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

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

EMPLOYMENT showed a further improvement in March.

Insured Persons in work.—It is provisionally estimated that at 14th March, 1938, the number of insured persons, aged 16–64, in employment in Great Britain, exclusive of persons within the agricultural scheme, was approximately 11,380,000. This was 56,000 more than at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of about 16,000 as compared with 15th March, 1937.

Numbers Unemployed (excluding Persons normally in Casual Employment).—At 14th March, 1938, there were 1,350,121 persons on the registers of Employment Exchanges in Great Britain who were out of a situation. This was 54,791 less than at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of about 24,000 as compared with 15th March, 1937.

Numbers Temporarily Stopped.—At 14th March, 1938, there were registered as unemployed in Great Britain, 331,247 persons who were on short time or otherwise temporarily suspended from work. This was 3,837 less than at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of about 174,000 as compared with 15th March, 1937.

Numbers unemployed normally in Casual Employment.—At 14th March, 1938, there were on the registers in Great Britain 67,613 unemployed persons who normally seek a livelihood by means of jobs of short duration. This was 2,812 less than at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of about 4,000 as compared with 15th March, 1937.

Applicants for Benefit or Allowances.—The total of 1,748,981 persons on the registers at 14th March, 1938, included 994,659 persons with claims admitted for insurance benefit, 549,315 persons with applications authorised for unemployment allowances, 48,802 persons with applications for benefit or allowances under consideration, and 156,205 other persons, of whom 33,863 were under 16 years of age.

Percentages Unemployed.—Among persons, aged 16–64, insured under the general scheme of unemployment insurance (including the special schemes for the banking and insurance industries), the percentage unemployed in Great Britain and Northern Ireland at 14th March, 1938, was 12·9, as compared with 13·2 at 14th February, 1938. Among persons within the agricultural scheme, the percentages were 6·4 at 14th March, 1938, and 8·4 at 14th February, 1938. For the two schemes combined the percentage for 14th March, 1938, was 12·6, as compared with 13·0 for 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis, there was an increase at 14th March, 1938, as compared with 15th March, 1937, of about 1·7 in the percentage unemployed among persons within the general scheme, and of about 1·4 among persons within the agricultural scheme. For the two schemes combined

the percentage rose by about 1·6 between these two dates.

Industries in which the Principal Variations occurred.—There was an improvement in employment, between 14th February and 14th March, in building and public works contracting, agriculture, tailoring and dress-making, the motor vehicle, cycle and aircraft industry, shipbuilding and shiprepairing, the distributive trades, and hotel and boarding house service. On the other hand, employment declined in coal mining, the iron and steel industry, metal goods manufacture, and most of the textile trades.

WAGES.

In the industries for which statistics are regularly compiled by the Department, the changes in rates of wages reported to have come into operation in March resulted in an increase of about £24,000 in the weekly full-time wages of 440,000 workpeople, and in a decrease of £100 in those of 2,000 workpeople.

The principal groups of workpeople whose wages were increased were coal miners in Northumberland, Yorkshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Cannock Chase, Warwickshire, and Scotland. The decreases affected mainly coal miners in Somerset, and iron puddlers and millmen in the West of Scotland.

The changes so far reported in the three completed months of 1938 are estimated to have resulted in a net increase of about £217,250 per week in the full-time wages of about 2,150,000 workpeople, and in a net decrease of £250 in those of about 4,000 workpeople.

COST OF LIVING.

At 1st April the average level of retail prices of the commodities taken into account in the statistics compiled by the Ministry of Labour (including food, rent, clothing, fuel and light, and miscellaneous items) was approximately 54 per cent. above the level of July, 1914, as compared with 56 per cent. at 1st March, 1938, and 51 per cent. at 1st April, 1937. For food only the percentages were 37, 40 and 35, respectively.

These 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, the changes in the prices of the various articles included are combined proportionately to 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.

TRADE DISPUTES.

The number of trade disputes involving stoppages of work reported to the Department as beginning in March was 79. In addition 19 disputes which began before March were still in progress at the beginning of that month. The number of workpeople involved in these 98 disputes, including workpeople thrown out of work at the establishments where the disputes occurred, was about 30,000, and the aggregate duration of the disputes in March is estimated at about 113,000 working days.

therefore, cannot be accurately ascertained by deducting the aggregate amount of the reductions from the aggregate amount of increases recorded. The figures, however, afford an indication of the general trend of money rates of wages during the period covered.

Table with columns: Year, Approximate Number of separate individuals* reported as affected by (Net Increases, Net Decreases), Estimated Net Weekly Amount of Change in Rates of Wages (Increases, Decreases), Estimated Net Weekly Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Rates of Wages of all Workpeople affected.

It will be seen that the number of workpeople affected by increases in wage rates in 1937 and the aggregate net weekly increase in rates of wages were the largest since 1920.

HOURS OF LABOUR.

In the industries for which statistics are available† the number of workpeople whose normal weekly hours of labour were reported as having been changed in 1937 was approximately 392,000. Of these nearly 391,000 had their working time reduced by an average of about 2½ hours a week, and about 1,500 had their hours increased by an average of approximately 3¼ hours a week.

The following Table shows the number of workpeople whose hours of labour were reported as changed in each of the years 1915 to 1937 in the industries for which statistics are available, with the aggregate net amount of the change in weekly hours:—

Table with columns: Year, Approximate Number of Workpeople whose Hours of Labour were (Increased, Reduced), Aggregate Net Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Weekly Hours.

Since the widespread reduction in hours of labour in the years 1919 and 1920 there was comparatively little movement in working hours until 1936, apart from those of building trade operatives and coal miners. The former contributed the great majority of those for whom changes were recorded in the years 1922 and 1923, while coal miners formed the majority of the totals shown for the years 1926, 1930 and 1931.

* In addition to the workpeople for whom figures are given in the above Table, there have been in each year since 1920 (except 1922) certain workpeople whose wages were increased and decreased by equal amounts during the year. The numbers of such workpeople are as follows: 1921, 110,000; 1923, 404,000; 1924, 372,000; 1925, 332,000; 1926, 447,000; 1927, 62,000; 1928, 187,000; 1929, 295,000; 1930, 85,000; 1931, 7,000; 1932, 16,000; 1933, 114,000; 1934, 122,000; 1935, 110,000; 1936, 21,000; 1937, 128,000. † The statistics are exclusive of changes affecting agricultural labourers, Government employees, domestic servants, shop assistants and clerks.

EXTENSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.

On 4th April, 1938, a number of workpeople, provisionally estimated at approximately a quarter of a million, became insurable against unemployment, some under the General Scheme and some under the Agricultural Scheme of unemployment insurance.

The workpeople who then became insurable under the General Scheme are, domestic workers employed in businesses not carried on for purposes of gain, e.g. by Local Authorities, Government Departments, Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes, clubs, hostels, canteens, hospitals and religious bodies. In addition, chauffeurs employed either by bodies such as those mentioned above or by private individuals, and other workers engaged in driving or attending to mechanically propelled vehicles who were not previously insurable, became insurable under the General Scheme.

The workpeople who became insurable under the Agricultural Scheme are outdoor domestic servants employed as boatmen, coachmen, gamekeepers, gatekeepers, ghillies, grooms, hunt servants, lodgekeepers, kennelmen, rabbit trappers, rangers, riverkeepers, stablemen, warreners and water bailiffs.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ORDERS.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS ORDER 1938* ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AND REDUCTION IN CONTRIBUTIONS (AGRICULTURE) ORDER 1938.†

A Summary of the Reports of the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee on the financial condition of the Unemployment Fund at 31st December, 1937 appeared on page 89 of the March, 1938, issue of this GAZETTE. The Committee found that there were disposable surpluses in both the General and the Agricultural Accounts of the Fund, and they made recommendations as to the way in which the sums available for disposal should be used to improve the provision for unemployment.

The Minister of Labour accepted the Committee's recommendations and laid before both Houses of Parliament draft Orders for giving effect to them. The draft Orders were approved by the House of Lords on 10th March, 1938, and by the House of Commons on 25th March, 1938. The Orders were made by the Minister on 25th March.

The Unemployment Insurance (Additional Benefits) Order provides for two amendments in the General Scheme of Unemployment Insurance. In the first place it amends Section 31 of the Unemployment Insurance Act 1935 (as amended by the Unemployment Insurance (Additional Days and Waiting Period) Order 1937) so that when additional "days," i.e. days of benefit in excess of 156 days in a benefit year, are computed, claimants will lose only one additional "day" for every ten days' benefit drawn in the preceding five years instead of one day for every eight days' benefit drawn. This amendment only affects benefit years beginning on or after 1st January, 1938. Secondly, the Order amends Section 38 of the Act so as to increase the weekly rate of benefit for an adult dependant from 9s. to 10s. This provision takes effect on and after 31st March, 1938.

The Unemployment Insurance (Additional Benefits and Reduction in Contributions) (Agriculture) Order applies only to the Agricultural Scheme of Unemployment Insurance. It provides for the amendment in two ways of Section 31 of the Unemployment Insurance Act 1935. Under the first amendment the rule which requires the payment of ten fresh contributions since the exhaustion of benefit will only apply in cases where benefit has been exhausted through the receipt of the maximum of 300 days of benefit in a benefit year. Under the second amendment the waiting period for benefit is reduced from six days to three, thus bringing the Agricultural Scheme into line with the General Scheme in this respect.

The Order also amends as from 4th July, 1938, the Second Schedule to the Unemployment Insurance (Agriculture) Act 1936, the effect of the amendment being to reduce by ¾d. the weekly rates of agricultural contributions payable by employers and employed persons in respect of insured contributors who have attained the age of 18. Finally, the Order amends the Third Schedule to the Agriculture Act by increasing the weekly rate of agricultural benefit for young men between the ages of 18 and 21 years from 10s. 6d. to 12s.

The first amendment, and the last amendment, take effect on and after the 31st March, 1938. The amendment reducing the waiting period is limited so that no person may by virtue of it receive benefit to which he would not otherwise have been entitled in respect of any day before the 31st March, 1938.

There is a consequential amendment to Section 35 of the Unemployment Insurance Act 1935.

TRADE BOARDS ACTS: PROPOSED APPLICATION TO BAKING TRADE.

The Minister of Labour has given Notice that he intends to make a special Order applying the Trades Boards Acts, 1908 and 1918, to the baking trade.

A copy of the Notice and of the Draft Special Order is reproduced on page 160 of this GAZETTE.

In the event of objections being made to the Draft Special Order, on or before 11th May, and not being met or withdrawn, it will be necessary, before the Order is made, for a Public Enquiry to be held. In this event public notice will be given.

