:—

District and Aggregate Population (at Census of 1921) of Towns from which returns have been received.	Estimated Cost of Buildings for which plans were approved in the 143 localities from which returns have been received.					
	Dwelling Houses.	Factories and Workshops.	Shops, Offices, Warehouses, and other Business Premises.	Churches, Schools and Public Buildings.	Other Buildings, and Additions and Alterations.	TOTAL.
(a) DECEMBER, 1923.						
ENGLAND AND WALES—	£	£	£	£	£	£
Northern Counties (917,000)	54,000	5,900	3,000	2,300	19,600	84,800
Yorkshire .. (2,376,000)	500,700	13,000	19,900	17,800	83,200	634,600
Lancashire and Cheshire (2,959,000)	412,200	52,700	13,600	30,000	46,400	554,900
North and West-Midland Counties .. (2,835,000)	581,600	140,900	25,500	57,100	22,600	827,700
South-Midland and Eastern Counties (641,000)	306,700	16,100	54,300	34,500	21,900	433,500
Outer London* (2,058,000)	609,900	23,300	38,200	800	70,300	742,500
South-Eastern Counties (1,012,000)	190,300	900	16,900	1,000	64,400	273,500
South-Western Counties (432,000)	34,000	—	1,600	400	12,700	48,700
Wales and Monmouthshire .. (834,000)	121,800	9,200	9,500	—	4,100	144,600
SCOTLAND .. (2,146,000)	387,300	47,600	126,200	76,100	103,600	740,800
Total .. (16,210,000)	3,198,500	309,600	308,700	220,000	448,800	4,486,600

ENGLAND AND WALES—	Estimated Cost of Buildings for which plans were approved in the 143 localities from which returns have been received.					
	Dwelling Houses.	Factories and Workshops.	Shops, Offices, Warehouses, and other Business Premises.	Churches, Schools and Public Buildings.	Other Buildings, and Additions and Alterations.	TOTAL.
(b) YEAR 1923.						
ENGLAND AND WALES—	£	£	£	£	£	£
Northern Counties (917,000)	1,232,400	346,100	136,200	230,000	281,800	2,226,500
Yorkshire .. (2,376,000)	4,317,000	378,600	511,800	484,200	1,245,800	6,937,400
Lancashire and Cheshire (2,959,000)	4,657,500	807,800	885,000	299,900	882,400	7,532,600
North and West-Midland Counties .. (2,835,000)	4,366,300	916,100	417,400	490,900	1,489,300	7,680,000
South-Midland and Eastern Counties (641,000)	2,133,300	147,500	233,200	115,600	276,100	2,905,700
Outer London* (2,058,000)	5,754,900	463,800	637,900	329,600	822,100	8,068,300
South-Eastern Counties (1,012,000)	2,689,600	96,800	251,100	119,600	884,700	4,041,800
South-Western Counties (432,000)	754,600	26,800	60,400	43,800	155,100	1,045,700
Wales and Monmouthshire .. (834,000)	1,306,000	181,900	152,300	169,300	74,600	1,884,600
SCOTLAND .. (2,146,000)	1,911,700	331,100	491,400	679,900	1,621,900	5,086,000
Total .. (16,210,000)	29,123,300	3,746,500	3,777,200	2,967,800	7,793,800	47,408,600

ASSISTED PASSAGES UNDER THE EMPIRE SETTLEMENT ACT, 1922.

The number of assisted passages granted during December, 1923, in connection with agreed schemes under the Empire Settlement Act, and the total number of such passages granted from the inception of these schemes, together with the number of departures during the same periods, are shown in the following Table:—

Assisted Passage Schemes:	Assisted Passages Granted in Dec., 1923.	Total Assisted Passages Granted.		Departures in Dec., 1923.	Total Departures.	
		1922.	1923.		1922.	1923.
To Australia ..	1,535	7,058	26,043†	2,068	6,118	24,949
" New Zealand ..	534	1,133	6,542†	819	694	6,145
" Canada:						
Dominion of Canada	75	—	3,577†	92	—	3,672
Province of Ontario	29	—	1,346†	23	—	1,312†
Minor Schemes ..	1	—	1,626†	8	—	1,681
TOTAL ..	2,174	8,191	39,134†	3,010	6,812	37,659†

The figures given in the above Table include both applicants and dependants of applicants to whom assisted passages have been granted.

* Particulars are not available for the London County Council area.
 † Revised figures.

DISEASES OF OCCUPATIONS.*

THE total number of cases† of poisoning and of anthrax in Great Britain and Northern Ireland reported under the Factory and Workshop Act during December, 1923, was 36. Two deaths,‡ due to lead poisoning in the pottery industry were reported during the month. In addition, four cases of lead poisoning (including one death) among house painters and plumbers came to the knowledge of the Home Office during December, but notification of these cases is not obligatory.

(a) CASES OF LEAD POISONING.	(b) CASES OF OTHER FORMS OF POISONING.
Among Operatives engaged in—	Mercury Poisoning .. 1
Smelting of Metals .. 3	Phosphorus Poisoning
Plumbing and Soldering .. 4	Arsenic Poisoning
Printing	Toxic Jaundice—
File Cutting and Hardening	Arseniuretted Hydrogen Gas
Tinning of Metals .. 1	Benzine, etc., derivatives ..
Other Contact with Molten Lead	Epitheliomatous Ulceration—
White and Red Lead Works	Paraffin
‡ Pottery 6	Pitch
Vitreous Enamelling ..	Tar
Electric Accumulator Works	Oil
Paint and Colour Works ..	Chromic Ulceration—
Indiarubber Works .. 1	Manufacture of Bichromates .. 1
Coach and Car Painting ..	Dyeing and Finishing .. 4
Shipbuilding	Chrome Tanning
Paint used in other Industries	Other Industries .. 1
Other Industries	TOTAL OTHER FORMS OF POISONING 15
TOTAL OF ABOVE 17	(c) CASES OF ANTHRAX—
HOUSE PAINTING AND PLUMBING 4	Wool 2
	Handling of Horsehair ..
	Handling and Sorting of Hides and Skins (Tanners, Fellmongers, &c.) 2
	Other Industries
	TOTAL, ANTHRAX 4

FATAL INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS.‡

THE number of workpeople, other than seamen, reported as killed in the course of their employment in Great Britain and Northern Ireland during December, 1923, was 225, as compared with 209 in the previous month, and with 208 a year ago. The distribution of such fatal accidents among the various trades is as follows:—

RAILWAY SERVICE.	FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS (continued):
Brakemen and Goods Guards	Boiler Making & Constructional Engineering ..
Engine Drivers 2	Locomotives, Railway & Tramway Carriages, Motors, Aircraft .. 1
Firemen 2	Other Metal Trades .. 3
Guards (Passenger)	Shipbuilding 11
Permanent Way Men .. 10	Wood 4
Porters 2	Gas 2
Shunters 3	Electric Generating Stations .. 1
Mechanics 1	Clay, Stone, Glass, etc. .. 3
Labourers	Chemicals, etc. 4
Miscellaneous 2	Food and Drink 3
Contractors' Servants ..	Paper, Printing, etc. .. 2
	Tanning, Currying, etc. ..
TOTAL, RAILWAY SERVICE 22	Rubber Trades 1
	Other Non-Textile Industries 3
MINES.	PLACES UNDER SS. 104-106, FACTORY ACT, 1901.
Underground 93	Docks, Wharves, etc. .. 6
Surface 13	Buildings 7
TOTAL, MINES 106	Warehouses and Railway Sidings 1
QUARRIES over 20 feet deep 8	TOTAL, FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS, AND PLACES 88
	Construction or Repair of Railways|| .. .. 1
	Total (excluding Seamen) 225

* Based on Returns from the Home Office and from the Ministry of Labour for Northern Ireland.
 † Cases include all attacks reported to the Home Office during the month and not previously reported, so far as is known, during the preceding 12 months. Deaths include all fatal cases reported during the month, whether included (as cases) in previous returns or not.
 ‡ Of the six persons affected in the Pottery Industry three were females.
 § Based on Returns from the Home Office, the Mines Department, the Ministry of Transport, and the Ministry of Labour for Northern Ireland.
 || Accidents occurring in the use or working of railways are included under "Railway Service."

