

THE LABOUR GAZETTE

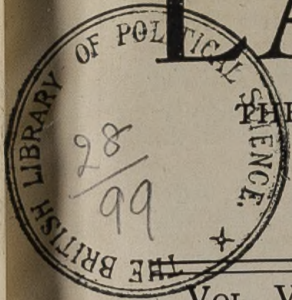
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CLASSIFIED CONTENTS TABLE.

Summary of the State of Employment in February 65

Special Articles and Reports—

FIFTH ABSTRACT OF LABOUR STATISTICS	67
DISPUTE IN THE PLASTERING TRADE	67
GERMAN LABOUR COLONIES IN 1898	68
EMPLOYMENTS OF CHILDREN ON LEAVING SCHOOL	69
THE COLOGNE REGISTRY FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKMEN'S DWELLINGS AGENCY	69
LABOUR DISPUTES IN AUSTRIA IN 1897	70
RECENT LEGISLATION IN NEW ZEALAND	70
EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS IN FRANCE IN 1897	71

Employment in Certain Industries and Districts—

REPORTS ON CERTAIN INDUSTRIES.

COAL MINING	75
IRON MINING	76
PIG IRON MANUFACTURE	76
IRON AND STEEL WORKS	76
TINPLATE WORKS... ..	77
AGRICULTURAL LABOUR	77
SEAMEN	79
LONDON DOCK AND WHARF LABOUR	79
WOMEN IN TEXTILE TRADES	79

DISTRICT REPORTS.

LONDON	80
ENGLAND : Northern Counties	81
Lancashire	81
Yorkshire	82
Midland Counties	83
Eastern Counties	85
South Western Counties	85
WALES	86
SCOTLAND	86
IRELAND	87

Labour in the Colonies and Abroad—

COLONIES... ..	73	HOLLAND	74
FRANCE	74	AUSTRIA-HUNGARY	75
GERMANY... ..	74	DENMARK	75
BELGIUM	74	RUSSIA	75

Miscellaneous Reports for February—

RECENT PROGRESS IN CO-OPERATION... ..	71
LEGAL CASES AFFECTING LABOUR	72
INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS	96
FOREIGN TRADE	95
MISCELLANEOUS TRADE NOTES... ..	90
EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION	90

Statistical Tables for February—

TRADE DISPUTES	92
CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES	88
CHANGES IN HOURS OF LABOUR	90
INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS	91
INDUSTRIAL PROSECUTIONS	96
WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT BUREAUX	90
LABOUR BUREAUX... ..	94
PAUPERISM	94
DISEASES OF OCCUPATIONS	95

Notes and Reviews—

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE AND EAST WORCESTERSHIRE. COAL TRADE WAGES BOARD	71
CIVIL EMPLOYMENT OF ARMY RESERVE MEN AND DISCHARGED SOLDIERS	71
ATTACHMENT OF WAGES IN VICTORIA	96
COLONIAL AND FOREIGN MINES AND QUARRIES	90
EXAMINATION FOR MINING MANAGERS' CERTIFICATES	93
H.M. INSPECTORS OF FACTORIES.—NEW APPOINTMENTS	96

STATE OF EMPLOYMENT IN FEBRUARY.

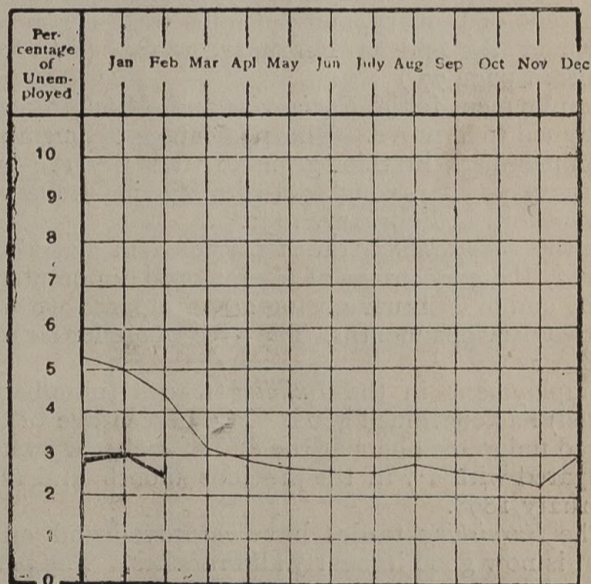
[Based on 2,295 returns, viz.: 1,643 from Employers, 518 from Trade Unions, and 134 from other sources.]

IN all the important industries an improvement in the state of employment has taken place during the month, with the result that the percentage of unemployed is lower than at any similar period of the year since February, 1891, whilst coal miners have had fuller employment than in any month during the five years in which the figures have been collected.

In the 123 trade unions making returns, with an aggregate membership of 491,790, 12,665 (or 2.6 per cent.) were reported as unemployed at the end of February, compared with 3.0 per cent. a month before, and 4.4 per cent. in the 116 unions, with a membership of 466,362 from which returns were received for February, 1898, when employment was still affected by the engineering dispute.

The following chart enables a comparison to be made with last year:—

Chart showing the percentage of unemployed members of the trade unions making returns at the close of each completed month of 1898 and 1899. [The thick line applies to 1899, the thin line to 1898.]



The table below classifies the membership of the 123 unions making returns according to the percentage proportion of their members that were unemployed at the end of the under-mentioned periods:—

Percentage of members unemployed.	At end of February, 1899.		Corresponding Percentages for		
	Number of Unions making Returns.	Total Membership of such Unions.		A Month ago.	A Year ago.
		Number.	Percentage.		
Under 1 per cent. ...	30	104,739	21.3	22.2	19.0
1 and under 2 per cent. ...	28	111,426	22.7	18.8	18.8
2 " 3 " ...	22	157,420	32.0	21.7	6.6
3 " 5 " ...	18	63,543	12.9	24.7	12.2
5 " 7 " ...	12	19,286	3.9	4.8	15.6
7 " 10 " ...	6	26,766	5.5	5.3	24.4
10 per cent. and upwards	7	8,560	1.7	2.5	3.4
Total	123	491,790	100.0	100.0	100.0

Employment in Various Industries.—Coal Mining.—Employment in February was exceptionally good, the average time worked at the collieries included in the returns being higher than any previously recorded in the five years during which these statistics have been compiled. At these collieries, at which 437,440 workpeople were employed, the average time worked was 5'63 days per week in the four weeks ended February 25th, as compared with 5'24 days per week a year ago. (For further details see page 75.)