* Statutory Rules and Orders, 1938, No. 292. H.M. Stationery Office; price 1d. net (1½d. post free). † Statutory Rules and Orders, 1938, No. 293. H.M. Stationery Office; price 1d. net (1½d. post free).

ENQUIRY INTO WORKING-CLASS FAMILY BUDGETS.

In the issue of this GAZETTE for October, 1937, particulars were given of an enquiry which is being undertaken by the Department into the weekly expenditure of working class households. The main object of the enquiry is to provide the data required for a revision of the basis of the official cost of living index figures, but it is also expected to furnish information of special value in the study of current problems relating to diet and nutrition.

The enquiry is to relate to four separate weeks, at quarterly intervals. Over 13,700 households have supplied budgets, giving details of their expenditure in one week in October or November, 1937, and over 12,800 of these have supplied further budgets for a week in January or February, 1938. The households which supplied budgets for these two weeks are being visited during the week ending 23rd April, and invited to furnish further particulars in respect of the following week, ending 30th April, 1938. The forms on which the information is to be given are similar to those used for the previous enquiries. A final collection of budgets will be made in July.

As on previous occasions, a payment of 2s. 6d. will be made for each completed budget supplied on the official enquiry forms, in recognition of the time and labour involved in keeping the necessary records and in filling up the forms, and a similar payment will be made for each budget supplied in July. To those households which supply budgets for all the four weeks covered by the enquiry, a further payment of 2s. 6d. (making 12s. 6d. in all) will be made.

The Department is greatly indebted to all those households who supplied information in October and January last, to the members of the local committees who assisted in organising the enquiries within each district, and to the large numbers of voluntary helpers who undertook the work of visiting the households, distributing the forms and collecting the budgets. The information supplied by individual households is being regarded as strictly confidential, and will be used only in compiling general statistics, and in view of the great social value of the information which is being obtained, the Department hopes that it may again rely on the help of all those who co-operated in the enquiries made in October and January last.

OUTPUT, COSTS, PROCEEDS AND WAGES IN THE COAL-MINING INDUSTRY.

STATISTICAL summaries* of the output, costs of production, proceeds and profits of the coal-mining industry for the quarter ended 31st December, 1937, and for the year 1937,† prepared by the Mines Department, have recently been published. These summaries are based partly upon returns made for the purpose of wages ascertainties for certain districts and partly upon other returns supplied by individual colliery owners.

FOURTH QUARTER OF 1937.

The return for the quarter ended 31st December, 1937, relates to undertakings which produced 60,549,286 tons of saleable coal, or about 97 per cent. of the total quantity raised in the quarter, of which 56,287,555 tons were disposable commercially, the balance being used for mine consumption or miners' coal.

The net costs, after deducting the proceeds of miners' coal, amounted to £42,454,444, equivalent to 15s. 1.02d. per ton, of which 10s. 0.16d. per ton represented wages costs. The proceeds of commercial disposals amounted to £46,738,615, equivalent to 16s. 7.29d. per ton. There was thus a credit balance of £4,284,171, or 1s. 6.27d. per ton.

The average number of workpeople employed was 749,564, and the number of man-shifts worked was 51,970,943. The average output per man-shift worked was 23.30 cwt., and the average cash earnings per man-shift worked were 10s. 10.14d. The average value of allowances in kind was 4.97d. per shift.

The following Table shows the average earnings in each of the principal districts, together with the average value of allowances in kind. The corresponding figures for the fourth quarter of 1936 are given for comparison:—

Table with columns: District, Oct.-Dec., 1937 (Average cash earnings per shift, Average value of allowances in kind per shift), Oct.-Dec., 1936 (Average cash earnings per shift, Average value of allowances in kind per shift).

* Cmd. 5698 and 5699. H.M. Stationery Office; price 1d. each net. (1½d. Post free). † In the case of South Wales and Monmouthshire the periods covered are the quarter ended 31st January, 1937, and the quarter and year ended 31st January, 1938.

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER, 1937.

The summary for the year ended 31st December, 1937, covers undertakings which produced 233,192,286 tons of saleable coal, or about 97 per cent. of the total quantity raised in the year, of which 217,037,110 tons were disposable commercially.

The net costs, after deducting the proceeds of miners' coal, amounted to £158,952,343, equivalent to 14s. 7.77d. per ton, of which 9s. 9.84d. represented wages costs. The proceeds of commercial disposals amounted to £172,299,475, equivalent to 15s. 10.53d. per ton. There was thus a credit balance of £13,347,132, or 1s. 2.76d. per ton.

The average number of workpeople employed was 739,215, and the number of man-shifts worked was 199,754,542. The average output per man-shift worked was 23.35 cwt., and the average cash earnings per man-shift worked were 10s. 8.04d. The average value of allowances in kind was 4.74d.

ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF INSURED PERSONS IN EMPLOYMENT IN GREAT BRITAIN.

In the issue of this GAZETTE for January, 1938 (page 10), a statement was published giving for the period January, 1936, to December, 1937, estimates of the numbers of insured persons, aged 16-64, exclusive of agricultural workers, in employment in Great Britain. In the following Table the figures are given for each month from January, 1937, to March, 1938. The figures in column 6 have been obtained by deducting from the total estimated numbers insured the numbers recorded as unemployed and the numbers directly involved in trade disputes, together with an allowance of 3½ per cent. of the numbers insured in respect of absences from work through sickness and other forms of unrecorded non-employment apart from "recognised" holidays.

Table with columns: Date, Estimated Total Insured, aged 16-64 (excluding agriculture), Number Unemployed, Number not recorded as unemployed, Estimated Number in Employment after allowance for sickness, etc., (A) including persons directly involved in Trade Disputes; (B) excluding such persons.

Index Numbers. (Average 1924 = 100.)

Table with columns: Date, Index Numbers (Average 1924 = 100) for various categories.

The figures for July, 1937, to March, 1938, are provisional, and subject to possible revision when information becomes available as to the number of unemployment books exchanged in July, 1938.

* A revised procedure for counting the unemployed was introduced in September, 1937, under which persons subsequently found to be in employment at the date of the count are excluded from the figures. At 13th September, 1937, the count of the unemployed was made on both the original and the revised bases, and the figures so obtained have been utilised for the purposes of linking the index numbers for September, 1937, to March, 1938, and the averages of the index numbers for the year 1937, with those for earlier dates, in order to obtain a continuous and comparable series of index numbers. The averages for 1937 of the actual numbers in cols. (3) to (6) of the first part of the Table, however, are computed from the figures (a) on the old basis for January to August, and (b) on the new basis for later months, and are not strictly comparable with those given for 1936. It is estimated that on the old basis the average numbers in employment in 1937, shown in column 6, would be about 11,480,000.

UNEMPLOYMENT SUMMARY BY DISTRICTS.

The following Table shows the percentages unemployed among insured workpeople, aged 16-64 years, at 14th March, 1938, classified by districts:—

Table with columns: Division, General Scheme (Including Special Schemes), Agricultural Scheme, Males, Females, Total, Comparison with a month before (totals).

UNEMPLOYMENT DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS.

The following Table shows the numbers of unemployed persons (insured and uninsured) on the registers of Employment Exchanges at one date in each month since March, 1937:—

Table with columns: Date, Great Britain (Men 18 and over, Boys 14-17, Women 18 and over, Girls 14-17, Total 14 and over), Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Total 14 and over).

The following Table shows the percentages unemployed among insured persons, aged 16-64, in Great Britain and Northern Ireland at one date in each month since March, 1937:—

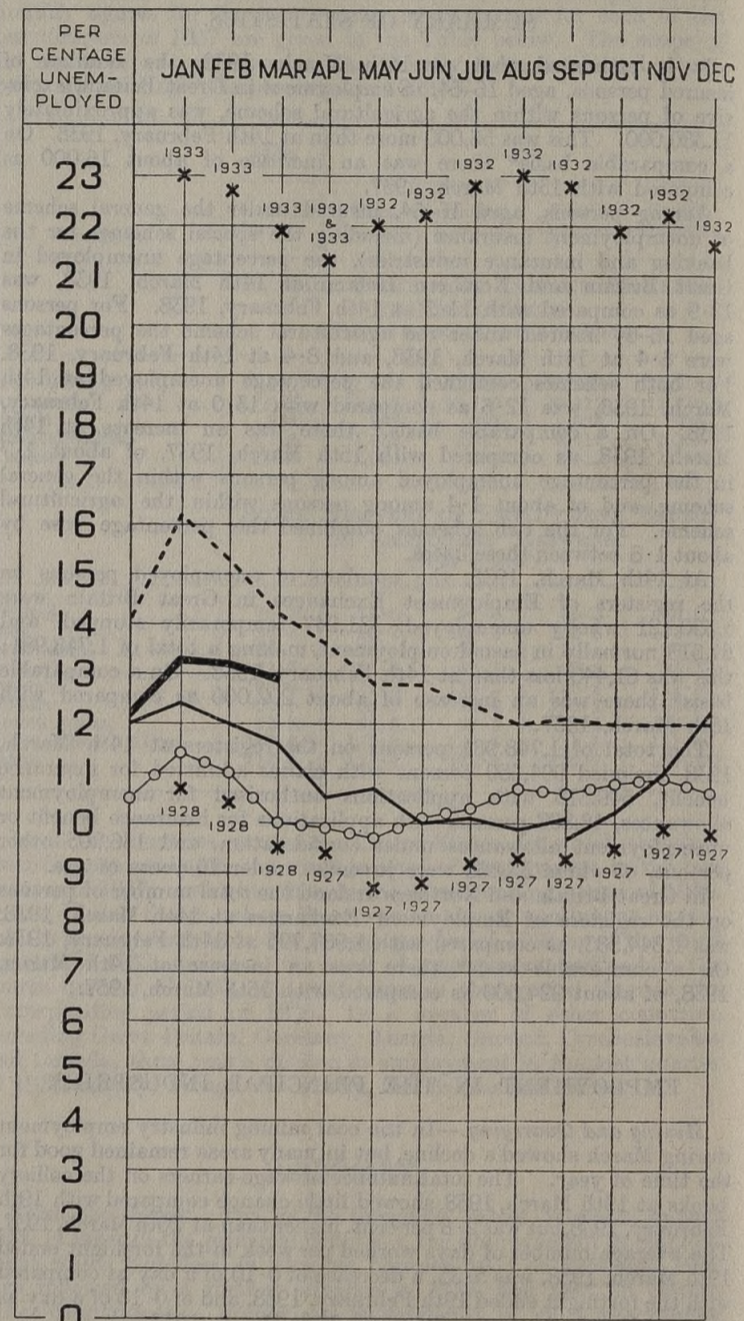
Table with columns: Date, General Scheme (Including Special Schemes), Agricultural Scheme, Males and Females, Wholly Unemployed (including Casuals), Temporarily Stopped.