POOR LAW RELIEF IN GREAT BRITAIN.

(Data supplied by the Ministry of Health in England and Wales, and by the Board of Health in Scotland.)

The number of persons relieved on one day* in December, 1923, in the 31 selected areas named below was 843,284, or 2.4 per cent. less than in the previous month and 11.5 per cent. less than in December, 1922.

In the 25 selected areas in England and Wales the number of persons relieved in December, 1923, was 696,891, or 4.46 per cent. of the estimated population.

Recipients of indoor relief in the 31 districts in December numbered 126,236, or 1.0 per cent. more than in the previous month and 0.8 per cent. more than in December of last year.

Twenty districts showed decreases and eleven districts showed increases in the number per 10,000 relieved in December, 1923, as compared with November; the most marked decreases were in the Paisley and Greenock district (211 per 10,000), the Stockton and Tees district (151 per 10,000), and the Newcastle district (83 per 10,000).

Table with 5 columns: Selected Urban Areas, Indoor, Outdoor, Total, Rate per 10,000, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in rate per 10,000 of Population as compared with a. Includes rows for ENGLAND & WALES, METROPOLIS, and OTHER DISTRICTS.

Table for ENGLAND & WALES, METROPOLIS, showing data for West, North, Central, East, and South Districts.

Table for WEST HAM, showing Indoor, Outdoor, Total, and Rate per 10,000.

Table for OTHER DISTRICTS, listing various districts like Newcastle, Stockton and Tees, Bolton, etc., with their respective relief statistics.

Table for TOTAL DISTRICTS IN ENGLAND AND WALES, showing aggregate figures.

Table for SCOTLAND, listing Glasgow, Paisley and Greenock, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, and Coatbridge and Airdrie.

Table for TOTAL FOR THE ABOVE SCOTTISH DISTRICTS.

Table for TOTAL FOR ABOVE 31 DISTRICTS.

* The figures for England and Wales relate to 29th December, and those for Scotland to 15th December. † These urban areas include in the case of England and Wales more than one poor-law union, except in the Leicester, Birmingham, and West Ham districts; and more than one parish in the case of Scotland, except in the Aberdeen and Edinburgh districts.

RETAIL PRICES OVERSEAS.

[N.B.—While the percentages given in the following Summary Tables are derived from the most authoritative sources of statistical information, certain differences in the nature and scope of the data used, in the methods of combining such data and in the periods for which the rise is measured, suggest the need for caution in drawing conclusions from a comparison between the figures for any two countries. It is also to be observed that in every case the percentage calculation is based on the assumption that the standard of living is identical at the various periods compared.]

I.—FOOD.

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN RETAIL FOOD PRICES IN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES AS COMPARED WITH JULY, 1914.*

Table showing percentage increase in retail food prices for various countries from July 1920 to Jan 1924. Includes rows for UNITED KINGDOM, FOREIGN COUNTRIES, and BRITISH DOMINIONS, &C.

* Exceptions to this are: Belgium, in which comparison is with April, 1914; France (other towns), 3rd quarter of 1914; Germany, average, 1913-14; The Hague, January to July, 1914; Milan, January to June, 1914; Switzerland, June, 1914; Poland, January, 1914; Amsterdam, South Africa, average, 1914. † Figure for June. ‡ The increases shown are for families of the lowest income class; in Sept., the increase for all working-class families ranged from 40.4 to 40.8 per cent. § Fuel and lighting are also included in these figures. ¶ Figure for August. ¶¶ 862,000,000,000-fold increase. ¶¶¶ 531,485-fold increase.

II.—ALL ITEMS.

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES IN THE COST OF FOOD, TOGETHER WITH (SO FAR AS POSSIBLE) HOUSE-RENT, CLOTHING, FUEL AND LIGHT AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD REQUIREMENTS, AS COMPARED WITH JULY, 1914.†

Table showing percentage increase in all items for various countries from July 1920 to Jan 1924. Includes rows for UNITED KINGDOM, FOREIGN COUNTRIES, and BRITISH DOMINIONS, &C.

* A=Food; B=House-Rent; C=Clothing; D=Fuel and Light; E=Other of Miscellaneous Items. † Exceptions to this are: France, Spain, Australia and South Africa, in which comparison is with the average for 1914; Belgium, April, 1914; Greece, March, 1914; Rome, Milan, and New Zealand, January to June, 1914; Egypt, Germany and Hungary, average, 1913-1914; Poland, January, 1914; Switzerland and Luxembourg, June, 1914; United States, 1913; Bulgaria, average, 1901-1910. ‡ Figure for 3rd Quarter. § Figure for June. ¶ Figure for May. ¶¶ 1,163,000,000,000-fold increase. ¶¶¶ 440,945-fold increase.

COMPARATIVE REAL WAGES

IN LONDON AND CERTAIN CAPITAL CITIES ABROAD IN NOVEMBER, 1923.

[N.B.—The method by which the index-numbers in the following table have been computed was explained in an article in the MINISTRY OF LABOUR GAZETTE for July, 1923, pages 236-238. The numbers relate to purchasing-power in terms of food alone, and, for the reasons given in the article referred to, they can only be accepted as affording a very rough indication of the differences that existed, on or about the date at the head of the table, between the real wage levels (in terms of food), in the various capitals, of the selected categories of typical urban male labour. The numbers for the various occupations are comparable horizontally but not vertically. The averages, however, are comparable both ways, provided it be understood (a) that this applies only to capitals other than London, and (b) that any difference between the indices for a given capital at two different dates does not imply a proportionate change in the real-wage level between those dates, but only a proportionate change in the level in relation to that of London.]

Index Numbers of Comparative Real Wages, 1st November, 1923. (London=100.)

Table showing index numbers of comparative real wages for various occupations in London and other cities like Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, etc., in November 1923.

The decrease in the index numbers for Amsterdam and Christiania for 1st November is partly due to the fact that while prices in these cities have risen, there has been no corresponding increase in wage rates. For observations regarding Paris, Copenhagen, Berlin, Warsaw, Sydney and New York, see notes to Tables in previous GAZETTES.

CHANGES IN WAGES IN DENMARK: SECOND QUARTER OF 1923.

A RECENT issue of the journal of the Danish Statistical Department contains statistics of wages for the second quarter of 1923, compiled from returns furnished by the Danish Employers' Association. The data relate to a number of trades which, it is stated, are sufficient to be regarded as representative of manufactures and handicrafts generally.

The number of workpeople covered by the latest returns is about 105,000, and the industries most strongly represented are metal and engineering (24,000), building (14,000), pottery glass and stone (11,600), food preparation (9,900), textiles (8,000), and printing and paper (6,000).

The general result of the computation shows that, if the country be taken as a whole, the average hourly earnings remained at about the same level as in the previous quarter, viz., 1.34 kroner, which represented an increase of 167 per cent. above the level of 1914. For skilled workmen the average hourly earnings decreased from 1.66 kroner in the first quarter of 1923 to 1.65 in the second quarter, and those for unskilled men decreased from 1.33 kroner to 1.32 kroner. The average hourly earnings of female workers during the same period remained at .85 kroner.

* Revised figure. † Provisional figure. ‡ Based on prices and wages for the first two weeks of the month. § Statistiske Efterretninger, 11th January, 1924.

EMPLOYMENT OVERSEAS.

[N.B.—The following paragraphs include an abstract of such official information as is available with regard to the state of employment abroad, in order to indicate, as far as possible, the fluctuations in employment in each country from period to period. The bases of the official statistics published in the various countries, are, however, not the same as those of the United Kingdom statistics, and therefore the figures quoted below cannot properly be used with those on pp. 14-15 to compare the actual level of employment in the United Kingdom with that in other countries. For further information on the subject of the bases of the unemployment statistics of the various countries see Report issued in 1922 by the International Labour Office under the title "Methods of Compiling Statistics of Unemployment." (Studies and Reports, Series C., No. 7.)]