Iron Mining.—Employment in February was better in the English districts but not so good in Scotland as a year ago. At mines and open works, at which 17,500 workpeople were employed, the average number of days worked during the four weeks ended February 25th was 5'86, as compared with 5'79 in the corresponding period of 1898. (For further details see page 76.)

In the **Pig Iron Industry** the improvement in employment continues. Returns relating to the works of 113 iron masters show that 371 furnaces were in blast at the end of February, or three more than at the end of January and 16 more than a year ago. The estimated number employed was 23,975, or 72 more than at the end of January and 513 more than at the end of February, 1898. (For further details see page 76.)

Iron and Steel Manufacture.—Employment at the end of February, though not quite so good as at the end of January, was considerably better than a year ago. At the 211 works from which the returns were received 79,098 persons were employed in the last week of February, or 495 less than in the last week of January, but 3,061 more than a year ago. The average number of shifts worked was 5'60 in the last weeks of both January and February and 5'54 in the last week of February, 1898. (For further details see page 76.)

Template Trade.—Employment in this industry recovered considerably during the month, and at the end was better than a year ago. The number of mills working at the end of February was 355, employing an estimated number of 17,826 workpeople, compared with 323 mills at work, and 16,259 workpeople employed at the end of January, and 341 mills with 17,351 workpeople at the end of February, 1898. (For further details see page 77.)

Employment in the **Engineering and Metal** trades has continued to improve. The percentage of unemployed union members in this group of trades at the end of February was 2'4, compared with 2'6 in January, and 7'0 per cent. in February, 1898.*

In the **Shipbuilding** trades employment has also improved, the percentage of unemployed union members at the end of February being 2'8, compared with 3'7 in the two previous months. The percentage for February, 1898, was 6'8.*

Employment in the **Building** trades (plumbers excepted) has continued good. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of February was 1'5, compared with 1'7 in the previous month and also in February 1898.

The **Furnishing** trades have improved and employment is now good in nearly all branches. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of February was 3'0, compared with 4'3 in January, and 2'8 per cent. in February of last year.

Employment in the **Printing and Bookbinding** trades has improved in most branches and is now good. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of February was 3'5, compared with 4'4 in January, and 3'6 in February, 1898.

Employment in the **Paper** trade remains steady. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of February was the same as in January, viz., 3'2. The percentage for February, 1898, was 3'5.

In the **Glass** trades the percentage of unemployed was 11'5, compared with 11'8 in February, 1898.

Employment in the **Leather** trades has improved, the percentage of unemployed union members at the end of February being 3'6, compared with 4'5, in the two

* Employment affected by the Engineering dispute.

previous months and 3'7 per cent. in February of last year.

Employment in the **Boot and Shoe** trade has shown further improvement and is good in nearly every centre.

Employment in the bespoke branch of the **Tailoring** trade has improved and is moderate; in the ready-made branch it has been good on the whole in the factories, and not so slack in the workshops.

Employment in the **Spinning** branch of the **Cotton** trade continues good; in the **Weaving** branch it remains fairly good.

Employment in the **Woollen and Worsted** trades continues quiet but shows a slight improvement. In the **Hosiery** trade it has again improved and is fairly good.

As regards the employment of **women** in the **Textile** trades, information respecting 474 cotton, woollen and worsted mills, employing 81,000 women and girls, shows that 82 per cent. were in mills giving full employment during the month, compared with 84 per cent. during the previous month, and 70 per cent. in February, 1898. (For further details, see page 79.)

Dock and Riverside Labour in London.—In the four weeks ended February 25th an average number of 13,836 labourers were employed daily at all the docks and the principal wharves, as compared with averages of 15,283 per day in the five preceding weeks and 14,057 in January, 1898. (For further details see page 79.)

Agricultural labourers were generally well employed during the month of February, though in the earlier part of the month some men who take irregular work lost time owing to the wet and stormy weather which prevailed. Reports state that during the last half of the month farmers were employing as many hands as they could get, and that in a number of districts there was a scarcity. (For further details see page 77.)

Trade Disputes.—Thirty-six fresh disputes occurred in February, 1899, involving 5,348 workpeople. The corresponding number of disputes for January was 26, involving 2,194 workpeople, and for February, 1898, 25 disputes, involving 3,568 workpeople. Three disputes took place in the building trades, 7 in mining and quarrying, 11 in the metal, engineering and shipbuilding trades, 8 in the textile trades, and 7 in other industries. Of the 38 new and old disputes, involving 7,795 workpeople, of which the settlement is reported, 10, involving 1,719 persons, were settled wholly in favour of the workpeople; 13, involving 1,721 persons, wholly in favour of the employers; and 15, involving 4,355 persons, resulted in a compromise. (For further details see page 92.)

Changes in Rates of Wages.—Changes in the rates of wages of about 272,400 workpeople were reported during February, of which number 270,600 received advances averaging 1s. 6d. per head, and 1,800 sustained decreases averaging 1s. 5½d. per head. The net result was an increase estimated at about 1s. 5¼d. per head in the weekly wages of those affected. The increases were mainly in the mining industry (250,123), iron and steel manufacture (8,452), and engineering and shipbuilding trades (6,355). Changes affecting about 2,800 workpeople were preceded by disputes causing stoppage of work. Changes affecting about 251,900 workpeople were arranged by Conciliation Boards, and the remaining changes, affecting about 17,700 workpeople were arranged by direct negotiation between employers and workpeople, or conceded voluntarily by the employers. (For further details, see page 88.)

Pauperism.—In 35 selected urban districts of the United Kingdom, 341,973 persons were relieved on one day in the second week of February. This number corresponds to a rate of 214 per 10,000 of the estimated population of those districts, or 3 per 10,000 less than a year ago. (For further details, see page 94.)

Emigration.—The number of British and Irish passengers who left the United Kingdom during February for places out of Europe was 6,638, as compared with 7,086 in February, 1898. (For further details, see page 90.)

ABSTRACT OF LABOUR STATISTICS.*

THE 5th Abstract of Labour Statistics, which has just been published by the Board of Trade, relates to the statistics of labour in the United Kingdom, and consists of 225 pages, including a short introduction, a detailed list of contents, and an alphabetical index. Forty-two of the tables give the figures for 1898, but as regards the others the latest available returns relate to 1897; in all cases comparative figures are given for a number of years wherever possible.