* The method of counting the unemployed was altered in September, 1937 (see article on page 379 of the October, 1937, issue of this GAZETTE). The effect of the change is shown by the separate figures for September, 1937, given in the Tables, and by the two points for that month, on the chart in the next column.

UNEMPLOYMENT CHART.

PERCENTAGES UNEMPLOYED* AMONG INSURED PERSONS, AGED 16-64, IN GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND (EXCLUDING THE AGRICULTURAL SCHEME).

1938. 1936. 1937.† Mean for 1924-29.‡ X The crosses indicate the minimum and maximum monthly percentages unemployed during the years 1924-1936.‡



VACANCIES NOTIFIED TO, AND FILLED BY, EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES.

(GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.)

Table with columns: Four weeks ended 21st Mar., 1938; Period 16th March, 1937, to 21st March, 1938; Vacancies Notified; Vacancies Filled; Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a year before.

* See footnote† in previous column. † See footnote* in previous column. ‡ Excluding the period April, 1926, to March, 1927. § "Vacancies Filled" include certain types of cases (described as Class B engagements) in which the work of the Exchanges was limited; for instance, obtaining for an employer former employees or placing the same men in relief work in alternate weeks.

EMPLOYMENT IN SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES.

COAL MINING.

EMPLOYMENT during March showed a decline, but in many areas remained good for the time of year. At 14th March the number of insured workpeople recorded as temporarily stopped showed a marked increase in Nottingham and Leicester and certain South Wales districts as compared with 14th February, but in other districts there was little change.

The percentage unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, was 11.8 at 14th March, 1938, as compared with 11.2 at 14th February, 1938. The percentage wholly unemployed decreased by 0.1 (from 9.4 to 9.3), but the percentage temporarily stopped increased by 0.7 (from 1.8 to 2.5). On a comparable basis there was a decrease of about 2.7* in the total percentage as compared with 15th March, 1937.

The numbers and percentages unemployed among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, in the respective areas at 14th March, 1938, and the increases or decreases in the percentages as compared with 14th February, 1938, and with 15th March, 1937*, were as shown below.

Table with columns: Area, Insured Persons (aged 16-64) recorded as Unemployed at 14th March, 1938, Numbers (Wholly Unemployed, Temporary Stopped, Total), Percentages, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) in Total Percentages as compared with a Month before, Year before.

The following Table shows, for the principal coal mining districts, the total number of wage earners on the colliery books at 19th March, 1938, and the average number of days worked per week† during the preceding fortnight, as shown by returns obtained by the Mines Department. Small numbers of workpeople employed at coal mines in raising or handling minerals other than coal are included in the totals.

Table with columns: Districts, Total Number of Wage Earners on Colliery Books (19th Mar., 1938), Average Number of Days worked per week at the Mines (19th Mar., 1938), Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a Month before, Year before.

* See footnote* on page 135. † The figures in this and the following articles show the number of days (allowance being made in all the calculations for short time) on which coal, iron, etc., were 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.

The average number of coal winding days lost in Great Britain during the fortnight ended 19th March, 1938, was 0.43 of a day per week, of which 0.35 of a day was due to want of trade. The corresponding figures for the fortnight ended 19th February, 1938, were 0.33 and 0.25 of a day per week, respectively, and for the fortnight ended 20th March, 1937, 0.25 and 0.17 of a day per week, respectively. The average non-winding time, for each of the three periods under review, was about one-fifth of a day per week.

The output of coal in Great Britain for the four weeks ended 19th March, 1938, as reported to the Mines Department, was 20,349,500 tons, as compared with 20,507,100 tons in the four weeks ended 19th February, 1938, and 20,464,400 tons in the four weeks ended 20th March, 1937.

IRON MINING.

EMPLOYMENT during March showed a decline but was good on the whole. The percentage unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, in the iron ore and ironstone mining industry was 9.3 at 14th March, 1938, as compared with 7.8 at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis* the percentage for 14th March, 1938, was about the same as for 15th March, 1937.

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

Table with columns: Districts, Number of Workpeople employed at Mines included in the Returns (Fortnight ended 19th March, 1938), Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a Month before, Year before, Average No. of Days worked per week at the Mines (Fortnight ended 19th March, 1938), Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a Month before, Year before.

SHALE MINING.

THE number of workpeople employed at the West Lothian mines during the fortnight ended 19th March, 1938, by firms making returns was 2,086, an increase of 0.9 per cent. as compared with February, 1938, and of 2.3 per cent. as compared with March, 1937.

The average number of days worked per week† at the mines making returns was 6.00 in March, 1938, as compared with 5.89 in February, 1938, and 5.93 in March, 1937.

PIG IRON INDUSTRY.

EMPLOYMENT during March showed a decline but continued good in most districts.

The percentage unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, was 11.1 at 14th March, 1938, as compared with 8.5 at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of about 0.1* in the percentage as compared with 15th March, 1937.

Returns received by the British Iron and Steel Federation from firms engaged in the production of pig iron, employing 17,287 workpeople at the end of March, 1938, showed a decrease of 1.2 per cent. in the numbers employed compared with February, 1938, but an increase of 15.3 per cent. compared with March, 1937.

The number of furnaces in operation at the end of February, 1938, was 118, compared with 124 at the end of February, 1938, and 117 at the end of March, 1937. The figures are analysed below:—

Table with columns: Districts, Number of Furnaces in Blast (Mar. 1938, Feb. 1938, Mar. 1937), Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on Month before, Year before.

The production of pig iron in March, 1938, amounted to 714,600 tons compared with 693,300 tons in February, 1938, and 680,300 tons in March, 1937.

* See footnote* on page 135. † See footnote† in previous column.

IRON AND STEEL MANUFACTURE.

EMPLOYMENT continued to decline during March. In Wales employment was adversely affected by the depression in the tinplate industry. The percentage unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, was 16.3 at 14th March, 1938, as compared with 14.6 at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of about 4.7* in the percentage as compared with 15th March, 1937.

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

Table with 10 columns: DEPARTMENTS, No. of Workpeople employed by Firms making returns, Aggregate number of Shifts, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a, Per cent. Includes rows for Open Hearth Melting Furnaces, Rolling Mills, Forging and Pressing, etc.

The average number of shifts during which the works were open was 5.6 in each of the three periods.

The production of steel ingots and castings, as shown in returns from the British Iron and Steel Federation, amounted to 1,115,800 tons in March, 1938, as compared with 1,057,600 tons in February, 1938, and with 1,109,500 tons in March, 1937.

TINPLATE AND STEEL SHEET INDUSTRIES.

EMPLOYMENT in the tinplate industry in March showed a further decline. The percentage unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, was 38.7 at 14th March, 1938, as compared with 35.2 at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of about 2.5* in the percentage as compared with 15th March, 1937.

In steel sheet manufacture employment showed little change. The following Table shows the number of mills in operation at those works in respect of which returns were received for the week ended 19th March, 1938, and comparisons with a month before and a year before :-

Table with 7 columns: Works, Week ended 19th Mar., 1938, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a, Number of Works Open, Number of Mills in Operation, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a. Includes rows for Tinplate and Steel Sheet.

ENGINEERING.

Employment during March showed little general change and was good on the whole. It declined slightly in general engineering (mainly textile machinery manufacture) and in electrical engineering, but was still good in the former section and very good in the latter. There was a slight improvement in the other principal sections of the industry; employment was good in motor vehicle manufacture, fair in marine engineering, and moderate in constructional engineering.

Compared with a year ago employment was better in marine engineering, but showed a decline in the other principal sections of the industry; in the industry as a whole it was worse in most administrative divisions.

* See footnote * on page 135. † The figures relate to the number of shifts during which the works were in operation, taken in conjunction with the number of men employed. No account is taken of time lost by individuals owing to absenteeism, etc., and it is not intended to imply that the number of shifts shown were actually worked by all the men employed. Works closed are omitted in computing the average number of shifts.

The following Table shows the numbers and percentages unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) at 14th March, 1938, among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, and the increases or decreases as compared with a month before and a year before* :-

Large table with 15 columns: Division, Numbers of Insured Workpeople, aged 16-64, Unemployed at 14th March, 1938, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with a, Month before, Year before. Includes rows for London, South-Eastern, etc., and a summary for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

On the North-East Coast employment in marine engineering improved slightly and was moderate; it continued moderate in general engineering. In Yorkshire and Lincolnshire employment in general engineering continued fairly good. Employment in Lancashire and Cheshire was fairly good in motor vehicle manufacture and fair in general engineering; a further decline occurred in textile engineering and it was moderate in that section.

In Scotland employment showed little change and was fair both in marine engineering and in general engineering. Employment in Wales declined and was slack; in Northern Ireland it continued moderate to slack.

SHIPBUILDING AND SHIP-REPAIRING.

EMPLOYMENT at 14th March showed a slight improvement as compared with 14th February. The improvement, which affected all the principal areas except London and Northern Ireland, was most marked on the North-East Coast. Shortages of certain classes of skilled labour were reported from some districts. Compared with March, 1937, employment was better on the whole.

The following Table shows the numbers and percentages unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, at 14th March, 1938, and the increases or decreases as compared with a month before and a year before* :-

Table with 10 columns: Division, Insured Workpeople aged 16-64 Unemployed at 14th March, 1938, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Numbers Unemployed as compared with a, Percentage Unemployed at 14th March, 1938, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Percentage Unemployed as compared with a, Month before, Year before. Includes rows for London, South-Eastern, etc., and a summary for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Statistics of shipbuilding in the first quarter of 1938 are given on page 158.

* See footnote * on page 135.

COTTON INDUSTRY.

EMPLOYMENT showed a further decline between 14th February and 14th March, particularly in the manufacturing department, and was worse than in March, 1937.

The percentage unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, was 24.0 at 14th March, 1938, as compared with 23.3 at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of about 14.0* in the percentage as compared with 15th March, 1937. For 14th March and 14th February, 1938, the corresponding figures in the preparing and spinning departments were 23.2 and 23.8, and in the manufacturing department 24.9 and 22.7. On a comparable basis there were increases in the percentages as compared with 15th March, 1937, of about 13.3* in the preparing and spinning departments and of about 14.7* in the manufacturing department.