FRANCE.*

Unemployment in December.—The total number of unemployed remaining on the "live register" at the Employment Exchanges on 22nd December, 1923, was 9,295 (6,478 men and 2,817 women). At the end of the preceding week the corresponding figure was 11,182, and on 23rd December, 1922, 10,258. The total number of vacancies remaining unfilled on 22nd December, 1923, was 6,872 (3,985 for men and 2,887 for women), as against 7,191 in the preceding week, and 6,103 on 23rd December, 1922. During the week ended 22nd December the exchanges succeeded in placing 26,257 persons (21,609 men and 4,648 women) in situations, and, in addition, found employment for 2,633 foreign immigrants.

According to the latest returns, 2 departmental and 14 municipal unemployment funds were in operation throughout France on 27th December, the number of persons in receipt of out-of-work benefit through their agency being 440 (379 men and 61 women). This total is practically the same as that for the preceding week, and is less by 2,204 than the figure for 23rd December, 1922. It is to be noted that these figures do not fully represent the number of persons out of employment, since some localities are without unemployment funds, and where they do exist their record of unemployed persons is not complete.

BELGIUM.†

Unemployment in October and November.—The latest figures available relate to November, but are provisional only. Returns received by the Ministry of Industry and Labour from 1,559 approved unemployment societies, with a total membership of 644,850, show that 17,633 of these were either wholly or partially unemployed at the end of the month (on 1st December). The total days lost through unemployment in November numbered 165,935, or 1.07 per cent. of the aggregate possible working days; in the preceding month the percentage was 0.68, and in November, 1922, 2.18.

Revised figures are given for October, in which month returns were received applying to 656,374 members of unemployment insurance societies. Of these 3,977 (or 0.6 per cent.) were totally unemployed and 8,714 partially so on the last working day of the month. The proportion totally unemployed in September was 0.5 per cent., and in October, 1922, 1.5 per cent.

During November, 13,100 applications for employment were received at Employment Exchanges, as compared with 13,280 in the preceding month. Vacancies notified by employers in November totalled 10,500, as against 12,166 in October. There were thus on an average 125 applicants for every 100 situations registered as vacant, as compared with 109 in the preceding month.

SWITZERLAND.‡

Unemployment in November.—According to figures compiled by the Federal Labour Office of Switzerland, the number of applicants for work remaining on the "live register" of the Employment Exchanges on 30th November was 27,029, as compared with 24,013 at the end of the preceding month, and 51,123 at the end of November, 1922. Of these, 7,330 were employed on relief works, leaving 19,699 entirely without work. Among the 27,029 applicants for employment were 4,973 normally engaged in the building trades, 3,031 in the metal, engineering and electrical trades, and 2,043 in the textile trades. In addition to the foregoing persons entirely without work, 14,368 were reported as only partially employed, including 6,342 in the textile trades and 4,579 in the metal, engineering and electrical trades. The vacancies reported by employers remaining unfilled at the end of November numbered 1,811, as against 2,135 at the end of October, and 1,161 at the end of November, 1922. Taking November as a whole, 387 applications on an average were made for each 100 vacancies for men and 128 for each 100 for women. In October the figures were 301 and 109 respectively.

HOLLAND.

Unemployment in December.—H.M. Commercial Secretary at The Hague, in a despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade, reports that, according to figures supplied by the State Department of Unemployment Insurance, in the week ended 8th December, out of 281,547 members of unemployment funds making returns, 36,209 (12.9 per cent.) were unemployed for six days in the week, and 9,120 (or 3.2 per cent.) for less than six days. In the corresponding week of the preceding month (ended 10th November) the percentages were 10.7 and 2.5, and in the week ended 9th December, 1922, 10.7 and 2.3.

* Bulletin du Marché du Travail, 28th December, 1923. Paris.

† Revue du Travail, 31st December, 1923. Brussels.

‡ Der Schweizerische Arbeitsmarkt, 15th December, 1923.

AUSTRIA.

Unemployment in November.—According to *Statistische Nachrichten* (the journal of the Austrian Department of Statistics) for 25th December, the number of persons in receipt of unemployment benefit in Austria was 78,390 at the end of November, as compared with 75,809 at the end of the preceding month, and 83,387 at the end of November, 1922. In Vienna alone there were 47,712 in receipt of benefit at the end of November, and 50,554 at the end of October.

SWEDEN.*

Unemployment in October.—Trade unions with an aggregate membership of 136,320 reported 11,013, or 8.1 per cent., as out of work on the last day of October, as against 7.9 per cent. at the end of September, and 15.5 per cent. at the end of October, 1922. The following Table gives particulars for the principal unions included in the returns:—

Unions.	Membership reporting on 31st Oct., 1923.	Percentage Unemployed.		
		31st Oct., 1923.	30th Sept., 1923.	31st Oct., 1922.
All Unions making Returns ..	136,320	8.1	7.9	15.5
PRINCIPAL UNIONS:—				
Iron and steel	8,826	5.0	5.0	14.7
Engineering	31,274	10.7	10.6	23.4
Textile	6,889	1.7	1.2	2.7
Clothing	4,361	7.1	8.8	7.8
Boot, shoe and leather ..	6,850	3.4	3.3	6.1
Food preparation	3,176	8.3	6.1	9.7
Sawmilling	8,434	15.2	11.9	15.1
Woodworking	6,993	11.9	9.8	22.4
Paper and pulp	7,533	2.9	2.8	4.7
Municipal workers	7,133	1.8	1.6	1.5
Commercial employees ..	6,055	6.8	9.4	9.9
General and factory workers ..	13,761	15.2	17.1	23.0
(trades not specified)				

DENMARK.†

Unemployment in November.—Returns supplied to the Danish Statistical Department by trade unions and by the Central Employment Exchange show that out of 248,997 workpeople, 11.4 per cent. were unemployed on 30th November, as against 7.6 per cent. on 26th October, and 15.2 per cent. at the end of November, 1922.

* *Socinia Meddelanden*, No. 12, 1923. Stockholm.
† *Statistiske Efterretninger*, 21st December, 1923. Copenhagen.

UNITED STATES.*

Employment in November.—The Federal Department of Labour presents preliminary figures relating to the volume of employment in November, 1923, from 7,430 representative establishments in fifty-one manufacturing industries, covering 2,483,431 workpeople. These establishments in October reported 2,496,724 persons employed, and the November figures consequently indicate a net decrease amounting to 0.5 per cent. in numbers employed. The aggregate wages paid show a decrease of 1.4 per cent., and the average weekly earnings a decrease of 0.9 per cent. Twenty-five of the fifty-one industries show increases in the number of workpeople employed in November, but in four industries only did the increases exceed 2 per cent.—viz., automobile tyres, rubber boots and shoes, agricultural implements and slaughtering and meat packing. Seasonal decreases were shown in women's clothing (8.4 per cent.), millinery and men's clothing industries, and brick and tile employees decreased by 4.6 per cent.

As regards comparison between the month under review and the corresponding month of 1922, returns from 3,283 establishments in forty-three industries show a net increase of 6.5 per cent. in the number of workers employed, an increase of 15 per cent. in the aggregate wages paid, and one of 8.1 per cent. in average weekly earnings. Twenty-seven of the forty-three industries show increases in the number of workpeople employed; the increase amounts to about 218 per cent. in the pottery industry, owing to the strike in 1922.

AUSTRALIA.†

Unemployment in the 3rd Quarter of 1923.—For the 3rd quarter of 1923, 453 trade unions with a total membership of 380,256 reported 28,122, or 7.4 per cent., unemployed. The corresponding percentage for the preceding quarter was 7.1, and for the 3rd quarter of 1922, 9.6.

CANADA.‡

Employment in December.—The index number of employment for 1st December was 97.5, as compared with 98.8 for 1st November and 95.1 for 1st December, 1922. In computing these indexes the number of workpeople employed in the week ended 17th January, 1920, is taken as equal to 100.

Trade Union Unemployment at End of November.—At the end of November 6.2 per cent. of the membership of trade unions making returns were unemployed, as compared with 4.8 per cent. at the end of October and 6.2 on 30th November, 1922.

* *Employment in Selected Industries in November, 1923.* Federal Bureau of Labour Statistics, Washington, D.C.
† *Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics*, September, 1923. Melbourne.
‡ Information supplied through the courtesy of the Canadian Department of Labour, Ottawa.

OFFICIAL NOTICES, &c.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACTS.

DECISIONS GIVEN BY THE UMPIRE.