The first series of tables in the Abstract relate to the number, membership, income, expenditure and Funds of Trade Unions, a special table being devoted to the provision made by certain societies against old age. Tables are also given dealing with Trades Councils and the Federations of Trade Unions and of Trades Councils, together with some particulars respecting Trade Union Congresses held since 1866. The Associations of Employers are shown grouped by trades, Federations being distinguished from National and Local Associations.

The next series of tables deal with Co-operative Societies and Workmen's Clubs. Considerable space is devoted to Co-operative Societies, which are classified into those for retail distribution, wholesale distribution, societies for corn milling and for other forms of production. The tables show the membership, capital, sales, mode of distribution of profits, rates of dividend, number of persons employed in production and other particulars.

In the section dealing with Friendly Societies, details are given with regard to the membership, income, expenditure and funds of fourteen of the principal Societies, while a table and chart show in a condensed form the sickness and mortality experience of Friendly Societies as stated in a voluminous report (H. C., 303 of 1896) relating to this subject.

An important section of the Abstract deals with the fluctuations in employment in various industries in recent years, the subject being treated in different ways, according to the nature of the available data. When, as in the case of the textile and clothing industries, no statistical information exists with regard to the numbers unemployed, the export returns have been used as indicating approximately years of good and bad employment. The production of coal, iron ore and other minerals, pig iron, merchant and war vessels, corn and other crops, is closely connected with the state of employment, and tables are given on these subjects. The extent of the work done by labour bureaux in finding employment for those out of work is also shown.

The number and magnitude of trade disputes during each of the years 1893-8 are shown in another section, together with the proportion that the number of workpeople engaged in disputes is of the total working population in the trades affected. The disputes are further analysed by trades and districts affected, causes, results, and methods of settlement. Tables are also given showing the work done by trade and district Conciliation and Arbitration Boards, besides other agencies for settling disputes.

In the section dealing with wages, there are tables showing the changes that have occurred during each of the years 1893-8 in the rates of wages and hours of labour in different trades, with the number of workpeople affected by such changes. Special tables are given dealing with the wages of railway servants, seamen, and agricultural labourers, while the changes in miners' wages, as disclosed by the percentage increases and decreases on the standard tonnage rates, are traced back for each principal district to 1886. The standard rates of wages recognised by the principal trade unions for various occupations at the end of 1898 are shown for 38 important towns. The results of the general census of wages in 1886 (and in part in 1891) are summarised for each group of trades, the average

* C 9011.—Price 11½d. ex. postage.

weekly wages of men, lads, women and girls being shown separately.

Other tables deal with profit sharing schemes and prices. The number of profit sharing schemes is shown, the trades in which such schemes have been adopted, the causes of certain schemes being abandoned, and the ratio of bonuses paid to the amount of wages. The prices of coal, pig and manufactured iron, are shown for those districts in which such prices are ascertained by accountants and published at regular intervals in connection with sliding scales, wages boards, etc. Tables are also given, showing the average prices of British wheat, barley and oats for a long series of years.

The statistics of Industrial accidents are brought together in another section, separate tables being given for coal and metal miners, quarrymen, factory and workshop operatives, seamen and railway servants, the cause and nature of the injuries being shown, while the whole set of tables is preceded by a general summary. Another table deals with the number of cases of anthrax, lead, phosphorus, and arsenical poisoning reported to the Home Office as occurring to workpeople in factories. The number and result of actions under the Employers' Liability Act, and of prosecutions in connection with the administration of the Acts for the protection of factory and workshop operatives, miners, quarrymen, and seamen are also given.

A considerable portion of the Abstract is occupied with tables showing the numbers employed in the various trades carried on in the United Kingdom, the Census and Factory Reports being the sources of information. The ages of the people, and certain particulars with regard to the housing of the people, with especial reference to overcrowded tenements, are also given, together with tables showing the number and ages of paupers, and the number, ages and nationalities of seamen. The conjugal condition of women workers in textile factories is also dealt with, the proportion of married, widowed, and single women employed being shown for each trade.

Several tables relate particularly to children. The number and wages of half-timers are shown by trades and districts, together with a summary of the legal regulations affecting the employment of children. Tables are also given showing the employments to which children first go on leaving school.

Other tables show the estimated total population, the number of births, deaths and marriages that take place, the number of emigrants and immigrants, the amount of the deposits in the Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks, and the liabilities of building societies.

DISPUTE IN THE PLASTERING TRADE.

THE present situation in the plastering trade arose out of an attempt on the part of the National Association of Operative Plasterers to induce or compel foremen plasterers to join their society. With this object three London firms were struck early in January, about 106 plasterers and 62 workpeople of other classes being thrown out of work. It was contended by the Central Association of Master Builders of London that these strikes were a direct breach of the rule with regard to disputes, included in the terms of settlement of the dispute in the London Building trade which took place in 1896. This rule provides:—

"That in the event of a dispute arising on any job or works the District Officials of the National Association of Operative Plasterers shall send written notice to the Central Association of Master Builders of London, who shall inform them whether the said builder is a member of that body. If so, a strike shall not be sanctioned by the National Association of Operative Plasterers until six clear working days have expired from the receipt of such notice, during which time the matter shall be considered by the employers and the representatives of the workmen with a view to an amicable settlement."

The situation was considered at a meeting of London master builders and other employers of plasterers held in London on January 24th, when it was decided to refer the matter to the National Association of

offered in that branch) of which 3,272 were situations sought by domestic servants (cooks, etc.), and 1,565 by laundresses, charwomen, etc.

The house-agency department, intended for the free use of workmen, shop assistants, minor clerks, etc., was added to the registry on April 1st, 1898, the Municipality defraying the initial cost (£40), and granting an annual subvention of £150 for working expenses. During the first three months 413 dwellings (92 containing one room, 123 two rooms, 90 three, 53 four, and 55 five or more) were offered, and 1,198 (102 to contain one room, 500 two rooms, 380 three, 137 four, and 79 five or more) were applied for through the registry.

LABOUR DISPUTES IN AUSTRIA IN 1897.*

THE report on strikes and lock-outs in Austria containing the figures for 1897, is the first of the volumes on this subject issued by the newly established Labour Department. The figures are exclusive of disputes in agriculture, in mining and cognate industries, and in blast-furnaces, &c., closely connected with mines.