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

Table with 10 columns: DEPARTMENTS, Number of Workpeople, Total Wages paid to all Workpeople, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a, Month before, Year before. Includes rows for Preparing, Spinning, Weaving, etc., and a summary for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Returns from firms employing about 48,600 workpeople in the week ended 19th March, 1938, showed that about 14½ per cent. of these workpeople were on short time in that week, losing 14 hours each on the average. These figures do not take account of other forms of under-employment, e.g. reductions in the number of looms.

At Ashton-under-Lyne and at Stockport employment declined. At Stalybridge there was rather less short time worked; at Hyde, however, employment declined further and short-time working increased. Employment at Glossop improved slightly, but was still generally bad.

In the Oldham district short-time working continued. Employment showed a further slight decline, in both the spinning and manufacturing departments. A large amount of machinery was stopped in the velvet section, and employment was very poor; it was, however, fair or fairly good with weavers of fustians, calicoes, fancy and heavy goods.

At Bolton employment continued bad with spinners and slack with cardroom workers; it remained bad with weavers, winders and warpers, and showed increased slackness in the quilt section. At Leigh there was much short time worked and employment continued bad. At Rochdale and at Bury there was little general change and employment was bad.

At Preston, Colne and Great Harwood employment showed little change; at Accrington, Burnley, Chorley and Nelson it declined. In the spinning departments at Darwen, Padiham and Blackburn employment showed little general change, but in the manufacturing department it declined. In the Rossendale Valley employment remained bad, and was worse than a year ago.

In Yorkshire employment was bad at most centres. The following Table shows the number of men and women (other than casuals) on the registers of 56 Employment Exchanges in the principal cotton trade centres of Lancashire and Cheshire at 14th March, 1938 :-

Table with 10 columns: Department, Numbers (excluding Casuals) on the Registers at 14th March, 1938, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) as compared with a month before. Includes rows for Card and Blowing Room, Spinning, Beaming, etc., and a summary for Total.

* See footnote * on page 135. † Comparison of earnings is affected by changes in rates of wages.

WOOL TEXTILE INDUSTRY.

EMPLOYMENT during March showed little change on the whole and was very slack. Short time working was fairly general.

The percentage unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, at 14th March, 1938, was 20.8, compared with 20.4 at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of 14.5* in the percentage as compared with 15th March, 1937.

Worst section.—Employment remained very slack on the whole, and was much worse than in March, 1937.

Returns from employers for the week ended 19th March, 1938, showed that, in the worst section as a whole, 38 per cent. of the workpeople covered by the returns were on short time† in that week, losing 12 hours each on the average, and 4 per cent. were on overtime, averaging 6 hours each. In the sorting, combing and preparing departments 40½ per cent. were on short time, losing 16½ hours each on the average, and 5 per cent. were on overtime averaging 8 hours each. In the spinning department 39 per cent. were on short time, losing 11½ hours each on the average, and 3½ per cent. were on overtime, averaging 4½ hours each. In the weaving department, the corresponding figures were: short time†, 39½ per cent. and 11½ hours; overtime, 2½ per cent. and 4½ hours.

Among woollenters employment remained bad. In the wool combing department employment showed a slight improvement in the crossbed carding and preparing sections, but remained slack in the merino section. There was a further slight decline among spinners and weavers and employment was very slack.

At Bradford employment improved with combers but remained poor in the spinning and weaving departments. At Shipley there was an improvement in the combing section but a decline in the spinning section. At Keighley employment improved with some firms and declined with others, but was slightly better on the whole. At Halifax there was little change and employment was slack. In the fine worsted trade at Huddersfield there was a slight decline.

Woolen section.—Employment showed some decline and continued very slack on the whole; it was much worse than in March, 1937.

Returns from employers for the week ended 19th March, 1938, showed that, in the woolen section as a whole, 42½ per cent. of the workpeople covered by the returns were on short time† in that week, losing 12 hours each on the average, and 11 per cent. were on overtime, averaging 6½ hours each. In the spinning department, 39 per cent. were on short time, losing 11 hours each on the average, and 16½ per cent. were on overtime, averaging 7 hours each. In the weaving department the corresponding figures were: short time,† 48½ per cent. and 12½ hours; overtime, 6½ per cent. and 6 hours.

In the Huddersfield and Colne Valley district employment declined and was very slack. At Leeds employment was worse than in the previous month. At Morley there was a substantial decline, especially amongst women workers in the weaving section, and much short time was worked. In the Heavy Woollen district there was a further decline at Dewsbury, and employment was poor generally.

In the blanket trade employment declined in Yorkshire and was generally bad; at Witney, however, there was a marked improvement. Among flannel workers there was little change at Rochdale, but at Saddleworth employment again declined slightly. In the West of England employment showed little change and was fair on the whole. In the South of Scotland there was a further slight improvement, but employment was still slack generally.

Carpet section.—In the carpet section there was a slight improvement on the whole, but employment was still poor generally and much short time was worked. The percentage unemployed at 14th March, 1938, was 21.7, compared with 24.3 at 14th February, 1938. On a comparable basis there was an increase of about 18.0* in the percentage as compared with 15th March, 1937.

The following Tables summarise the information received from employers who furnished returns :-

Table with 10 columns: Departments, Number of Workpeople, Total Wages paid to all Workpeople, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a, Month before, Year before. Includes rows for Worst Section, Woollen Section, Carpet Section, and Total Wool Textile Industry.

* See footnote * on page 135. † The figures given in the article do not take into account, in the case of the weaving departments, other forms of under-employment such as "playing for warps," or tending one loom instead of two. ‡ Comparison of earnings is affected by changes in rates of wages.

at 14th February, 1938; in dock, wharf and lighterage (port transport) service the corresponding figures were 30.1 and 30.9 respectively.

London.—Employment again declined, and was moderate. The following Table shows the average daily number of dock labourers employed at docks and wharves in respect of which returns were received:—

Table showing Average Daily Number of Labourers employed in Docks and at Principal Wharves in London. Columns include Period, In Docks (By the Port of London Authority, By Ship-owners, etc.), At Wharves making Returns, and Total Docks and Principal Wharves.

Tilbury.—The average daily number of dock labourers employed during March was 890, as compared with 896 in February, 1938, and with 889 in March, 1937.

North-East Coast.—Employment showed little change, and was fair on the whole.

Mersey.—Employment at Liverpool and Garston remained fair generally; at Salford it declined, mainly with casual workers, and was slack.

The average weekly number of dock labourers registered at the clearing houses under the Liverpool Docks Scheme as employed in the five weeks ended 1st April, 1938, was 11,883, compared with 12,169 in February, 1938, and with 12,220 in March, 1937.

Other Ports in England and Wales.—Employment at Cardiff and Swansea declined slightly, but was fair generally. At Bristol and Avonmouth it remained quiet. At Plymouth, employment continued to improve, and was fair; at Southampton it remained fair.

Scottish and Irish Ports.—Employment at Glasgow improved slightly; at Leith it fluctuated, but was moderate on the whole. At Dundee employment declined somewhat, particularly among casual workers; at Grangemouth it was fair, and better than a year ago. Employment at Belfast was good.

SEAMEN.

Employment among seamen showed a slight improvement which was partly seasonal, but was still slack on the whole. The percentage unemployed (including those temporarily stopped) among insured workpeople, aged 16-64, in shipping service was 24.4 at 14th March, 1938, as compared with 24.9 at 14th February, 1938.

The following Table shows the number of seamen shipped in British registered foreign-going vessels at the undermentioned ports of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:—

Table showing Number of Seamen shipped in British registered foreign-going vessels at various ports from March 1938 to March 1937. Columns include Principal Ports, March 1938, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month before, Year before, and Three Months ended March 1938 and March 1937.

* See footnote * on page 135. † It will be understood that the numbers given are the numbers of separate engagements, and not of separate individuals. ‡ Including Birkenhead and Garston. § Including Avonmouth and Portsmouth. ¶ Including Barry and Penarth.

NUMBERS ON THE REGISTERS IN THE PRINCIPAL TOWNS.

The Table below shows for each of the Employment Exchange administrative areas in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and for the principal towns therein, the number of unemployed persons registered at Employment Exchanges on 14th March, 1938:—

Large table showing Number of Persons on Register at 14th March, 1938, by Area (London Division, South-Eastern, South-Western, Midlands Division, North-Eastern, Northern Division, Scotland Division, Wales Division, Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Northern Ireland). Columns include Men, Women, Juveniles, Total, and Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) in totals as compared with 14th Feb 1938 and 15th Mar 1937.

* See footnote * on page 135. † Comparable figures are not available. ‡ The figures for Rutherglen are included. [Percentage rates of unemployment for about 760 Towns in Great Britain are given in the monthly "Local Unemployment Index."]

COMPOSITION OF UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS: GREAT BRITAIN.

ANALYSIS FOR 14TH MARCH, 1938.

Table showing Composition of Unemployment Statistics: Great Britain, Analysis for 14th March, 1938. Columns include Men (18 years and over), Boys (under 18 years), Women (18 years and over), Girls (under 18 years), and Total. Rows include A. Insured on Register, B. Others on Register, C. Total on Register, D. Insured Unemployed, and E. Total aged 14-64.

APPLICANTS FOR INSURANCE BENEFIT AND UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCES.

DIVISIONAL ANALYSIS—14TH MARCH, 1938.

CLAIMS ADMITTED FOR INSURANCE BENEFIT.†

Table showing Divisional Analysis—14th March, 1938, Claims Admitted for Insurance Benefit. Columns include Division, Men 18-64, Boys 16 & 17, Women 18-64, Girls 16 & 17, and Total 16-64. Rows include General Scheme, Agricultural Scheme, and Great Britain.

APPLICATIONS AUTHORISED FOR UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCES.‡

Table showing Applications Authorised for Unemployment Allowances. Columns include Division, Men aged 18-64, Boys aged 16 & 17, Women aged 18-64, Girls aged 16 & 17, and Total aged 16-64. Rows include London, South-Eastern, South-Western, Midlands, North-Eastern, North-Western, Northern, Scotland, Wales, and Great Britain.

* These exclusions represent (a) insurance benefit claimants in receipt of unemployment allowances in supplementation of benefit (numbering 9,027 at 14th March, 1938); and (b) persons disqualified for short periods from receiving benefit, who are shown in line 2 (b) of the Table.

† See explanation on page 144. ‡ The persons with claims admitted for insurance benefit included 9,027 for whom payment of unemployment allowances in supplementation of benefit had been authorised. § Including 5,599 persons, disqualified for short periods from receiving unemployment benefit, who had applications authorised for unemployment allowances.