VOLUMES containing the collected decisions of the Umpire, appointed under Section 12 of the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1920, respecting disputed claims to benefit, are published by H.M. Stationery Office.

Cases after No. 2,000 will not be published in volume form, but summaries of the decisions are printed in pamphlets issued at approximately fortnightly intervals. The pamphlets will be supplied post free, as and when issued, for an annual subscription of 7s. 6d. payable in advance. All applications should be made to H.M. Stationery Office or at any of the addresses shown on the front cover of this Gazette.

The following are recent decisions of general interest:—

CASE No. 5859, SECTION 8 (1).—TRADE DISPUTE—REGULARLY ENGAGED IN SOME OTHER OCCUPATION, BUT NOT BONA FIDE EMPLOYED ELSEWHERE IN USUAL OCCUPATION—CAULKER UNEMPLOYED OWING TO DISPUTE—WORKED ELSEWHERE FOR ONE MONTH ON WORK WHICH NECESSITATED USE OF TOOLS USED IN SHIPYARD—NOT USUAL OCCUPATION.

The applicant's claim for benefit had been disallowed under Section 8 (1) on the ground that he had lost his employment as a caulker in a shipyard owing to a lock-out of boilermakers on 30th April, 1923. He was subsequently employed for one month ending 15th June, 1923, on repairing agricultural implements, and as this work involved the use of tools which he used on his work in the shipyard, he claimed that he had become *bona fide* employed elsewhere in his usual occupation during the dispute and, accordingly, the disqualification for the receipt of benefit should be removed. He admitted that he did not intend to follow regularly the occupation of repairing agricultural implements because he hoped to return to the shipyard when the dispute was over.

Recommended by the Court of Referees that the claim for benefit should be disallowed. The Court held that the work upon which the applicant had been engaged was not his usual occupation and he had not become regularly engaged in it. The disqualification under Section 8 (1), therefore, remained effective.

The applicant's Association appealed to the Umpire against the Court's recommendation.

Decision.—"On the facts before me my decision is that the claim should be allowed."

"The applicant usually follows the occupation of a caulker at a shipyard. After having lost employment by reason of a stoppage of work due to a trade dispute at the yard at which he was employed he worked for a month repairing agricultural implements. This was not employment in the occupation which he usually follows. He had no intention of following this occupation permanently, as he hoped to return to the shipyard when the dispute was over. The employment, however, lasted for a substantial time. I see no reason for thinking that it was taken merely as a casual job or for a limited time, and I think he must be regarded as having become regularly engaged in the occupation of repairing agricultural implements."

CASE No. 5879, SECTION 8 (1).—TRADE DISPUTE—NOT REGULARLY ENGAGED IN SOME OTHER OCCUPATION—SHIPWRIGHT ATTENDED ANNUAL TERRITORIAL CAMP DURING BOILERMAKERS' DISPUTE.

A firm of shipbuilders and repairers reported that the applicant, a shipwright, who had been with them for eighteen years, had lost employment on 19th May, 1923, owing to a stoppage of work due to a lock-out of boilermakers, which began on 30th April, 1923. The applicant's claim for benefit was accordingly disallowed under Section 8 (1). During the stoppage of work the applicant, who was a member of the Territorial Forces, attended the annual Territorial camp, which lasted from 28th June to 19th July. In view of the fact that his unemployment and health insurance cards had been stamped while he was at camp, the applicant contended that his period of training there

constituted "employment," and that consequently the disallowance of his claim for benefit under Section 8 (1) should be removed, in that he had become regularly engaged in some other occupation during the dispute.

Recommended by the Court of Referees that the claim for benefit should be disallowed under Section 8 (1). Leave to appeal to the Umpire was granted.

Decision.—"On the facts before me my decision is that the claim for benefit should be disallowed."

"This case is similar in principle to No. 5,845."*

CASE No. 5957, SECTION 8 (1).—TRADE DISPUTE—REGULARLY ENGAGED IN SOME OTHER OCCUPATION—LOCKED OUT RIVETTER BECAME LICENSED FISH PORTER—WORKED AS SUCH FOR THREE DAYS PER WEEK FOR SIX WEEKS.

The applicant lost his employment as a shell rivetter in a shipyard on 23rd April, 1923, owing to a stoppage of work caused by the boilermakers' lock-out. He afterwards became employed as a fish porter, and worked as such for two or three days a week for six weeks. He lodged a claim for benefit on 26th May, 1923, in respect of the days on which he was not employed at the fish market, but the claim was disallowed under Section 8 (1) on the ground that he had lost employment on 23rd April owing to the boilermakers' lock-out, which was still in operation.

The applicant submitted that he had become regularly engaged in the occupation of fish porter during the stoppage, and that, accordingly, the disqualification under Section 8 (1) should be removed. He was now a licensed fish porter, and while the work of fish porters was always of an irregular or casual nature, he was able to get as much work as any other fish porter. He admitted that it was probable that he would return to his work in the shipyard if he had the opportunity, but it would depend upon the circumstances.

Recommended by a majority of the Court of Referees that the claim for benefit should be disallowed under Section 8 (1). The Court thought, however, that it was a border-line case, and that the applicant had established the right to say that he had definitely entered another occupation. The representative of insured contributors thought the claim should be allowed on the ground that the applicant had become regularly engaged in some other occupation. The Court granted the applicant leave to appeal to the Umpire, and his Association appealed on his behalf.

Decision.—"On the facts before me my decision is that the claim should be allowed."

"I agree with the insured contributors' representative on the Court of Referees. The applicant had obtained a licence as a fish porter, and had been following that occupation three days a week for six weeks, and in my opinion he had become regularly engaged therein."

CASE No. 5983, SECTION 7 (1) (iii).—SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT, REFUSAL OF—APPLICANT, AGE 18, REFUSED DOMESTIC SERVICE—HAD HAD THREE YEARS' TRAINING AS DRAPER'S ASSISTANT—UNEMPLOYED ONE YEAR.

It was reported that the applicant, a shop assistant, age eighteen years, and unemployed since August, 1922, had, on 10th August, 1923, refused an offer of resident employment as a housemaid at a seaside hotel situated fifty miles from her home. The usual district rates of wages would have been paid, and the work would have lasted at least throughout the holiday season.

The applicant refused the offer on the ground that it was not in her trade. She had served a three years' apprenticeship as a draper's assistant, and if she had accepted the job she would have prejudiced her chances of getting work in her usual occupation.

Recommended by the Court of Referees that the claim for benefit should be allowed on the ground that the refusal was reasonable.

The Insurance Officer declined to accept the Court's recommendation in view of the length of time the applicant had been unemployed.

Decision.—"On the facts before me my decision is that the claim for benefit should be disallowed."

"The applicant had been unemployed for about a year when she was offered domestic service, and although she has had three years' training as a shop assistant she is only eighteen and cannot have had much experience of the work. In these circumstances she should be prepared to accept employment of another kind until she finds an opening as a shop assistant."

CASE No. 5990, SECTION 7 (1) (ii).—NOT UNEMPLOYED—SHORT TIME WORKERS—NORMAL WORKING WEEK COMPRISED FIVE NIGHT SHIFTS EQUAL TO FIVE DAYS' WORK—BENEFIT CLAIMED FOR FIRST DAY OF WEEK WHEN SHIFT NOT STARTED UNTIL 10 P.M.

The applicant was employed as a shingler at an iron works where the men normally worked under a three-shift arrangement. Each man worked on each shift in the following sequence:—From 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. for six shifts in one week, from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. for five shifts in the second week, and 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. for five shifts in the third week. The works were wholly closed down owing to slackness of work during the fortnight preceding Monday, 13th August, 1923, and during this period the applicant claimed benefit. The works re-opened on

* See LABOUR GAZETTE for November, 1923, page 465.

13th August, and the applicant restarted work at 10 p.m. on that day on the 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. night shift, under a short-time system of alternate weeks of work. He then submitted that he was entitled to benefit in respect of Monday, 13th August. The claim for benefit was, however, disallowed under Section 7 (1) (ii) in respect of this day.

On behalf of the applicant it was stated that on 13th August no production men were employed at the works until 10 p.m., when the applicant's shift started. The maintenance men, such as engineers, furnacemen and their labourers, were, however, at work during the day. It was submitted that this Monday was a continuous day of unemployment.