Strikes in Austria were both fewer and shorter in 1897 than in 1896, the number reported being 221 (compared with 294 in 1896); the number of workpeople directly participating, 34,835 (compared with 36,114); and the number of working days lost by these workpeople, 354,922 (compared with 595,768). Besides the actual participants, there were in 1897, 2,621 workpeople (compared with 2,372 in 1896) indirectly concerned in strikes and subjected to the loss of 32,721 working days (compared with 24,233 in 1896).

The extent to which various groups of trades were affected by strikes in the two years, will be seen from the following table:—

Table with 6 columns: Groups of Trades, 1896 (Strikers, Days lost by Strikers, Proportion per cent. of all days lost by Strikers), 1897 (Strikers, Days lost by Strikers, Proportion per cent. of all days lost by Strikers). Rows include Building Trades, Metal & Engineering, etc., Textile Trades, Clothing Trades, Transport Trades, Woodworking, India-rubber, and Furnishing Trades, Glass, Pottery, &c., Trades, Miscellaneous Trades.

In the following statement the strikers are classified according to the results of the strikes in which they were engaged in 1897, compared with 1896:—

Table with 3 main columns: Results (In favour of Workpeople, In favour of Employers, Total), 1896 (Strikes, No., Per cent.), 1897 (Strikes, No., Per cent.).

Disputes classed as lock-outs are shown separately from strikes in the Austrian statistics. Both in 1897 and in 1896, the number reported was 10, but while 5,445 workpeople belonging to 211 establishments were locked-out in 1896, only 1,544 belonging to 11 establishments had this experience in 1897. Seven of the 10 lock-outs of 1897 (compared with 4 in 1896) were due to workpeople absenting themselves on May-day, and 2 to their absence on other occasions.

* Die Arbeitseinstellungen und Aussperrungen im Gewerbebetriebe in Oesterreich während des Jahres 1897. Published by the Bureau of Labour Statistics of the Austrian Ministry of Commerce. Vienna, 1899. Alfred Hölder, I., Rotherthurmstrasse 15. These statistics relate to Austria as distinct from Hungary.

The factory inspectors intervened in 59 out of the 221 strikes which occurred in 1897; in 21 of these cases they were assisted by the Authorities for dealing with Industrial Matters, and in one case by the Police Authorities. In 21 further cases, the Industrial Authorities were the sole mediators, and in two cases the Police Authorities, while in one case the Police Authorities intervened in conjunction with the Mayor.

RECENT LEGISLATION IN NEW ZEALAND.

Regulation of Conditions of Employment in Mines.—The Mining Act, 1898, contains provisions regulating (amongst other things) the employment of labour in mines, other than coal mines (to which the Act does not apply). With respect to persons in charge of machinery used in connection with a mine, or with the treatment of the products of a mine, it is enacted that, except in cases of breakage, or other special emergency, no such person shall be employed for a longer period than eight consecutive hours, exclusive of meal-times and of time occupied in raising or exhausting steam or drawing fires; and between each such period and the next there shall be an interval of at least four hours. Every such person shall be entitled to holidays at the rate of not less than one whole or two half holidays for every eight weeks (consecutive or not) during which he is in charge of such machinery on seven consecutive days in each week. It is made an offence for any such person to cause, by his negligence, damage or destruction of property. The employment (other than as clerks) of women and girls of any age, and of boys under 14 in or about mines is declared illegal. No person under 18 may be employed as lander or brace-man over a shaft, nor, except in emergency, shall he be employed in any capacity for more than 48 hours in a week, or more than 8 hours in 24, exclusive of meal-times. The Act came into operation on February 1st.

Accommodation for Sheep Shearers.—By the Shearers' Accommodation Act, 1898, power is conferred upon the Governor of the colony to appoint inspectors charged with the inspection of buildings used for shearing sheep, including places in which the shearers sleep or take their meals, and of seeing that proper and sufficient accommodation shall be provided for the health and comfort of shearers. The space provided in a sleeping-room (which must not be used also for meals) must in no case fall below 240 cubic feet for each person sleeping there. Where persons of the Chinese race are employed, they must be provided with sleeping accommodation distinct from that provided for other shearers.

Old-Age Pensions.—The Old-Age Pensions Act, 1898, provides that, subject to the provisions therein mentioned, every person of the full age of 65 years or upwards shall, whilst in the colony, be entitled to a pension. But no such person will be able to claim a pension unless he has resided in the colony continuously for at least 25 years, and has not during that time been imprisoned for a term of 5 years for any offence entailing public dishonour, or during the last 12 years been imprisoned for four months or on four occasions for such an offence punishable by imprisonment for 12 months or upwards. Desertion of, or failure to maintain a wife, or failure to maintain children under 14 years, on the part of a man, and desertion of husband or children on the part of a woman, will disqualify for receipt of pension. No one can receive a pension unless he is of good moral character, and leads (and for 5 years before he claims a pension has led) a sober and reputable life. A person, whose yearly income is £52 or more, or whose accumulated property amounts to £270 or more, cannot claim a pension. The amount of the pension provided by the Act is £18 per year, less £1 for every £1 of income exceeding £34, or for every £15 of capital value of accumulated property. The Act does not apply to aliens, to naturalised subjects (except such as have been naturalised for at least 5 years before they claim a pension), or to Chinese or other Asiatics, whether naturalised or not.

RECENT PROGRESS IN CO-OPERATION.

RETURNS received from 1,153 Co-operative Retail Distributive Societies in the United Kingdom with a total membership of 1,453,835 show total sales for the fourth quarter of 1898 amounting to £10,366,727 as compared with £9,862,653 in the corresponding period of 1897. Of these societies 836 show an increase, and 316 a decrease, the net increase being £504,074, or 5.1 per cent. The societies in Wales and Monmouth show a decrease of 12.2 per cent., as compared with a corresponding decrease of 15.3 per cent. last quarter.

Returns from 3 of the 4 wholesale federations for the same period show total sales in their distributive departments amounting to £4,984,040 as compared with £4,569,790 in the corresponding period of 1897, an increase of £414,250 or 9.1 per cent. The return from the remaining federation is for 6 months, and shows an increase of £10,562 on the corresponding period of 1897, of which £10,130 is due to the opening of a new department for the sale of live stock.

The sales and transfers from the manufacturing to the distributive departments of the English and Scottish wholesale societies amounted to £807,926, compared with £723,387 in the corresponding period of 1897, an increase of 11.7 per cent.