PERIODS OF REGISTERED UNEMPLOYMENT.

ANALYSIS IN RESPECT OF PERSONS APPLYING FOR INSURANCE BENEFIT OR UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCES. The following Table gives an analysis, according to the length of their last spell of registered unemployment, of persons aged 16-64 applying for insurance benefit or unemployment allowances (including those applicants whose position in relation to insurance benefit and unemployment allowances had not been determined), who were registered at Employment Exchanges in Great Britain as unemployed on 14th March, 1938.

Of the persons who had been on the register for extended periods a proportion, which will increase as the period on the register increases, will have had one or more short spells of employment, lasting not more than three days each, during such periods.

Table showing Analysis in respect of persons applying for insurance benefit or unemployment allowances. Columns include Applicants aged 16-64 who had been on Register (Less than 3 months, 3 months but less than 6 months, etc.), NUMBERS, and PERCENTAGES.

Of the 974,637 applicants who had been on the register for less than three months, approximately 719,400, or 44.6 per cent. of the total number of applicants, had been on the register for less than six weeks.

UNEMPLOYMENT FUND. GREAT BRITAIN.

The following Table shows approximately the income and expenditure of the Unemployment Fund* for the periods stated:—

Table showing Income and Expenditure of the Unemployment Fund for Great Britain. Columns include Four weeks ended 26th Mar. 1938, Four weeks ended 26th Feb. 1938, and Four weeks ended 27th Mar. 1937. Rows include (1) General Account, (2) Agricultural Account, and Total Income and Expenditure.

UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCES. (GREAT BRITAIN.)

As from 1st April, 1937, the cost of unemployment allowances is met from the Unemployment Assistance Fund, which is reimbursed by the Exchequer. For the period of four weeks ended 26th March, 1938, expenditure on these allowances (excluding the cost of administration) amounted to approximately £2,783,000, as compared with £2,822,000 during the four weeks ended 26th February, 1938, and £2,712,000 during the four weeks ended 27th March, 1937.

* A detailed account of the Fund is presented to Parliament annually (see H.C. 49 of 1938, for the period ended 31st March, 1937). † Includes adjustment. ‡ Provision is made in the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1935, for the repayment (including interest) of the debt outstanding on 1st July, 1934 (amounting to £105,780,000) by half-yearly payments of £2,500,000. The first of these payments was made on 30th September, 1934, under the authority of the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1934.

UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG INSURED PERSONS AT 14th MARCH, 1938.

INDUSTRIAL ANALYSIS.

The statistics here presented show, industry by industry, the estimated number of persons, aged 16-64, insured against unemployment at July, 1937, and the total number and percentage of such persons unemployed on 14th March, 1938, distinguishing those wholly unemployed (i.e., out of a situation) from those temporarily stopped (i.e., suspended from work on the understanding that they were shortly to return to their former employment).

The Unemployment Insurance Acts provide, subject to certain exceptions, for the compulsory insurance against unemployment of substantially all employed persons. The principal classes of excepted employments are private domestic service, employment otherwise than by way of manual labour at a rate of remuneration exceeding in value £250 a year, employment as female professional nurse, and, subject to certain qualifications, employment in the teaching profession and in the police forces.

The agricultural scheme introduced by the Unemployment Insurance (Agriculture) Act, 1936, came into operation for the payment of contributions on 4th May, 1936. Unemployment benefit became payable under the scheme six months later.

An unemployment book, on which is recorded the industry in which he is employed, is issued to every insured person, and this book must be lodged at an Employment Exchange whenever the insured person makes a claim for unemployment benefit or for an unemployment allowance, or registers as unemployed without claiming benefit or an allowance.

The files of "lodged" books at the Employment Exchanges thus furnish for each industrial group a record of the unemployment of insured persons. In arriving at this figure the books of those

persons who are known to be working in an uninsured trade, or to be sick or deceased, or to have gone abroad, are excluded. Where information on these points is lacking, the books remain in the "lodged" files, and are included in the statistics of unemployment, for a period of two months from the date on which the insured person was last in touch with the Exchange.

The numbers unemployed given in the following Tables relate only to persons aged 16-64, insured against unemployment. They include insured persons of those ages maintaining registration at Employment Exchanges, together with those whose unemployment books remain lodged in the "two months" file referred to above. The figures given on pages 135 and 136 relating to persons registered at Employment Exchanges include uninsured as well as insured persons who are maintaining registration for employment, but not insured persons whose books are in the two months file.

Insured persons who are disqualified for the receipt of unemployment benefit under the trade dispute disqualification are not included in the numbers unemployed, unless they are definitely maintaining registration for other employment.

The estimated numbers of insured persons in each industry are computed once a year, in November, on the basis of information obtained at the annual exchange of unemployment books. The figures relate to the beginning of July, and similar statistics are not available for other dates in the year. In considering the figures on pages 146 and 147 it should be borne in mind that, in the case of individual industries, the percentage rates of unemployment at February, and March, 1938, have been calculated on the basis of the estimated numbers of insured persons at July, 1937, while the figures for March, 1937, used for the purpose of comparison, are calculated on the basis of the estimated numbers insured at July, 1936 (see, however, footnote § on page 147 regarding the percentage for all industries and services combined). In an industry in which a relatively large change has occurred between July, 1936, and July, 1937, in the estimated number of insured workpeople, this change may have an important effect on the relative percentage rates of unemployment.

Table with 13 columns: Industry, Wholly Unemployed (including Casuals), Temporary Stoppages, Total, and Great Britain Only. Rows include Fishing, Mining, Non-Metalliferous Mining Products, Brick, Tile, Pipe, etc., Pottery, Earthenware, etc., Glass, Chemicals, Paints, Oils, etc., Metal Manufacture, Engineering, etc., Construction and Repair of Vehicles, and Shipbuilding and Ship Repairing.

I. PERSONS, AGED 16-64, INSURED UNDER THE GENERAL SCHEME.*

Main data table for I. PERSONS, AGED 16-64, INSURED UNDER THE GENERAL SCHEME. Columns include Industry, Wholly Unemployed (including Casuals), Temporary Stoppages, Total, and Great Britain Only. Rows include Fishing, Mining, Non-Metalliferous Mining Products, Brick, Tile, Pipe, etc., Pottery, Earthenware, etc., Glass, Chemicals, Paints, Oils, etc., Metal Manufacture, Engineering, etc., Construction and Repair of Vehicles, and Shipbuilding and Ship Repairing.

* Persons insured under the special schemes for the banking and insurance industries have been included in the figures.

GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.

GREAT BRITAIN ONLY.

Main data table for GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND and GREAT BRITAIN ONLY. Columns include Industry, Wholly Unemployed (including Casuals), Temporary Stoppages, Total, and Great Britain Only. Rows include Other Metal Industries, Textiles, Leather and Leather Goods, Clothing, Food Drink and Tobacco, Woodworking, etc., Paper, Printing, etc., Gas, Water and Electricity Supply, Transport and Communication, Distributive Trades, Commerce, Banking, Insurance and Finance, and Miscellaneous Trades and Services.

II. PERSONS, AGED 16-64, INSURED UNDER THE AGRICULTURAL SCHEME.

Table for II. PERSONS, AGED 16-64, INSURED UNDER THE AGRICULTURAL SCHEME. Columns include Industry, Wholly Unemployed (including Casuals), Temporary Stoppages, Total, and Great Britain Only. Rows include Farming, Forestry, etc., Market Gardening, Horticulture, etc., Private Gardening, and Other Gardening.

* See footnote * on page 144.

† Including 69,873 casuals (males, 67,807; females, 2,066).

Table with columns: INDUSTRY, ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INSURED PERSONS, AGED 16-64, AT JULY, 1937, PERCENTAGES AT 14TH MARCH, 1938, INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) IN TOTAL PERCENTAGES AS COMPARED WITH 14TH FEB., 1938, 15TH MAR., 1937*, GREAT BRITAIN ONLY, TOTAL PERCENTAGE AT 14TH MAR., 1938.

* For the purpose of comparison with 15th March, 1937, an estimate has been made of the effect of the change in the procedure for counting the unemployed, introduced in September, 1937 (see page 379 of the October, 1937, issue of this GAZETTE).

Table with columns: INDUSTRY, ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INSURED PERSONS, AGED 16-64, AT JULY, 1937, PERCENTAGES AT 14TH MARCH, 1938, INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) IN TOTAL PERCENTAGES AS COMPARED WITH 14TH FEB., 1938, 15TH MAR., 1937*, GREAT BRITAIN ONLY, TOTAL PERCENTAGE AT 14TH MAR., 1938.

Table with columns: II. PERSONS INSURED UNDER THE AGRICULTURAL SCHEME, ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INSURED PERSONS, AGED 16-64, AT JULY, 1937, PERCENTAGES AT 14TH MARCH, 1938, INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) IN TOTAL PERCENTAGES AS COMPARED WITH 14TH FEB., 1938, 15TH MAR., 1937*, GREAT BRITAIN ONLY, TOTAL PERCENTAGE AT 14TH MAR., 1938.

* See footnote * on page 146.
† For 15th March, 1937, separate figures are not available.
‡ See footnote † on page 146.
§ The percentage for all industries and services combined for March, 1937, used for this comparison, is the revised figure based on the estimated number insured at that date—see the issue of the GAZETTE for November, 1937, page 424 (see also footnote* on page 146). The percentages for February and March, 1938, are based on the numbers insured at July, 1937.
|| Comparable figures are not available.
¶ For the purpose of comparison with 15th March, 1937, private gardening is excluded.

PRINCIPAL CHANGES IN NUMBERS UNEMPLOYED. GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.

Table with columns: Industries, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in the numbers insured, aged 16-64, recorded as unemployed at 14th March, 1938, compared with 14th February, 1938.

NEW ENTRANTS INTO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE. MARCH, 1938.

Table with columns: Division, Men aged 16-64, Boys, Women aged 16-64, Girls, Total.

JUVENILE UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS.

JUVENILES, UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, ON THE REGISTERS OF EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES AND JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT BUREAUX AT 14TH MARCH, 1938.

Table with columns: Division, Boys (Aged 14 and 15, Aged 16 and 17, Total), Girls (Aged 14 and 15, Aged 16 and 17, Total). Rows include London, South-Eastern, etc., and Great Britain totals.

Note.—These figures include considerable numbers of boys and girls who, though registered at Employment Exchanges and Juvenile Employment Bureaux as applicants for employment, are remaining whole time at school until employment is obtained.