Recommended by the Court of Referees that the claim for benefit should be allowed in respect of Monday, 13th August. As the applicant had been unemployed for the previous two weeks, and had started on five night shifts at 10 p.m. on the Monday evening, the Court regarded the first day of eight hours (viz., from Monday 10 p.m. to Tuesday 6 a.m.) as being Tuesday, 14th August, while for the purpose of continuity of unemployment the Monday was a day of unemployment.

The Insurance Officer declined to accept the Court's recommendation. He contended that as the normal full working week was one of five night shifts, benefit was not payable in respect of any day in the week when, as in this case, the full number of night shifts was worked.

Decision.—"On the facts before me my decision is that the claim for benefit should be disallowed."

"The recognised and customary week's work when a man is on night shift is five night shifts, the first beginning at 10 p.m. on Monday and the fifth finishing at 6 a.m. on the following Saturday. In normal times each man works on night shift one week in three."

"In my opinion the applicant is, in fact, employed during the whole of any week in which he does a normal week's work of five night shifts, and cannot claim to be unemployed on the Monday merely because his night work does not begin until late in the evening."

CASE No. 6006, SECTION 7 (1) (iii).—SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT, NOT UNABLE TO OBTAIN—JOB LOST BY DELAYING APPLICATION FOR IT FOR ONE DAY.

The applicant, who had last been employed in his usual occupation as joiner for two weeks ending 11th August, 1923, was, on Monday, 13th August, offered local work as joiner with a building contractor at the standard rate of wages. The offer was made at 10 a.m., and the applicant was told that if he went to the job at once he would probably be able to start work in the afternoon of the same day.

The prospective employer, who had asked the Employment Exchange to supply men, stated that the applicant applied for work on Tuesday, 14th August, but he was not engaged because it was not known that he had been sent by the Exchange. If the applicant had produced his Introduction Card from the Exchange and had reported for work as instructed, he could have started on the Monday afternoon. There was no vacancy for him at the time of the employer's report.

The applicant admitted that he was told to go for the job on the Monday morning, but he had to see a friend about another possible job on that day. When he went for the job on Tuesday he forgot to produce his Introduction Card and was rejected.

Recommended by the Court of Referees that the claim for benefit should be allowed on the ground that a disallowance of the claim would impose hardship on the applicant.

The Insurance Officer declined to accept the Court's recommendation. His view was that the applicant, who had been employed for only seven weeks since September, 1922, should have gone to the job offered at once. Through the delay of one day he had lost his chance of obtaining work.

Decision.—"On the facts before me my decision is that the claim for benefit should be disallowed. If the applicant had applied for the job at once, as he was instructed to do, he would probably have secured it. He does not satisfy me that he was unable to find suitable employment."

RECENT CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION CASES.

THE INDUSTRIAL COURT.

TOOL TURNERS AND TOOL SMITHS, STRATFORD—WITHDRAWAL OF EXTRA PAYMENT ABOVE NORMAL RATE—INDIVIDUAL QUALIFICATIONS OR SKILL.—The Amalgamated Engineering Union v. The London and North-Eastern Railway. This case concerned four turners and three blacksmiths. The rates of pay set out in Decision No. 728 are the rates applicable to men engaged on the ordinary and customary duties of their class, and it is expressly declared that they were not intended to prejudice the position of men possessing special qualifications or skill or employed under conditions recognised by the management as entitling them to a higher rate. The company are not, therefore, precluded by the award from paying or continuing to pay extra remuneration to such men, nor is the right of the company to review such cases at any time interfered with. The Court viewed the work in the tool room and tool smithy at Stratford.

Decision.—Of the men concerned, three are engaged on special work at Stratford, and the Court are of opinion that the cases of these three men might properly be reconsidered by the company with a view to saying what extra pay should be made to them. Issued 7th December, 1923. (857.)

MECHANICS' LABOURERS AND WIRE-ROPE MEN, SWANSEA.—**DECISION NO. 723.**—PARAGRAPH 42, CANCELLATION OF PRIOR AWARD—SCHEDULE F, CONDITION 11, WORK OF AN EXCEPTIONAL NATURE.—The National Union of Railwaymen v. The Great Western Railway. **Decision.**—Paragraph 42 of Decision No. 723 expressly provides that "all existing awards and agreements between the parties inconsistent with the provisions of this Decision (including the Schedules) shall, except where the contrary is indicated, be cancelled as from the date of the coming into operation of this Decision." The parties to the present case were also parties to the reference which resulted in Decision No. 723, and accordingly the rates of pay prescribed by Decision No. 232 (the prior award) are superseded by those of the main decision. It is necessary to point out, however, that Decision No. 723 safeguards the position of such men as are now in question. Condition 11 of Schedule F to the Decision states that the scheduled rates are applicable to men performing the ordinary and customary duties of their class; and that any case where a man is employed on work of exceptionally dirty or dangerous nature shall be considered on its merits with a view to extra payment being made. It appears to be admitted that the men in question are engaged on work of an exceptionally dirty character, and, in the light of the above, it should be possible for the parties now to reach agreement. Issued 21st December, 1923. (859.)

MACHINISTS (METAL)—"CAPABLE OF WORKING ANY CLASS OF MACHINE OR RANGE OF MACHINES OF THE SAME CLASS"—**DECISION NO. 746, SCHEDULE I, NOTE 4.**—The Amalgamated Engineering Union v. The Great Western Railway. **Decision.**—The Court are satisfied that the grading of the men concerned has been determined with care and understanding, and they are unable, on the evidence before them, to revise the grade into which these men have been severally classified. Issued 28th December, 1923. (860.)

CONCILIATORS, SINGLE ARBITRATORS AND AD HOC BOARDS OF ARBITRATION APPOINTED BY THE MINISTER OF LABOUR.

APPRENTICES AND SMITHS' STRIKERS: IRON AND STEEL WORKS: SOUTH WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE.—South Wales and Monmouthshire Allied Engineering Trades Association v. South Wales and Monmouthshire Iron and Steel Manufacturers' Association. Difference: Question as to the interpretation of an award of an Ad Hoc Board of Arbitration, dated 29th July, 1922, in respect of the wages of apprentices and smiths' strikers. Board of Arbitration: Mr. W. Addington Willis (Chairman), Mr. George Pate, O.B.E. (Employers' representative), and the Right Honourable T. Richards (Workpeople's representative). Award: The award above referred to did not abolish, alter or affect either the base rates or the "make-up" prices of strikers "over 19 with 1 year's experience" or "over 19 with 2 years' experience" which were existing on June 30th, 1922, and it did not affect or alter any base rates or "make-up" prices except in the cases and to the extent specified in the Schedule. Issued 3rd December, 1923. (I.R. 747/3/1923.)

OUTSIDE STEELWORK ERECTORS: GREAT BRITAIN.—Iron and Steel Trades' Confederation and the Transport and General Workers' Union v. Bridgebuilding and Constructional Engineering Employers' Association. Difference: As to whether the Association were entitled to terminate two cost of living wage agreements dated 17th March, 1922, and 27th April, 1922, respectively, on two months' notice from 5th October, 1922. Arbitrator: Sir William W. Mackenzie, K.B.E., K.C. Award: The Association were not entitled to terminate the agreements on two months' notice from 5th October, 1922. Issued 31st December, 1923. (I.R. 100/1924.)

AGREEMENTS NEGOTIATED BY OFFICERS OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR.

CARTERS: LONDON.—Transport and General Workers' Union v. Messrs. Heaslip and Company, Cartage Contractors, Silver-town. Difference: As to payment for overtime of men engaged upon carting ballast or bricks. Agreement: The firm would continue to operate in its entirety the London Road Transport Agreement, dated 4th July, 1923. The men employed by the firm are daily servants, and are therefore covered by Clause 2, Schedule B, of the above-mentioned Agreement. A Yard Committee, consisting of 6 employees, would be established to deal with any question that might arise in future disputes. Signed 12th December, 1923. (I.R. 1807/1923.)

CARTERS AND MATES: WANDSWORTH.—Transport and General Workers' Union v. Messrs. William Hampton, Limited, Cartage Contractors, Wandsworth. Difference: As to the re-establishment of the 48 hour week. Agreement: The firm would operate the London Road Transport Agreement, dated 4th July, 1923, in its entirety. The operation of the 48 hour week would take effect as from 8th December, 1923. Signed 26th November, 1923. (I.R. 1765/1923.)