Thirty-nine societies in England and Wales reported the opening of 44 new branches and departments, and 8 societies in Scotland and Ireland reported 11 new branches and departments during the quarter.

The following table, based upon reports and balance-sheets supplied direct to the department shows the progress in trade of the wholesale and retail distributive societies, grouped by districts:—

Table with 6 columns: Description of Societies and Districts, Societies making Returns (No., Membership), Sales of Societies making Returns (In 4th quarter of 1898, 1897, Amount, Per cent. on Sales). Rows include ENGLAND AND WALES, SCOTLAND, IRELAND, and TOTAL RETAIL DISTRIBUTIVE SOCIETIES.

Table with 6 columns: Description of Societies and Districts, Societies making Returns (No., Membership), Sales of Societies making Returns (In 4th quarter of 1898, 1897, Amount, Per cent. on Sales). Rows include ENGLAND AND WALES, SCOTLAND, and IRELAND.

* Decrease. † Number and Membership of federated societies. ‡ Transfers from productive to distribute departments. § Six months' sales.

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS IN FRANCE IN 1897.

THE Bulletin de l'Office du Travail for February shows that out of a total of 290,305 establishments (exclusive of mines, openworks, quarries, and Admiralty and War Office establishments) liable to inspection under the factory laws in France in 1897, 125,775, or 42.3 per cent., were actually inspected. The total number of the workpeople employed in all the 290,305 establishments was 2,591,288; while that of the workpeople employed in the establishments inspected was 1,755,351, or 67.7 per cent., of all workpeople employed in establishments liable to inspection. These 1,755,351 workpeople were of the age and sex shown below:—

Table with 3 columns: Age, Number Employed in Establishments Inspected (Male, Female). Rows include 12 and under 13 years, 13 and under 16 years, 16 and under 18 years, Total Children and Young Persons, 18 and under 21 years, 21 years and over, Grand Total.

Children of 12 and under 13 years of age are not admitted to factories and workshops* without certificates attesting physical fitness and the completion of primary studies. Prosecutions were instituted in respect to 359 contraventions of this provision of the law in 1897, compared with 273, 396, and 435 in the years 1894, 1895, and 1896 respectively. The bulk of these contraventions took place in textile establishments, glassworks, and brick yards.

The number of contraventions of the legal provisions limiting the length of the working day (including infractions of the law of September 9th, 1848, restricting the duration of the employment of adult males in certain classes of establishments to 12 hours in the day) was 3,000 in 1897, compared with 3,877 and 5,725 in 1895 and 1896 respectively. The report states that the law of November 2nd, 1892, regulating the employment of women, young persons, and children, has had the effect of shortening the working day in a large number of industries, that from 60 to 66 hours per week are now being worked in certain branches where formerly from 72 to 75 hours were worked, and that, speaking generally, no appreciable effect on production has resulted from the adoption of an 11-hour day. The law limits the working day to 10 hours for children under 16, to 11 hours (but not more than 60 hours per week) for young persons of 16 and under 18, and to 11 hours (without any weekly limit) for women of 18 and upwards. The Report recommends the adoption of a uniform legal working day of 11 hours for all classes, which, it is stated, would render the exercise of proper surveillance by the inspectors less difficult.

South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire Coal Trade Wages Board.

On February 13th it was agreed by this Board to give an advance of 5 per cent. on the first pay in April, and a further advance of 2 1/2 per cent. on the first pay in October. These advances, which are similar to those agreed on by the Coal Conciliation Board of the Federated Districts (see GAZETTE for February, page 39) affect about 10,000 workpeople.

Civil Employment of Army Reserve Men and Discharged Soldiers.—A handbook entitled "Instructions as to the Civil Employment of Army Reserve Men and Discharged Soldiers" has been issued by the War Office, and provides for the keeping of Registers at the headquarters of each regimental district for the enrolment of men desiring such employment. Details are given as to the conditions of employment and rates of pay obtainable as messengers in Government offices, and for various kinds of work in the Royal Army Clothing Department and the Army Ordnance Department, Barrack Services, the Customs, Office of Works, Ordnance Factories, Post Office, Prisons Service, Royal Engineer Services and Stationery Office. Particulars are also given of employment in the Police, the Corps of Commissionaires and on Railways. Copies of the pamphlet are supplied to all Sergeants' Messes and Soldiers' Reading Rooms.

* Other than workshops in which the only persons employed are parents and children. It is stated that in some districts workshops of this class are increasing in number, and are being furnished with mechanical power.

LEGAL CASES AFFECTING LABOUR.

THE following are among the more interesting legal cases reported in February, specially affecting labour. The accounts are based principally upon reports appearing in newspapers:

(1) WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT.

What is an accident "arising out of and in the course of the employment?"—The widow of a railway servant, who met with a fatal accident, claimed compensation from the company by which he was employed. The County Court judge found the facts to be, that at the time of the accident the deceased had not finished his day's duty, but that the accident occurred while he was getting off the footboard of a train in motion, on to which he had got for his own pleasure and not for any object of his employers, and held that, since this was not obviously dangerous and did not amount to serious and wilful misconduct on his part, and the deceased was not neglecting his duty, the plaintiff was entitled to compensation. This decision was reversed on appeal. The Court held that in an appeal on questions of law and not as to the finding of the judge as to the facts, and that, upon the facts as found by the County Court judge, the accident could not be considered to have arisen "out of the employment." In another case the driver of a travelling crane, who had met with an accident in endeavouring to take the belting off his crane, claimed compensation from his employers. It was proved that there was a man whose special duty it was to take off the belting; but the applicant stated that this man frequently told the drivers to do it themselves, and on this occasion this man could not be found, and another employee, in a superior position to himself, called to him to take the belt off in a particular manner, which direction he carried out. The respondents resisted the claim on the ground that the accident did not happen in the ordinary course of the driver's employment, and that he had been guilty of serious and wilful misconduct, and the arbitrator decided in their favour. In a third case the widow of a foreman ganger in the employment of a firm of railway contractors sought compensation. The ganger was killed by a train while walking to his work. He had not reached the place where his gang was working by over 100 yards. The County Court judge held that the accident had arisen out of and in the course of the employment of the deceased, and gave judgment in favour of his widow.—*Court of Appeal, November 26th, reported February 4th; Manchester, February 8th; Newport County Court, February 16th.*