INSURED JUVENILES, UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, RECORDED AS UNEMPLOYED AT 14TH MARCH, 1938.

Table with columns: Division, Boys (Aged 14 and 15, Aged 16 and 17, Total), Girls (Aged 14 and 15, Aged 16 and 17, Total). Rows include London, South-Eastern, etc., and Great Britain totals.

Note.—These figures include not only insured juveniles on the register, but also those whose unemployment books were in the "two months' file," (see paragraph below the Table in next column). The effect of the inclusion of those with books in the two months' file is especially marked in the London Division.

JUVENILES, UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, PLACED IN EMPLOYMENT. FOUR WEEKS ENDED 21ST MARCH, 1938.

Table with columns: Division, Boys, Girls, Total, Juveniles placed in first situation since leaving School. Rows include London, South-Eastern, etc., and Great Britain totals.

JUVENILES, UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, IN ATTENDANCE AT AUTHORIZED COURSES OF INSTRUCTION.

Table with columns: Division, Week ended 23rd March, 1938, Month ended 23rd March, 1938, Total number of individuals who have attended Junior Instruction Centres and Classes* since 1st April, 1937. Rows include London, South-Eastern, etc., and Great Britain totals.

* Comparable figures for other educational institutions are not available.

UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG BOYS AND GIRLS, UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE, IN INSURED INDUSTRIES.

THE following Table shows for each industry group, and for the principal industries, the numbers of insured boys and girls under 16 years of age recorded as unemployed in Great Britain, and in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, at 14th March, 1938:—

Large table with columns: Industry, Great Britain (Boys, Girls), Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Boys, Girls). Rows include Fishing, Mining, Non-Metallic Minerals, etc., and Agricultural Scheme.

The figures above include those boys and girls whose unemployment books were in the "two-months' file" of lodged books, i.e., boys and girls who had registered as unemployed at some date within the previous two months and were not known to have found work, but were not maintaining registration as applicants for employment.

* Persons insured under the special schemes for the banking and insurance industries have been included in these figures.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE: ADJUDICATIONS BY THE STATUTORY AUTHORITIES.

THE Table below analyses for Great Britain for the period 1st to 31st March, 1938, inclusive, the decisions of Insurance Officers, of Courts of Referees and of the Umpire on doubtful claims for insurance benefit:—

A.—DECISIONS OF INSURANCE OFFICERS*.

Table with columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total. Rows include Claims allowed, Claims disallowed, Contributions conditions, etc.

B.—DECISIONS OF COURTS OF REFEREES*.

(1) Appeals against Disallowances by Insurance Officers.

Table with columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total. Rows include Claims allowed, Claims disallowed, Contributions conditions, etc.

(2) Other Cases.

Table with columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total. Rows include Claims allowed, Claims disallowed, Contributions conditions, etc.

C.—TRADE DISPUTE CASES.

Table with columns: Claims Allowed, Claims Disallowed, Total. Rows include Cases dealt with by Insurance Officers, Appeals against disallowances, etc.

D.—DEPENDANTS BENEFIT CASES.

Table with columns: Claims Allowed, Claims Disallowed, Total. Rows include Cases dealt with by Insurance Officers, Appeals against disallowances, etc.

E.—DECISIONS BY UMPIRE.

Table with columns: Claims Allowed, Claims Disallowed, Total. Rows include Appeals by the Chief Insurance Officer, Appeals against disallowances, etc.

* Except in "Trade Dispute" and "Dependants Benefit" cases, which are given separately in Parts C and D.

POOR RELIEF IN MARCH.

(Data supplied by the Ministry of Health for England and Wales and the Department of Health for Scotland.)

THE number of persons* relieved on one day† in March, in the forty-seven selected areas named below, was 585,157, or 0.9 per cent. less than in the previous month, and 25.6 per cent. less than in March, 1937.

Recipients of indoor relief in the forty-seven selected areas in March numbered 71,626, a decrease of 1.8 per cent. as compared with the previous month, and 6.0 per cent. less than a year ago.

Recipients of outdoor relief numbered 513,531, or 0.8 per cent. less than in the previous month, and 27.7 per cent. less than in March, 1937.

Of the forty-seven areas, twenty-nine showed slight decreases in the proportion of the population in receipt of relief in March as compared with February, fourteen showed slight increases, while in four areas there was no change.

Table with columns: County, Indoor, Outdoor, Total, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in rate per 10,000 of Population as compared with a year before. Rows include County of London, Birkenhead, Birmingham, etc., and Scotland.

* The numbers shown include dependants of persons relieved. The figures exclude casuals, persons in receipt of outdoor medical relief only, rate-aided patients in mental hospitals in England and Wales, and lunatics and mental defectives in Scotland.

PRINCIPAL CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES REPORTED DURING MARCH, 1938—continued.

Industry.	District.	Date from which Change took effect.	Classes of Workpeople.	Particulars of Change. (Decreases in italics.)
Leather Manufacture.	Lancashire, Cheshire, and North Wales.	1st pay day in Mar.	Workpeople employed in the Persian section of the roller leather industry.	Cost-of-living wage decreased* from 60 to 55 per cent. on basis rates. Minimum hourly rates after change: men—skilled, 9d.; semi-skilled, 6d. to 7½d.; women, 5d.; plus in each case 55 per cent.
	Northern Ireland (certain firms).	11 Dec. 1937.†	Workpeople employed in the hide and skin casing trade.	Adoption of scales of minimum rates for a 48 hour week resulting in increases of 2s. per week for adult weekly workers and 4d. per hour for adult hourly paid workers. Rates after change for men 21 years and over, 1s. 0½d.; casual workers 1d. per hour more.
Basket Making	Lancashire and Cheshire.	7 Mar.	Skip and basket makers ...	Decrease* of 2 per cent. on list prices, leaving wages 8½ and 7½ per cent. above the list for timeworkers and pieceworkers respectively.
	England and Wales...	28 Mar.	Male workers under 21 years ... Female workers under 21 years ...	Increase in minimum rates of 6d. to 2s. 6d. per week in most cases. Minimum rates after change for A, B and C Areas† respectively: clerks, 10s., 14s. and 16s., at under 15 years increasing to 41s., 50s. and 56s., at 20 years; shop assistants, pasteurizers, assistant roundsmen and other workers, 10s., 14s. and 16s. at under 15 years increasing to 39s., 48s. and 54s. at 20 years.‡ Increases in minimum rates of 1s. 6d. or 2s. per week. Minimum rates after change for A, B and C Areas† respectively: roundswomen—23s., 26s. and 35s. 6d. at under 18 years increasing to 36s., 41s. and 49s. at 20 years; clerks, 11s. 6d., 15s. and 17s. 6d. at under 15 years increasing to 31s., 35s. 6d. and 42s. at 20 years; shop assistants, 11s. 6d., 15s. and 17s. 6d. at under 16 years, increasing to 27s. 6d., 31s. 6d. and 37s. at 20 years; other female workers, 11s. 6d., 15s. and 17s. 6d. at under 16 years increasing to 27s., 31s. and 35s. at 20 years.§
Milk Distribution.	Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire districts.	1st pay day after 20 Feb.	Workpeople in the milk distributive trade employed by co-operative societies affiliated to the North-Eastern District Hours and Wages Board of the Co-operative Union, Ltd. :— Male workers 21 years and over Female workers 21 years and over.	Increase in minimum rates of 3s. per week. Minimum rates after change: foremen, 73s. or 75s. 6d.; roundsmen, 61s.; sterilizers, 63s.; other workers, 59s.¶ Increases in minimum rates of 1s. 6d. or 2s. per week. Minimum rates after change: roundswomen, 46s.; other workers, 37s.
	Lancashire, North Derbyshire, Cheshire and North Staffordshire districts.	1st pay day after 20 Mar.	Workpeople in the milk distributive trade employed by co-operative societies affiliated to the North-Western District Hours and Wages Board of the Co-operative Union, Ltd. :— Male workers 21 years and over Female workers 21 years and over.	Increase in minimum rates of 3s. per week. Minimum rates after change: foremen, 73s. or 75s. 6d.; roundsmen, 61s.; sterilizers, 63s.; other workers, 59s.¶ Increases in minimum rates of 1s. 6d. or 2s. per week. Minimum rates after change: roundswomen, 46s.; other workers, 37s.
	Oxford and district...	20 Mar.	Workpeople in the milk distributive trade employed by co-operative societies affiliated to the Oxford District Hours and Wages Board of the Co-operative Union, Ltd.	Increase in minimum rates of 3s. per week. Minimum rates after change: foremen, 73s. or 75s. 6d.; roundsmen, 61s.; sterilizers, 63s.; other workers, 59s.¶ Increases in minimum rates of 1s. 6d. or 2s. per week. Minimum rates after change: roundswomen, 46s.; other workers, 37s.
Wholesale Distribution.	Sheffield (certain firms).	1st pay day after 25 Mar.	Workpeople employed in the wholesale provisions trade.	Increase of 2s. per week for adult male packers, warehousemen and clerks, and of 1s. for adult female packers, and juvenile male workers. Rates after change include: male packers, warehousemen and clerks 23 years and over, 54s.; female packers 21 years and over, 28s.
Coal Distribution.	Oxford ...	5 Mar.	Workpeople employed in the coal distributive trade.	Adoption of scales of minimum rates for a normal working week of 48 hours. Minimum weekly rates after change: one-horse drivers, 53s.; motor drivers, 55s. or 57s.; yard men and bag fillers, 50s.
	London ...	2 Feb.	Workpeople employed in the boiler and pipe covering industry.	Increase of 1d. per hour for qualified men (1s. 5d. to 1s. 6d.) and of 5 per cent. on basic rates for shop hands, improvers and boys.¶
Entertainments	Nottingham and Derby.	14 Mar.	Workpeople employed in cinema theatres.	Adoption of scales of minimum rates according to class of theatre resulting in increases of various amounts. Minimum weekly rates include: projectionists—chief, 65s. to 90s., others, 32s. 6d. to 60s.; male attendants 20 years and over, 42s. and 45s.; cashiers, 21s. to 35s.; usherettes, 19s. to 25s.¶
	Mansfield and Chesterfield.	14 Mar.	Workpeople employed in cinema theatres.	Adoption of scales of minimum rates according to class of theatre resulting in increases of various amounts. Minimum weekly rates include: projectionists—chief, 62s. to 85s., others, 31s. to 57s.; male attendants 20 years and over, 39s. and 41s. 6d.; cashiers, 19s. 6d. to 32s. 6d.; usherettes, 17s. 6d. to 23s.¶
	Other districts in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Leicester ...	24 Jan.	Workpeople employed in cinema theatres.	Adoption of scales of minimum rates of 10 or 3¼ per cent. below the rates shown for Nottingham and Derby.¶

PRINCIPAL CHANGES IN HOURS OF LABOUR REPORTED DURING MARCH, 1938.