NATIONAL WAGES BOARD (RAILWAYS ACT, 1921).

PARTICULARS of the report and decisions, dated 18th December, of the National Wages Board on the claims referred to the Board on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd November, by the Railway Companies, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, and the Railway Clerks' Association, are given on page 6.

TRADE BOARDS ACTS, 1909 AND 1918.

ORDERS.

ORDERS confirming minimum rates of wages as varied by the undermentioned Trade Boards have been made under Section 4 (2) of the Trade Boards Act, 1918:—

Coffin Furniture and Cerement Making Trade Board (Great Britain).

Order U. (13), dated 18th December, 1923, confirming variation of general minimum time-rates, piece-work basis time-rates and overtime rates for male workers dependent on the "cost of living" index figure and specifying 1st January, 1924, and the dates determined by the "cost of living" figure as provided in the Schedule to the Order, as the dates from which the said variations shall become effective.

The general minimum time-rates applicable when the "cost of living" index figure was 101 or above, 88-100 and 76-87 (as set out in the Schedule to the Order U. (10) and effective from 6th June, 1922) remain unaltered, the rates applicable when the "cost of living" index figure was 75 or below now apply when the index figure is not less than 63 and not more than 75 and further reduced rates now apply when the index figure is not less than 51 and not more than 62 and 50 or below.

Order U. (14), dated 18th December, 1923, confirming general minimum time-rates, piece-work basis time-rates and overtime rates for female workers, and specifying 1st January, 1924, as the date from which the rates as varied should become effective. These rates are not subject, as in the case of the male rates, to a "cost of living" scheme.

The general minimum time-rates (as varied) are as follows for a week of 47 hours:—

Coffin Furniture Section.

(i) Polishers, 26s., 30s. and 32s. per week, according to experience. Polishers with not less than three years' experience and capable also of roughing and finishing, 38s. per week.

(ii) Heavy hand press workers and stampers of all ages and blackers of 18 years of age and over, 26s., 30s. and 32s. per week, according to experience. These rates are operative only from 1st January to 30th June, 1924; from 1st July, 1924, the rates are 25s., 29s. and 31s. per week.

(iii) Power press workers, light hand press workers, lace cutters and lacquerers of 21 years of age and over, 25s. and 27s. per week, according to experience; workers between 18 and 21, 24s. and 26s. per week, according to experience.

For workers of the above classes under 18 years of age, and also blackers under 18, the rates are 11s. per week for workers between 14 and 15 years of age, rising by annual increments to 18s. per week for workers of 17 and under 18.

(iv) All other workers in the coffin furniture section of 21 years of age and over, 24s. 6d. and 26s. 6d. per week, according to experience; workers between 18 and 21, 23s. 6d. and 25s. 6d., according to experience.

For workers under 18 years of age the rates are 11s. per week for workers under 15 years of age, rising to 18s. per week for workers of 17 and under 18.

Cerement-Making Section.

(i) All female workers (other than pinkers and choppers) of 21 years of age or over, 6d., 6½d., 7d. and 7½d. per hour, according to experience, operative from 1st January to 30th June, 1924; from 1st July, 1924, the rates are 5¾d., 6¼d., 6¾d. and 7¼d. per hour. For female workers of 18 and under 21 years of age the rates are 6d., 6½d. and 6¾d. per hour, according to experience, operative from 1st January to 30th June, 1924; from 1st July, 1924, the rates are 5¾d., 6d. and 6½d. per hour.

For workers under 18 years of age, 2d. to 6d. per hour, according to age, operative from 1st January to 30th June, 1924; from 1st July, 1924, 2d. to 5¾d. per hour.

(ii) Pinkers, the rates set out in (i), with the addition of 1d. per hour in each case.

(iii) Choppers, the rates set out in (i), with the addition of ¼d. per hour in each case.

The piece-work basis time-rates are:—

Coffin Furniture Section.

15 per cent. above the appropriate general minimum time-rate.

Cerement-Making Section.

1d. per hour higher than the appropriate general minimum time-rate.

Hat, Cap and Millinery Trade Board (England and Wales).

Order H.M. (12), dated 19th December, 1923, confirming general minimum time-rates, piece-work basis time-rates and overtime rates for female workers, and specifying 31st December, 1923, as the date from which the rates as varied should become effective.

The general minimum time-rate (as varied) for female workers other than learners (including homeworkers) is 7d. per hour.

The piece-work basis time-rate (as varied) for female workers (including homeworkers) is 8d. per hour.

CHANGES IN MINIMUM RATES OF WAGES DUE TO AN ALTERATION IN THE "COST-OF-LIVING" FIGURE.

Higher wage rates have become operative in two trades, viz., Brush and Broom, and Coffin Furniture (male section), according to the rates set out for the appropriate periods in the respective current determinations, the specified periods being "not less than 76 and not more than 87" in the Coffin Furniture and Cerement Making trade, and "less than 81 and not less than 76" in the Brush and Broom trade.

NOTICES OF PROPOSAL.

Fur Trade Board (Great Britain).

Proposal Z (13) to make certain adjustments in existing time and piece rates and to extend the provisions in the case of apprentices so that indentures may be in any form approved by the Trade Board. Under the current determination the form of indenture must be the model form prescribed by the Board.

Hat, Cap and Millinery Trade Board (Northern Ireland).

Proposal N.I.H.M. (N. 9), dated 20th December, 1923, to vary the general minimum time-rates, piece-work basis time-rates and overtime rates for female workers in the retail branch of the trade.

Brush and Broom Trade Board (Northern Ireland).

Proposal N.I.B.B. (N. 26), dated 21st December, 1923, to vary the general minimum time-rates and overtime rates for certain classes of male workers, and the general minimum piece-rates and overtime rates for certain classes of male and female workers.

Proposal N.I.B.B. (N. 27), dated 21st December, 1923, to vary certain of the general minimum piece-rates and overtime rates for male apprentices.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

LIST OF NEW CONTRACTS, DECEMBER, 1923.

ADMIRALTY.

(CIVIL ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF'S DEPARTMENT.)

H.M. Naval Establishments Abroad: Jetty and Dolphins: Jessop & Co., Ltd., London, E.C.—**Pipes and Fittings:** Sheep-bridge Coal and Iron Co., Ltd., Chesterfield.—**Timber:** Gabriel Wade and English, Ltd., London, S.W.—**Portsmouth: C.I. Pipes:** Sheep-bridge Coal and Iron Co., Ltd., Chesterfield.—**Portland Cement:** Cement Marketing Co., Ltd., London, E.C.

ADMIRALTY.

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Alternators, Motor and Spares: Small Electric Motors, Ltd., Beckenham, Kent.—**Basins, Seamen's, and Plates (Earthenware):** W. Adams & Sons, Tunstall; Bishop & Stonier, Ltd., Hanley; Bovey Pottery Co., Bovey Tracey; W. T. Copeland & Sons, Stoke-on-Trent; Furnivals (1913), Ltd., Cobridge; Keeling & Co., Ltd., Burslem; Myott, Son & Co., Cobridge; Mintons, Ltd., Stoke-on-Trent.—**Battery:** D.P. Battery Co., Ltd., Bakewell.—**Bilge Pumps, Turbo Driven:** W. H. Allen, Sons & Co., Ltd., Bedford.—**Blow Lamps and Gear:** Howes & Burley, Ltd., Birmingham; Kitson Eng. Co. (London), Ltd., Stamford, Lincs.—**Bolts and Nuts, etc., Bright Steel:** E. Mercer, Ltd., Hollinwood; A. P. Newall & Co., Ltd., Glasgow; Isaiah Platt, Ltd., Wednesbury; C. Richards & Sons, Ltd., Darlaston.—**Boards, Supply and Distributing:** General Electric Co., Ltd., Birmingham.—**Brushes, Tooth:** W. R. Speer & Son, London, E.—**Carving Sets:** Boswell, Son & Naylor, Ltd., Sheffield; John Clarke & Son, Ltd., Shef-

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL INDUSTRIES.—Thirteenth report of the Development Commissioners for the year ended the 31st March, 1923. [H.C. 129: price 4s.]