Serious and Wilful Misconduct.—A miner, in the employment of a colliery company, was at work with other men getting coal. They were trying to get rid of a stone from the roof, when the deputy came up and instructed them to put up a bar across the roof supported by two props, one on each side of the working place, in order to prevent the stone from falling. This was done; but subsequently this miner and another man took down the bar and props, because, as they said, the corves or trucks with the coal could not get by, and the props interfered with the getting of the coal. Instead thereof, they put up a prop directly under the stone, to support it. About two hours afterwards the stone fell and injured the miner, who took proceedings in the County Court to obtain compensation from his employers. The general rules prescribed by the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, provide that "the roof and sides of every working place shall be made secure, and a person shall not work in any such working place which is not so made secure"; and by the special rules of this colliery it is provided that "the miners must build good pack walls, and set a sufficient quantity of props and bars for safely securing the roof and sides of their working places, and add to them or renew them when necessary, or when told by the manager, under-manager, or deputy," and also that "all persons employed in the mine shall be under the control of the manager, under-manager, and deputies, and shall at all times obey their lawful commands." The County Court judge decided that the applicant had not been guilty of "serious and wilful misconduct," and awarded him compensation. On appeal, the Court affirmed the judgment of the County Court judge, holding that, assuming that some of the rules had been broken, yet, when all the circumstances were considered, the evidence was not such that, as a matter of law, the County Court judge was bound to hold that this workman was guilty of serious and wilful misconduct. In another case a miner, employed by a firm of fireclay manufacturers, sued his employers for compensation in respect of personal injuries received under the following circumstances. In the usual course of his employment he drilled a shot-hole in the material of the mine, and charged the hole with blasting powder in the ordinary way. After an interval of about six minutes from the time of setting light to the charge, the pursuer left his place of shelter and went forward to the shot-hole, when the explosion occurred, and in consequence he was injured. The defenders stated that, according to one of the special rules of the mine, if a shot has been lighted, and does not explode, no person shall enter the place where it was lighted until 30 minutes shall have elapsed, and pleaded that the pursuer had been guilty of serious and wilful misconduct within the meaning of the Act. The sheriff-substitute found that the pursuer met with his injuries by an accident arising out of the course of his employment, and that they were not attributable to such serious and wilful misconduct as was contemplated by the Act, and awarded him compensation. On appeal, the Court affirmed this decision, holding that, as the miner did not know of the rule and acted

according to the best of his judgment, and as there was no breach of duty on his part other than neglect to inform himself of the rule, he must be held to have been in the course of his employment, and not to have been guilty of serious and wilful misconduct. Weight must be given to the finding that the rule was not generally observed in the mine, and that it was the practice of the miners to return to a delayed or missed shot whenever they thought it safe to return.—*Court of Appeal, February 4th; Court of Session, First Division, reported February 25th.*

Failure of action under Employers' Liability Act.—Subsequent claim under Workmen's Compensation Act.—By sec. 1, sub-sec. 4, of the Workmen's Compensation Act it is provided that if, within the time limited in that Act for taking proceedings, an action is brought to recover damages independently of that Act for injury caused by any accident, and it is determined in such action that the injury is one for which the employer is not liable in such action, but that he would have been liable to pay compensation under the provisions of that Act, the action shall be dismissed, but the Court in which the action is tried shall, if the plaintiff shall so choose, proceed to assess such compensation, and shall give a certificate having the force of an award under that Act. A workman, employed by a cycle company, who had been injured owing to the defective action of the gearing apparatus of a capstan lathe which he was working, brought an action in the County Court against the company under the Employers' Liability Act, when the judge held that the allegation of negligence failed, and gave judgment for the defendants. Thereupon the plaintiff made a claim under the Workmen's Compensation Act. On behalf of the defendants it was urged that, if a plaintiff claimed under the Employers' Liability Act, and, on failing to obtain judgment under that Act, did not apply to the judge to award him compensation in the manner provided by the sub-section above cited, then he could not proceed afterwards under the Workmen's Compensation Act. The arbitrator rejected this contention, and awarded the plaintiff compensation.—*Manchester, February 28th.*

Employment on or in or about a Factory.—In the case, noticed in the November GAZETTE (pp. 327, 328), in which a claim for compensation by the widow of a carter, who, while loading timber on to his cart from the premises of his employers (the cart being in the road outside) fell from his cart and received fatal injuries, was decided in favour of the plaintiff, the County Court judge holding that the accident took place "on or in or about" the factory, within the meaning of the Act, this decision was confirmed on appeal. In another case the widow of a carter, employed by a firm of team owners, claimed compensation in respect of the death of her husband. While returning with his cart to, and when about fifteen yards from, his employer's premises, this man was knocked down and killed by his horses, which had bolted and which he was trying to stop. It was shown that the respondents had a shoeing-forge and wheelwright's shop besides the stables, which were almost exclusively used for their own horses and carts, and had in connection with the stables a chaff-cutting machine worked by steam power and used in preparing provender for their horses. The judge held that the respondents' premises were not a factory within the meaning of the Act because no manufacturing processes were carried on there, and because no manual labour was exercised there by way of gain, or incidental to the making of any article. He also said that he did not find that the accident occurred on or in or about the premises. He decided accordingly in favour of the respondents.—*Court of Appeal, November 26th, reported February 4th; Liverpool County Court, February 20th.*

Employment to which the Act applies.—An able-bodied seaman in the employment of a steamship company met with injuries which proved fatal while working at the hoisting of a ship's boat by means of a crane on the quay alongside a steamship. His dependents claimed compensation from his employers. The Court of Appeal, affirming the decision of the County Court judge, held that the claim could not be granted, because the employment of the deceased at the time of the accident was that of a seaman on shore, carrying out the normal duties of a seaman, and was not an employment to which the Act applied.—*Court of Appeal, Ireland, February 23rd.*

Illegal employment a bar to claim for compensation.—A girl, employed by a packing-box clasp manufacturer, who had injured her finger while working a punching-machine, claimed compensation; but the sheriff dismissed the action on the ground that the girl being under 13 years of age and not certificated, as required by the Education Act (Scotland), the contract of employment between defender and pursuer was unlawful, and could not be set up in a claim by the pursuer.—*Glasgow Sheriff Court, reported February 18th.*

Assessment of Compensation.—"Average Weekly Earnings."—In the case mentioned in the February GAZETTE (p. 40), in which an operative in the employment of a firm of cotton-spinners was admitted to be entitled to receive compensation for injuries received while at work a sum equivalent to one week's wages, but a question arose as to how such wages should be calculated, the decision of the County Court judge was affirmed on appeal. The plaintiff had been employed as a little piecer, earning 9s. 6d. a week, but three weeks prior to the accident had been promoted to be side-piecer, in which capacity he earned 13s. 8d. per week. On behalf of the plaintiff it was contended that, in calculating his average weekly wages, his employment as a side-piecer had alone to be considered, and he claimed 13s. 8d. The Court, however, held that his average weekly earnings ought to be reckoned by taking 49 weeks at 9s. 6d., and 3 weeks at 13s. 8d., and dividing the total by 52.—*Court of Appeal, February 4th.*

(2) FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS.