Industry.	District.	Date from which Change took effect.	Classes of Workpeople.	Particulars of Change.
Printing Ink and Roller Manufacture.	England and Wales...	14 Mar.	Workpeople employed in the printing ink and roller making industry.	Weekly hours reduced from 48 to 45.**
Entertainments	Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.	14 Mar.	Workpeople employed in cinema theatres.	Adoption of a normal working week of 48 or 52 hours for projectionists, of 48 to 55 for other males and of 35 to 50 for females.**
	Leicester ...	24 Jan.	Workpeople employed in cinema theatres.	Adoption of a normal working week of 48 or 52 hours for projectionists, of 48 to 55 for other males and of 35 to 50 for females.**

* Under cost-of-living sliding-scale arrangements.
† This increase took effect under an agreement dated 28th March, 1938, and is retrospective to the date shown.
‡ The areas are as follows:—Area A.—Areas administered by Rural District Councils and areas administered by Municipal Borough Councils and Urban District Councils with a population of less than 10,000, other than any area within the Metropolitan Police District.
C: Area C.—City of London and the Metropolitan Police District.
§ These increases took effect under Orders issued under the Trade Boards Acts. Full details of the minimum rates are contained in the Minister of Labour's Confirming Order, obtainable from H.M. Stationery Office.
¶ Further increases of 4d. per hour for qualified men and of proportional amounts for others are to operate as from 1st July, 1938, and 1st January, 1939.
** See also under "Changes in Hours of Labour."
*** See also under "Changes in Rates of Wages."

TRADE DISPUTES IN MARCH.*

Number, Magnitude and Duration.—The number of disputes involving stoppages of work, reported to the Department as beginning in March in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was 79, as compared with 78 in the previous month and 53 in March, 1937. In these 79 new disputes about 19,400 workpeople were directly involved, and 4,500 workpeople 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 6,000 workpeople were involved, either directly or indirectly, in 19 disputes which began before March and were still in progress at the beginning of that month. The number of new and old disputes was thus 98, involving 29,900 workpeople and resulting in a loss, during March, estimated at 113,000 working days.

In the following Table is given an analysis, by groups of industries, of disputes in progress in March:—

Industry Group.	Number of Disputes in progress in Month.			Number of Workpeople involved in all Disputes in progress in Month.	Aggregate Duration in Working Days of all Disputes in progress in Month.
	Started before beginning of Month.	Started in Month.	Total.		
Mining and Quarrying ...	4	36	40	17,100	56,000
Metal, Engineering and Shipbuilding ...	2	15	17	6,300	21,000
Textile ...	2	6	8	800	10,000
Food, etc. ...	1	4	5	1,800	3,000
Building, etc. ...	2	6	8	2,100	11,000
Other ...	8	12	20	1,800	12,000
Total, March, 1938 ...	19	79	98	29,900	113,000
Total, February, 1938 ...	17	78	95	30,800	133,000
Total, March, 1937 ...	20	53	73	32,700	218,000

Causes.—Of the 79 disputes beginning in March, 16, directly involving 3,000 workpeople, arose out of demands for advances in wages, 8, directly involving 1,300 workpeople, out of proposed wage reductions, and 10, directly involving 1,100 workpeople, on other wage questions; 6, directly involving 800 workpeople, on questions as to working hours; 15, directly involving 2,200 workpeople, on

questions respecting the employment of particular classes or persons; 16, directly involving 4,900 workpeople, on other questions respecting working arrangements; and 7, directly involving 5,800 workpeople on questions of trade union principle. One dispute, directly involving 300 workpeople, was due to sympathetic action.

Results.—Final settlements of disputes which terminated during March have been effected in the case of 59 new disputes, directly involving 15,200 workpeople, and 11 old disputes, directly involving 4,000 workpeople. Of these new and old disputes, 15, directly involving 8,400 workpeople, were settled in favour of the workpeople; 33, directly involving 7,400 workpeople, were settled in favour of the employers; and 22, directly involving 3,400 workpeople, resulted in a compromise. In the case of 8 other disputes, directly involving 700 workpeople, work was resumed pending negotiations.

TOTALS FOR THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF 1938 AND 1937.†

Industry Group.	January to March, 1938.			January to March, 1937.		
	No. of Disputes beginning in period.	Number of Workpeople involved in all Disputes in progress.	Aggregate Duration in Working Days of all Disputes in progress.	No. of Disputes beginning in period.	Number of Workpeople involved in all Disputes in progress.	Aggregate Duration in Working Days of all Disputes in progress.
Mining and Quarrying ...	107	53,400	207,000	65	44,200	344,000
Engineering ...	11	8,300	37,000	17	11,800	90,000
Shipbuilding ...	12	1,000	13,000	7	1,000	2,000
Other Metal ...	15	4,400	23,000	16	3,900	27,000
Textile ...	16	2,900	14,000	20	3,700	18,000
Clothing ...	10	1,100	10,000	3	400	1,000
Food, Drink and Tobacco ...	9	2,000	5,000	4	1,100	3,000
Woodworking, Furniture, etc. ...	6	200	2,000	12	1,100	9,000
Building, etc. ...	23	3,800	17,000	21	2,400	13,000
Transport ...	14	3,200	13,000	11	10,100	78,000
Other ...	16	1,200	11,000	24	4,000	25,000
Total ...	239	81,500	352,000	200	83,700	610,000

PRINCIPAL DISPUTES INVOLVING STOPPAGES OF WORK DURING MARCH.

Occupations‡ and Locality.	Approximate Number of Workpeople Involved.		Date when Dispute		Cause or Object.	Result.
	Directly.	Indirectly.†	Began.	Ended.		
COAL MINING— Colliery workpeople—Stirling (one colliery).	570	111	24 Jan.	...	For reinstatement of a workman who had been suspended.	No settlement reported.
Brushers, repairers, machinemen and other colliery workpeople— Shotts (one colliery).	316	834	12 Mar.	12 Mar.	Against dismissal of a brusher, alleged to have been discharged out of his turn.	Work resumed on conditions existing prior to stoppage.
Colliery workpeople—West Calder (one colliery).	735	15	15 Mar.	16 Mar.	Against instruction that newly-engaged workpeople and former workpeople, who had been absent for at least three days, should wear safety helmets underground, as a condition of their employment.	Work resumed on advice of trade union officials.
Underground and surface workers—near Doncaster (one colliery).	1,845	353	30 Mar.	31 Mar.	In sympathy with a haulage hand who had been sent out of the pit for refusing to perform certain duties, alleged to be unsuitable for a youth of his age.	Amicable settlement effected, following a resumption of work.
ENGINEERING— Workpeople employed in aircraft construction—Belfast (one firm).	941	...	8 Mar.	17 Mar.‡	Against employment of non-union labour.	Work, other than that on production, at present performed by fitters and sheet metal workers to be reserved for trade unionists.
HOSIERY MANUFACTURE— Hosiery workers—near Hinckley (one firm).	500	...	18 Mar.	...	Against proposed reduction in wages.	No settlement reported.
BREAD, ETC., MAKING— Bakery warehousemen, packers, etc., oatcake bakers, and other bakers and transport workers—Glasgow (one firm).	882	751	30 Mar.	2 Apr.	For increases in wages.	Work resumed pending negotiations.
BUILDING— Joiners, plumbers, plasterers and labourers—Glasgow.	1,500¶	...	28 Feb.	5 Mar.	For a special inclusive rate of wages of 2s. per hour in connection with work on the Empire Exhibition site.	Wages for work in question increased to 1s. 9½d. per hour.
Joiners, steel fixers, labourers, etc.—London, W. (one firm).	209	211	1 Mar.	9 Mar.‡	Against employment of a non-union foreman joiner.	Foreman transferred to another contract, pending reference of dispute to National Disputes Commission for the building trade.
TRANSPORT— Omnibus mechanics, drivers and conductors—Paisley and Johnstone.	381¶	...	4 Mar.¶	12 Mar.	For the application to mechanics of the increases in wages and improvements in working conditions recently agreed upon in the engineering trade.	Increase granted to engineering trade workers conceded (with retrospective payment), and also engineering trade conditions.

* 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, etc.) exceeded 100 days.
† In making up these totals the figures have been amended in accordance with the most recent information. Workpeople involved in more than one dispute are counted more than once in the totals; the amount of such duplication, however, is slight.
‡ 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.
§ Work was resumed on 21st March.
¶ Estimated number.
¶ Drivers and conductors (numbering 320) were idle on 12th March only.

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

Summary: Average Increases since July, 1914.

All Items included ... 54%
Food only ... 37%

FOOD.

At 1st April the average level of the retail prices of food in Great Britain and Northern Ireland was lower than at 1st March. This decline was largely the result of a substantial fall in the prices of eggs, but there were slight reductions in the prices of the majority of other items included in the figures.

As a net result of all the changes recorded, the average increase over the level of July, 1914, in the retail prices of the articles of food included in these statistics was 37 per cent. at 1st April, 1938, as compared with 40 per cent. at 1st March, 1938, and 35 per cent. at 1st April, 1937.

In the following Table is given a comparison of retail prices in July, 1914, and at 1st March, and 1st April, 1938:—

Table with columns: Article, Average Price (per lb. unless otherwise indicated to the nearest 1/4d.), Average Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) at 1st April, 1938, as compared with July, 1914, and 1st March, 1938.

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

Table with columns: Article, Average Percentage Increase or Decrease (-) at 1st April, 1938, as compared with July, 1914, and 1st March, 1938.

* If this kind is seldom dealt with in a locality, the returns quote the prices of another kind locally representative.
† The description of cheese for which prices are quoted is in most cases Canadian or New Zealand, but in some districts the returns quote the prices of another kind locally representative.

RENT, CLOTHING, FUEL AND LIGHT.

As regards rents, enquiries which have been made into the changes which have taken effect under the Rent and Mortgage Interest Restrictions Acts indicate that the average increase in the controlled rents (including rates) of working-class dwellings between July, 1914, and 1st April, 1938, was approximately 51 per cent. When decontrolled rents are also included, the combined average increase, as compared with July, 1914, in controlled and decontrolled working-class rents (including rates) is approximately 59 per cent. This latter figure has been utilised in calculating the final percentage increase shown below for "all items."