CENSUS.—Census of England and Wales, 1921; (a) Counties of Lincoln and Rutland, (b) County of Leicester, (c) County of Northampton, including the Soke of Peterborough, (d) County of Somerset, (e) County of Wilts, (f) County of Dorset. [S.O. publications: price 16s., 8s. 6d., 10s., 7s. 6d., 7s., respectively.]

DISABLED MEN.—Meeting of experts for the study of methods of finding employment for disabled men (Geneva, 31st July, 1st and 2nd August, 1923). Report submitted to the experts, minutes of proceedings of the meeting of experts, resolutions adopted by the experts. International Labour Office. [Geneva, 1923: price 4s.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.—Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies for the year 1921. Part B, Industrial and Provident Societies. [S.O. publication: price 15s.]

OVERSEAS SETTLEMENT, ETC.—Imperial Economic Conference of representatives of Great Britain, the Dominions, India and the Colonies and Protectorates, held in October and November, 1923. Record of proceedings and documents. [Cmd. 2009: price 5s.]

POOR-LAW RELIEF.—Statement showing the number of persons in receipt of Poor-Law Relief on the last Saturday in July, August and September, 1923. Ministry of Health. [S.O. publication: price 4d.]

PRICES.—Departmental Committee on distribution and prices of agricultural produce: Final report. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. [Cmd. 2008: price 1s.]

ROAD FUND.—Report on the administration of the Road Fund for the year 1922-1923. Ministry of Transport. [S.O. publication: price 2s. 6d.]

SAFETY.—Fencing and other safety precautions for (a) transmission machinery. Safety Pamphlet No. 1. Second Edition. (b) Wood-working machinery. Safety Pamphlet No. 8. Home Office. [S.O. publications: price 6d. and 1s. respectively.] (See page 11.)

WELFARE.—Messrooms and canteens at small factories and workshops. Welfare Pamphlet No. 2. Second Edition. Home Office. [S.O. publication: price 6d.]

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.—Statistics of compensation and of proceedings under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, and the Employers' Liability Act, 1880, during the year 1922. Home Office. [Cmd. 2007: price 6d.] (See page 10.)

field; R. Hawley & Sons, Sheffield.—**Casks and Drums, etc.:** Baldwins, Ltd., London, E.C.; L. Berger & Sons, Ltd., London, E.; F. Francis & Sons, Ltd., London, S.E.; P. D. Mitchell, Ltd., Dundee.—**Cloth, Silk:** J. T. Brocklehurst & Sons, Ltd., Macclesfield.—**Crane, Electric:** S. Butler & Co., Ltd., Stanning-ley, Leeds.—**Duralumin:** J. Booth & Co. (1915), Ltd., Birmingham.—**Earthenware:** W. Adams & Sons, Tunstall; Bishop & Stonier, Ltd., Hanley; W. T. Copeland & Sons, Stoke-on-Trent; Geo. Jones & Sons, Ltd., Stoke-on-Trent; Keeling & Co., Ltd., Burslem; Mintons, Ltd., Stoke-on-Trent; Myott, Son & Co., Cobridge.—**Electric Welding Plant:** A.I. Electric Welding Appliances Co., Inverness.—**Flour:** Marriage, Neave & Co., Ltd., London, S.W.; J. Rank, Ltd., London, E.C.; W. Vernon & Sons, Ltd., London, E.C.; Buchanan's Flour Mills, Ltd., Liverpool.—**Generating Set:** Campbell Gas Engine Co., Ltd., Halifax.—**Glass Plates for W.L. Indicators:** S. & C. Bishop & Co., Ltd., St. Helens, Lancs; Dewrance & Co., London, S.E.—**Gunmetal Steam Cocks, Valves and Torpedo Fittings:** W. N. Baines & Co., Ltd., Rotherham; Cockburns, Ltd., Cardonald, Glasgow; Sir J. Laing & Sons, Ltd., Sunderland; C. S. Madan & Co., Ltd., Manchester; Shipham & Co., Ltd., Hull; Stevens & Struthers, Glasgow.—**Hack Saw Blades:** The Sheffield & Hallamshire Hack Saw Co., Ltd., Sheffield; Fry's (London), Ltd., London, E.C.—**Ironmongery:** John Allen & Sons, Old Hill; Douglass Bros., Ltd., Blyadon-on-Tyne; Fellows Bros., Ltd., Cradley Heath; J. Golcher, Ltd., Wednesbury; J. Hill & Sons, Stourbridge; G. Hughes & Sons, Wolverhampton; J. J. Ingham & Co., Ltd., Leeds; A. E. Jenks & Cattell, Ltd., Wolverhampton; S. Lewis & Co., Ltd., Dudley; Leys Malleable Castings Co., Ltd., Derby; Emma Orton, Willenhall; E. Partridge & Co., Old Hill; H. J. & E. Shorthouse, Birmingham; Swindell & Co., Ltd., Netherton; W. H. Tildesley, Ltd., Willenhall; T. B. Wellings & Co., Ltd., Old Hill.—**Lanterns and Gear:** Bulpitt & Sons, Ltd., Birmingham; E. Griffiths & Sons, Birmingham; J. P. Marrian & Co.,

Ltd., Birmingham; Parkinson & W. & B. Cowan, Ltd., Birmingham.—**Malt:** Edward Fison, Ltd., Ipswich.—**Motor Equipments, Outboard for Boats:** W. D. Fair & Co., Hampton Wick.—**Motor Generator Electric Arc Welding Sets and Spares:** Alloy Welding Processes, Ltd., London, N.—**Naval Brass Plates:** The Broughton Copper Co., Ltd., Manchester.—**Note Magnifiers:** Gambrell Bros., Ltd., London, S.W.—**Nitrate of Soda:** Mitrovitch Bros. & Co., London, E.C.—**Peas, Marrowfat:** Miller & Riley (1910), Ltd., Boston.—**Pickles:** S. Hannah & Co., Glasgow; Lipton, Ltd., London, E.C.; J. Moir & Son, Ltd., London, E.; C. & E. Morton, Ltd., London, E.C.; Rowat & Co., Glasgow; J. Stephens, Son & Co., Ltd., Gloucester.—**Plant for Electrification of Engines and Pumps, etc.:** English Electric Co., Ltd., Bradford & Stafford.—**Ribbons, Lettered, Hat:** W. H. Grant & Co., Coventry; T. Stevens (Coventry), Ltd., Coventry.—**Smiths' Work:** Carron Co., Falkirk; Douglass Bros., Ltd., Blaydon-on-Tyne; Horseley Bridge & Eng. Co., Ltd., Tipton; Hughes-Johnson Stampings, Ltd., Langley, near Birmingham; Laird & Son, Ltd., Irvine; W. Renwick, Blaydon-on-Tyne; Ruston & Hornsby, Ltd., Grantham; T. B. Wellings & Co., Ltd., Old Hill.—**Socks, Thin:** A. Kemp, Leicester; F. Main, South Wigston; A. Yates & Co., Leicester.—**Steel, Mild, Hoops:** Guest, Keen & Nettelfolds, Ltd., Rotherham, Newport, Mon.—**Steel Plates, Chequered:** Port Talbot Steel Co., Ltd., Port Talbot; South Durham Steel & Iron Co., Ltd., Stockton-on-Tees.—**Steel Plates, Non-Magnetic:** Sir W. G. Armstrong Whitworth & Co., Ltd., London, S.W.—**Steel Plates (H.S.T.) Quality:** Guest, Keen & Nettelfolds, Ltd., Cardiff.—**Steel Roller Fireproof Shutters:** A. L. Gibson, Twickenham.—**Steel Sections (Angles, etc.):** Cargo Fleet Iron Co., Ltd., Middlesbrough; D. Colville & Sons, Ltd., Glasgow; Dorman, Long & Co., Ltd., Middlesbrough; Frodingham Iron & Steel Co., Ltd., Scunthorpe.—**Steel Ship Plates:** South Durham Steel & Iron Co., Ltd., Stockton-on-Tees; Dorman, Long & Co., Ltd., Middlesbrough; Guest, Keen & Nettelfolds, Ltd., Cardiff.—**Steel Ship Sheets, Tensile Tested:** Park Gate Iron & Steel Co., Ltd., Rotherham; South Durham Steel & Iron Co., Ltd., Stockton-on-Tees; Steel Co. of Scotland, Ltd., Glasgow.—**Stockings, Thin:** A. Yates & Co., Leicester.—**Suit Cases:** M. & A. Hess, London, S.E.—**Tea, Blended:** Mazawattee Tea Co., Ltd., London, E.C.; Ferguson, Holness & Co., Ltd., London, E.C.; Kearley & Tonge, Ltd., London, E.C.—**Tiles:** Gibbons, Hinton & Co., Ltd., Brierley Hill; Maw & Co., Ltd., Jackfield, Shropshire.—**Timber, English:** R. Batcheller & Sons, Ltd., Maidstone, Kent; Bowerman & Sons, Ltd., Bridgewater, Somerset; East & Son, Ltd., Berkhamsted, Herts; E. C. White & Son, Ltd., Basingstoke, Hants; C. Miles & Sons, Stamford, Lincs; Child & Son, Slinfold, Sussex; C. R. Claridge, Exeter, Devon; A. Turner & Son, Ltd., Lewes, Sussex.—**Valves, Safety:** Cockburns, Ltd., Cardonald, Glasgow.—**X-Ray Apparatus:** A. E. Dean, London, E.C.; Newton & Wright, Ltd., London, N.