Delaying an Inspector in the exercise of his powers.—A boot luster was summoned by an assistant factory inspector for wilfully delaying him in the exercise of his powers. The inspector stated that he found two young persons at work in the defendant's workshop at 8.40 p.m., and while he was proceeding to obtain a declaration from one of them, the defendant refused to allow him to sign it, knocked the paper out of the inspector's hand, and assumed a threatening attitude. The defendant was fined £3 and 14s. costs, or in default of distress 21 days' imprisonment.—*Thames Police Court, reported February 2nd.*

Employment in Meal-times.—A firm of jute spinners was summoned for employing three female operatives during a time allowed for meals. The factory inspector stated that he found one of these operatives cleaning a spinning-frame, and the other two sweeping the floor during the meal hour. The first operative said that the spinner at the frame asked her to clean it, and the foreman of the flat did not know she was doing so, while one of the others said she was in the habit of sweeping the floor regularly in the meal-hour, and on this occasion, not feeling well, got the third woman to help her. The sole partner of the firm gave evidence that the woman, who said she was in the habit of sweeping the floor regularly in the meal-hour, did so with his consent, but he knew nothing about the other two, and, if they were working, it was against the rules. The sheriff decided that the defendant was liable in respect of the woman working with his consent, and sentenced him to pay a fine of 2s. 6d. and 17s. of expenses, but declined to convict in respect of the other two operatives, holding that it had not been proved that these women were employed by the defendant.—*Dundee Sheriff's Court, reported February 2nd.*

(3) MISCELLANEOUS.

Insurance of Employer against Accident to Workmen.—Stamp Act.—In two cases stated by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue the question was raised, whether a policy of insurance to indemnify an employer against liability to compensate his workmen or their representative for death or personal injuries caused to such workmen while in his employment was "a policy of insurance against accident" within the Stamp Act and accordingly the stamp duty to which it was liable was one penny. In one of the cases, in which the policy was not under seal, it was held liable to a stamp duty of 6d., as an agreement, and in the other, in which the policy was under seal, it was held liable to a stamp duty of 10s., as a deed.—*Queen's Bench Division, December 14th 15th, reported February 25th.*

Building Society.—Responsibility of Trustee of Deed of Dissolution.—In an action for account the two trustees of a deed of dissolution of a building society were ordered to pay into court a sum of money; and this order was obeyed by one of the trustees, the other having absconded. On a summons asking that the trustees should be ordered to pay the costs of the action it was admitted by the trustee who had paid in this money that he had accepted the trusteeship, but had left everything to his co-trustee, signing documents without inquiry as his co-trustee told him and swearing an affidavit which he did not understand. The judge held that he could not be considered to have acted "honestly and reasonably" within the meaning of the Judicial Trustee Act, 1896, so as to be excused for his breach of trust; that, though he was entitled as trustee to his costs, charges, and expenses properly incurred by him as trustee out of the fund in Court, yet he must pay, as between party and party, the costs of the action.—*Chancery Division, Kehewich, J., January 11th and 12th, reported February 25th.*

LABOUR IN THE COLONIES.*

(Monthly report, compiled by the Emigrants' Information Office, 31 Broadway, Westminster, S.W., from official and other reports, newspapers, etc., mostly dated January and February last.)†

Canada.—April is the best month in the year to arrive in Canada, and emigrants should therefore now prepare to start. A report from a settler at Agassiz in British Columbia, states that there is no opening for wage earners there without capital, except for domestic servants; but for those who can afford to buy 20 to 40 acres of land suitable for fruits, hops, &c., at £4 to £7 an acre there is an excellent opening. In New Brunswick there is a good demand for farm hands.

New South Wales.—Owing to the severe drought in the Western districts of the Colony, and the great loss of sheep, station hands have been dispensed with, and there is consequently no demand for them. Mining for opals has become a prominent industry; 700 men are working at the White Cliffs Opal Field, 60 miles North of Wilcannia, and some are doing very well. Recent reports from such widely distant parts as Walgett, Wilcannia, Mudgee, Orange, Cooma, Bourke, Jerilderie, Lithgow, Queanbeyan, Wagga-Wagga, Hillston, Dubbo and Young, state that there is practically no demand for miners, ordinary farm or station hands, or mechanics, but in most cases there is a good demand for female servants. At Uralla and Grafton in the North there is a fair demand for farm labourers or carpenters, and a

* And the South African Republic (Transvaal).

† Handbooks, with maps on the different Colonies, may be obtained from the Emigrants' Information Office, at a penny each, post free.

good one for female servants. Really skilled dairymen, however, and thoroughly capable farm labourers would probably have little difficulty in obtaining employment in many parts of the Colony. At the Broken Hill Silver Mines there is a demand for thoroughly practical hard ground silver miners only; the supply of mechanics is equal to the demand, but first class men can always be sure of getting permanent employment; there is a good demand for female servants. At Sydney the building trade is better than it has been for a long time, and carpenters and joiners have had their wages raised a shilling a day. Increased shipping accommodation is being provided at Sydney to meet an increase of business.

Victoria.—The demand for labour has improved, and employment is now more readily obtained than has been the case for some time past. Carpenters, joiners and bricklayers have all received an advance of 1s. per day in Melbourne; but the demand for them is not brisk, as owing to the large number of vacant shops and houses few new buildings are being erected. There is a good demand which is likely to continue for a limited number of really skilled plumbers on the Melbourne drainage works, which will take years to complete. And in nearly every trade—though there is no scarcity of ordinary men—yet a few thoroughly competent workmen are wanted. In country districts, also, the demand for labour is improving, owing to the abundance of the late harvest, and the progress of the dairying industry.

South Australia.—There has been a demand for married couples without family for stations, otherwise the labour market is fully supplied.