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 the 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. Information which has been collected, however, from retailers in the principal towns as to the prices of clothing bought by working-class families indicates that for articles of, as far as possible, similar quality at each date, the average increase in retail prices between July, 1914, and 1st April, 1938, was about 110 per cent. For the separate groups of items included, the percentage increases were approximately: men's suits and overcoats 80-85, woollen material for women's outer clothing 155, woollen underclothing and hosiery 140, cotton material for women's outer clothing 145, cotton underclothing material and hosiery 115, boots and shoes 95-100.

In the fuel and light group the prices of coal were between 95 and 100 per cent. above the level of July, 1914. The average price of gas was about 50 per cent. above the pre-war level. For the fuel and light group as a whole (including coal, gas, oil, candles and matches) the average increase at 1st April, as compared with July, 1914, was between 80 and 85 per cent.

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 75 per cent.), the resultant general average increase for 1st April, 1938, is approximately 54 per cent. over the level of July, 1914, as compared with 56 per cent. at 1st March, 1938, and 51 per cent. at 1st April, 1937.

The result of this calculation (in which the same quantities and, as far as possible, the same qualities of each item are taken now as in 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). In view of the variations in the amounts of increase in the prices of different commodities, it is probable that economies or readjustments 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, the standard of living has doubtless risen in many cases 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: 1920 to 1938.

The following Table shows the average percentage increase, as compared with July, 1914, for all the items included in the statistics, at the beginning of each month, 1920 to 1938:—

Table with columns: Year, Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. and rows for months from 1920 to 1938.

NOTE.

A detailed account of the method of compilation of these statistics, "The Cost of Living Index Number: Method of Compilation," is obtainable, price 3d., net (3 1/2d. post free), from H.M. Stationery Office at any of the addresses shown on the cover of this GAZETTE.

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 or cities. In every case, the percentage calculation is based on the cost of a fixed list of commodities taken in identical quantities.

I.—FOOD.

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

Table with columns: Country, Percentage Increase as compared with July, 1914, and Latest figures available.

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 with columns: Country, Percentage Increase as compared with July, 1914, and Latest figures available.

* Exceptions to this are: Finland, Italy (Rome), January to June, 1914; Switzerland, June, 1914; Portugal, South Africa, 1914; Egypt, Germany, 1913-1914; Netherlands, 1911-1913; Belgium, April, 1914; United States, Canada, 1913; Australia (all items), November, 1914. The Australian percentages for all items are weighted averages for the six capital cities. The percentages are calculated, in Austria, on prices converted at the rate of 1.44 Schilling equals one pre-war Krone, and, in the other countries, on prices in the ordinary currency.

† Fuel and light are also included in these figures.
‡ The method of calculation was revised in 1937.
§ Figure for August.
|| The figures for 1936 and subsequent years are on a revised basis.
¶ Figure for June.
** A = Food; B = House-Rent; C = Clothing; D = Fuel and Light; E = Other or Miscellaneous Items.
†† Figure for 3rd Quarter.
‡‡ The method of calculation was revised during the latter half of 1936.
§§ Decrease.

FATAL INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS.

THE number of workpeople, other than seamen, in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, whose deaths from accidents in the course of their employment occurred or were reported in March, was 165, as compared with 174* in the previous month, and with 206* in March, 1937. Fatal accidents to seamen reported in March numbered 61, as compared with 83 in the previous month, and with 73 in March, 1937.

Table with columns: Industry, Number of Fatal Accidents, and sub-sections like RAILWAY SERVICE, MINES, FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS, SEAMEN.

INDUSTRIAL DISEASES.

THE total number of cases† of poisoning, anthrax, and epitheliomatous and chrome ulceration in Great Britain and Northern Ireland reported during March, under the Factory and Workshop Act or under the Lead Paint (Protection against Poisoning) Act, was 42‡; the total number of deaths‡ reported was 4.

Table with columns: I. Cases, I. Cases—continued, II. Deaths, OTHER POISONING, ANTHRAX.

* Revised figure.
† Cases include all attacks reported 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.
‡ In addition to the cases reported under these Acts, one case of lead poisoning was reported among plumbers not employed in factories.

Engines and Tenders : North British Loco. Co., Ltd., Glasgow.—**Engine Spares :** English Electric Co., Ltd., Stafford.—**Everite Pipes :** Turner's Asbestos Cement Co., London, S.E.—**Expanded Metal :** J. Cranmer & Co., Ltd., London, E.C.—**Fans and Regulators :** General Electric Co., Ltd., London, W.C.—**Fire Engine :** Merryweather & Sons, Ltd., London, S.E.—**Fittings for Meters :** Manchester Water Meter Co., Manchester.—**Flannel :** R. Schofield, Ltd., Rochdale.—**Floodlighting Material :** General Electric Co., Ltd., London, W.C.—**Galvanised Cutters :** Wolverhampton C.I. Co., Ltd., Cheshire.—**Galvanised Corrugated Steel Sheets :** Wolverhampton C.I. Co., Ltd., Cheshire.—**Generating Plant, etc. :** Ruston & Hornsby, Ltd., London, W.C.—**Hoes, etc. :** V. & R. Blakemore, Birmingham.—**Iron Sheets :** P. & W. Maclellan, Ltd., Glasgow.—**Lathe :** Jones, Burton & Co., Ltd., Liverpool.—**Light Navigation :** Gas Accumulator Co. (U.K.), Ltd., Brentford.—**Lint :** Wardle Cotton Co., Ltd., Manchester.—**Liquid Asphalt :** Colas Products, Ltd., London, W.C.—**Loadometers :** H. Pooley & Son, Ltd., Birmingham.—**Locomotive Boiler :** R. Stephenson & Hawthorns, Ltd., Newcastle-on-Tyne.—**Locomotive Spares :** Vulcan Foundry, Ltd., Newton-le-Willows.—**Locomotive Steel Tubes :** Talbot Stead Tube Co., Ltd., Walsall.—**Locomotive Tyres :** T. Firth & J. Brown, Ltd., Sheffield; J. Baker & Bessemer, Ltd., Rotherham.—**Mexphalte, etc. :** Asiatic Petroleum Co., Ltd., London, E.C.—**Mild Steel Angles :** Consett Iron Co., Ltd., Co. Durham.—**Mild Steel Plates, etc. :** P. & W. Maclellan, Ltd., Glasgow.—**Mineral Water Factory :** Hayward-Tyler & Co., Ltd., Luton.—**Motor Ambulance :** Austin Motor Co., Birmingham.—**Motor Cycles :** Norton Motors, Ltd., Birmingham.—**Motor Rollers :** Aveling-Barford, Ltd., Grantham.—**Ol. Ricini :** Premier Oil Extracting Mills, Ltd., Hull.—**Paint :** Torbay Paint Co., Ltd., London, S.W.—**Paper :** Thomas & Green, Ltd., Wooburn Green; Portals, Ltd., Whitechurch; J. Dickinson & Co., Ltd., London, E.C.—**Percussion Boring Tools :** C. Isler & Co., Ltd., London, S.E.—**Pig Iron :** W. Baird & Co., Ltd., Glasgow.—**Piling :** British Steel Piling Co., Ltd., London, S.W.—**Pipes :** Stanton Ironworks Co., Ltd., Nr. Nottingham.—**Pipeline, etc. :** Lobnitz & Co., Ltd., Renfrew.—**Piping and Fittings :** Stewarts & Lloyds, Ltd., Glasgow.—**Pole Parts :** Siemens Bros. & Co., Ltd., London, S.E.; Newport & S. Wales Tube Co., Ltd., Birmingham.—**Printing Machine, etc. :** Harrild & Sons, Ltd., London, E.C.—**Printing Machines :** Victory-Kidder Printing Machine Co., Ltd., London, W.C.; Waite & Savile, Ltd., Otley.—**Publications :** Longmans Green & Co., London, E.C.—**Quinine :** Gale, Baiss & Co., Ltd., London, S.E.—**Quinine Bisulph :** Carnegie Bros., Ltd., London, N.—**Quinine Hydrochlor. Tablets :** Howards & Sons, Ltd., Ilford.—**Radium and Containers :** Chemical Service Co., Ltd., London, W.C.—**Rails and Fishplates :** Dorman, Long & Co., Ltd., Middlesbrough; Guest, Keen & Baldwins Iron & Steel Co., London, E.C.—**Refrigeration Plant :** Wm. Douglas & Sons, Ltd., London, S.W.—**R. S. Joists :** P. & W. Maclellan, Ltd., Glasgow.—**Sanitary Fittings :** Shanks & Co., Ltd., London, W.—**Serum, Tetanus Antitoxin :** Lister Institute, Elstree.—**Signal Materials :** Westinghouse Brake & Signal Co., Ltd., London, N.—**Steam Flanges, etc. :** Stewarts & Lloyd, Ltd., Glasgow.—**Steel Bars :** Appleby-Frodingham Steel Co., Ltd., Lincs.—**Steel Bars and Plates :** P. & W. Maclellan, Ltd., Glasgow.—**Steel Bearing Plates :** Barrow Haematite Steel Co., Ltd., London, S.W.—**Steel Casing :** Stewarts & Lloyds, Ltd., Glasgow.—**Steel Equipment :** Roneo, Ltd., London, E.C.—**Steel Tank, etc. :** Mechans, Ltd., Glasgow.—**Steel Windows and Doors :** Crittall Manufacturing Co., Ltd., London, W.C.—**Steel Work, etc. :** F. Morton & Co., Ltd., Liverpool.—**Switchgear, etc. :** British Thomson Houston Co., Ltd., London, W.C.—**Tarpaulins :** Gourock Rope-work Co., Ltd., Port Glasgow.—**Telegraph Ironwork :** Bullers, Ltd., London, E.C.—**Telephone Equipment, etc. :** General Electric Co.,

Ltd., Coventry.—**Timber :** C. Leary & Co., London, E.C.—**Train Lighting Spares, etc. :** J. Stone & Co., Ltd., London, S.W.—**Tubes :** Bromford Tube Co., Birmingham.—**Washbasins—Folding :** J. Beresford & Son, Ltd., Birmingham.—**Water Heaters :** Aidas Electric, Ltd., London, N.W.—**Water Meters, etc. :** G. Kent, Ltd., Luton.—**Water Sterilization Equipment :** Paterson Engineering Co., Ltd., London, W.C.—**Web Equipment, etc. :** Barrow, Hepburn & Gale, Ltd., London, S.E.—**Wire :** F. Smith & Co., Lancs.—**X-Ray Materials :** Ilford, Ltd., Ilford.

PRISON COMMISSION.

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