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and New Inn Barracks: T. Lawrie & Co., Glasgow. Strensall Camp, Yorks; Oxtoby & Sons, Yorks.—**Building Works and Services:** Colchester, Abbey Fields; Colchester Cavalry Barracks: F. Hutton & Son, Birch, near Colchester. Repair to Parade Ground, South Minden Barracks, Deepcut; Repairs to Parade Ground, Aldershot (Blenheim Barracks): G. Kemp, Stroud & Co., Ltd., Aldershot. Royal Military College, Sandhurst; McCarthy E. Fitt, Reading. Wellington Barracks: Roberts, C. P., & Co., Ltd., London, E.—**Installations:** Electric Lighting at Gosport: V. G. Middleton & Co., Ltd., London, S.W. Electric Light at St. Mary's Barracks, Chatham: G. E. Taylor & Co., London, E.C. Halifax Electric Light: Yorkshire Electric Wiring & Motor Co., Ltd., Sheffield.

AIR MINISTRY.

Accumulators: The Chloride Electrical Storage Co., Ltd., Clifton Junction, near Manchester; Peto & Radford, Ltd., London, S.W.—**Aircraft:** De Havilland Aircraft Co., Ltd., Edgware; G. Parnall & Co., Bristol; A. V. Roe & Co., Ltd., Manchester.—**Aircraft (Conversion to Dual Control):** Armstrong Whitworth Aircraft, Ltd., Coventry.—**Aircraft (Reconditioning):** Gloucestershire Aircraft Co., Ltd., Cheltenham; G. Parnall & Co., Bristol.—**Aircraft Spares:** H. G. Hawker Engineering Co., Ltd., Kingston-on-Thames; De Havilland Aircraft Co., Ltd., Edgware; Westland Aircraft Works, Yeovil; Gloucestershire Aircraft Co., Cheltenham; Bristol Aeroplane Co., Ltd., Bristol; Fairey Aviation Co., Ltd., Hayes, Middlesex.—**Aircraft Spares (Reconditioned):** H. G. Hawker Engineering Co., Ltd., Kingston-on-Thames.—**Airscrew Blades and Hubs:** Metal Airscrew Co., London, W.C.—**Ammeters:** The Western Electrical Instrument Co., Ltd., London, E.C.—**Batteries (Inert):** The General Electric Co., Ltd., London, W.C.; Siemens Bros. & Co., Ltd., London, S.E.—**Boilers (Hair):** Atkinson & Co., Ltd., London, S.E.—**Building Works Services:** Barrack Improvements (Calshot): H. G. Ross, Netley Abbey, Hants. External Services (Uxbridge): Parkinson & Sons (Blackpool), Ltd., London, W.C. Married Quarters (Bircham Newton): F. W. Shanks, Hunstanton. Motor Alternators (Kidbrooke): Electric Construction Co., Ltd., Wolverhampton. Re-roofing Shed (Kidbrooke): J. B. Edwards & Co., London, W. Slaters (Kidbrooke): Rhiwbach Quarries, Ltd., Blaenau Ffestiniog. Conversion of "Pinehurst Grange" into Officers' Quarters (Farnborough): Henry T. Hill, Cove, Hants. Dining Room, Cookhouse, etc. (Northolt): J. W. Ellingham, Ltd., Dartford, Kent. Guard House (Old Sarum): James & Crockerell, Dunnington, Salisbury. Additional Accommodation (Flowerdown): H. G. Ross, Netley Abbey, Hants. Barrack Blocks (Halton Park): Wilson, Lovatt, Ltd., Wolverhampton. Circulating Pumps (Hanau): The Pulsometer Engineering Co., Ltd., London, S.W. Married Quarters (Uxbridge): J. Laing & Sons, Ltd., London, W.C. Reconditioning Buildings (Flowerdown): H. G. Ross, Netley Abbey, Hants. Cable, Electric: Callendar Cable & Construction Co., Ltd., London, S.W.—**Canvas, Wagon Hood:** Jas. Stott, Ltd., Oldham.—**Castor Oil, Treated:** The Hull Oil Manfg. Co., Ltd., Hull.—**Coal, Welsh Steam:** Wm. Cory & Son, Ltd., London, E.C.—**Cotton Fabric (Proofing):** Campbell, Acknack & Co., Glasgow.—**Drums, Steel (5 Gallon):** The Steel Barrel Co., Ltd., Uxbridge; P. D. Mitchell, Ltd., Dundee.—**Duration Tests on Aircraft Engines:** The Bristol Aeroplane Co., Ltd., Bristol.—**Engines (Aircraft):** D. Napier & Son, Ltd., London, W.—**Felt, Grey:** Bury Felt Manufacturing Co., Ltd., Bury.—**Fire Extinguishers ("B.T."):** Minimax, Ltd., Feltham, Middlesex.—**Hangars, Portable:** Ransome, Sims & Jefferies, Ltd., Ipswich.—**Jackets, Blue:** Jas. Smith & Co. (Derby), Ltd., Derby.—**Jigs and Tools for Aircraft Engines:** D. Napier & Son, Ltd., London, W.—**Linen Old Rags:** S. & M. Myers, Ltd., London, E.—**Magnetos:** The British Thomson-Houston Co., Ltd., Coventry.—**Mahogany:** Wm. Mallinson & Sons, London, E.; Turner & Hunter, Ltd., London, E.—**Mattresses:** W. C. Nightingale, London, W.—**Oil, Mineral Lubricating for Aircraft Engines:** F. How & Co., London, E.—**Paint, Blue Grey:** Hadfields (Merton), Ltd., Mitcham.—**Rapson Tyres:** Rapson Tyre & Jack Co., Ltd., New Maldon, Surrey.—**Receivers:** E. W. Sullivan, Ltd., London, E.C.; The Western Electric Co., Ltd., London, E.C.—**Receivers, W/T.:** E. W. Sullivan, Ltd., London, E.—**Repair of Aircraft Engines:** The Aircraft Disposal Co., Ltd., London, W.C.—**Spreaders W/T.:** McGruer Hollow Spear Co., Ltd., London, S.E.—**Steel Tubes for Catapult Launching Gear:** Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., Manchester.—**Supply of Aircraft Engines:** The Bristol Aeroplane Co., Ltd., Bristol.—**Timber, Imported Swedish:** G. H. Renton & Co., Ltd., London, E.C.—**Tools for Aircraft Engines:** D. Napier & Son, Ltd., London, W.—**Transmitters:** C. A. Carter & Co., London, N.—**Transmitters and Receivers:** Gambrell Bros., Ltd., London, S.W.—**Trousers:** Blue: John Hammond & Co. (1922), Ltd., Newcastle, Staffs.—**Valves:** Mullard Radio Valve Co., Ltd., London, S.W.—**Valves W/T.:** The General Electric Co., Ltd., London, W.—**Walkways for Metal Vices:** Fairey Aviation Co., Hayes, Middlesex.

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