Western Australia.—The principal public works which are now being carried out, are the Fremantle Harbour Works, and the Coolgardie Water Scheme. A great many of the other public works have been completed, and those working on them have been discharged. As no new public works are being started, emigrants now landing will have to trust to getting work with private employers. Assisted as well as free passages to the colony are now suspended.

Queensland.—There is a good demand for competent farm labourers and ploughmen; free and assisted passages for this class of labour, and for female servants are now being given.

Tasmania.—A report from Zeehan, the chief town of the silver mining district on the West Coast, states that there is a good demand for first class fitters, and a fair one for engine drivers and miners. Skilled artisans are reported to be almost sure of work, but men without a trade have no prospects whatever. Laundresses, whose husbands are also in work, do very well.

New Zealand.—The last reports show that there was plenty of work in New Zealand. The places which seem to have been especially busy were Napier, Wanganui, Otaki, Masterton, Ashburton, Timaru, Oamaru, Dunedin (except in the boot trade), and Invercargill. At Wellington, however, trades, except the clothing trade, were slack, and at Christchurch a number of stonemasons and carpenters were out of work. In country districts men were generally very busy at shearing, harvesting, &c. but it must be remembered that the season for that kind of work is now over.

Cape Colony.—There are openings from time to time, but not now, for skilled artisans in the building trades at Cape Town; but it must be remembered that a large number of the workmen employed are coloured persons, who are willing to work for lower wages than white men. Several reports from country districts state that almost the only labour used is that of natives. At Fort Beaufort, however, a steady English mechanic would get work.

Transvaal.—There is no improvement in the demand for labour at Johannesburg; at Pretoria there is no opening for miners, but a good mechanic can generally get work.

EMPLOYMENT IN FEBRUARY—COAL AND IRON MINING; PIG IRON INDUSTRY; IRON AND STEEL TRADES.

In only four districts was the average below 5 1/2 days per week; viz:—Notts and Leicester (4.93 days), West Scotland (5.35 days), Fife (5.42 days) and Northumberland (5.44 days).

COMPARISON OF THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS WORKED BY COLLIERIES IN FEBRUARY, 1899 AND 1898, AND IN JANUARY, 1899.

Table with columns: District, No. employed in Feb. 1899, Average No. of Days worked per Week by the Collieries in four weeks ended, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Feb. 1899 as compared with, 25th Feb. 1899, 19th Feb. 1898, 21st Jan. 1899, A year ago, A month ago.

Percentage of Unemployed.—The miners in trade unions in Northumberland and Durham had 0.3 per cent. of their membership in receipt of unemployed benefit at the end of February, as compared with 0.4 per cent. in January and 0.6 per cent. in February, 1898.

Exports of Coal.—The exports of coal, coke, cinders and patent fuel, during February, amounted to 3,196,848 tons, as against 3,032,343 tons in January, and 2,518,751 tons in February, 1898.

(b) IRON MINING IN FEBRUARY.

EMPLOYMENT in February was better in the English districts but not so good in Scotland as a year ago.

Returns received relating to 135 iron mines and open works, at which 17,500 workpeople were employed, show that the average number of days worked by these workpeople in the four weeks ended February 25th was 5.86 as compared with 5.79 a year ago. The average for January was affected by the Christmas and New Year holidays. The number of workpeople employed was practically the same as in February, 1898.

Of the 17,500 persons employed, 92.3 per cent. were at mines working 22 or more days in the four weeks, as compared with 84.5 per cent. a year ago.

The following tables summarise the returns received:

(I.) Average number of days worked per week by the mines:—

Table with columns: District, No. employed in Feb. 1899, Average number of days worked per week by the mines in 4 weeks ended, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Feb. 1899 as compared with, 25th Feb. 1899, 19th Feb. 1898, 21st Jan. 1899, A year ago, A month ago.

(II.) Classification of workpeople according to days worked by the mines:—

Table with columns: Number of days on which Iron Ore or Stone was got and drawn in four weeks, February, 1899, Corresponding percentages in—, February, 1898, January, 1899.

(c) PIG-IRON INDUSTRY IN FEBRUARY.

THE improvement in employment in this industry still continues. At the works of 113 ironmasters there were 371 furnaces in blast at the end of February employing an estimated number of 23,975 workpeople, or 16 more furnaces and 513 more workpeople than a year ago. During the month three furnaces were re-lit in the Glamorgan and Monmouth district. In other districts the number of furnaces in blast, so far as shown by the returns, remains as in January. The estimated number employed has increased by 72 during the month.

Table with columns: Districts, Present time compared with a year ago, Present time compared with a month ago, Feb. 1899, Feb. 1898, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Feb. 1899, Feb. 1899, Jan. 1899, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Feb. 1899.

The shipments of pig iron to foreign countries and British possessions from all ports of the United Kingdom during February, amounted to 61,553 tons, as compared with 49,871 tons in January and 55,899 tons in February, 1898.

(d) EMPLOYMENT AT IRON AND STEEL WORKS* IN FEBRUARY.

EMPLOYMENT in this industry has further improved in Scotland, but in England and Wales it was not so good at the end of February as at the end of January. In both divisions of Great Britain it was considerably better than a year ago.

Returns received from 211 works show that they were employing 79,098 workpeople in the last week of February, or 495 less than in the last week of January, but 3,061 more than a year ago. The following table gives the changes in the numbers employed in England and Wales, and in Scotland:—

Table with columns: District, Numbers employed in week ending, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Feb. 1899 as compared with, Feb. 25th, 1899, Feb. 26th, 1898, Jan. 28th, 1899, a year ago, a month ago.

* Including iron puddling and rolling, and steel making and rolling.

EMPLOYMENT IN FEBRUARY—IRON AND STEEL TRADES; TINPLATE INDUSTRY; AGRICULTURE.

Information as to the number of shifts worked has been received with respect to about 93 per cent. of these workpeople, and the particulars are summarised in the table below. The average number of shifts worked in the last weeks of both February and January was 5.60, the average a year ago being 5.54.

Average Weekly Number of Shifts worked per Man.

Table with columns: Number of Shifts worked per man, Number employed in Feb., 1899, so far as returned, Percentage proportion to Total, Corresponding percentage in Feb., 1898.

Assuming that the workpeople not included in this table worked the same average number of shifts as those who are included, the total number of shifts worked by all the workpeople included in the first table may be estimated at 442,981 in the last week of February, 445,640 in the last week of January, and 421,454 in the last week of February, 1898.

(e) EMPLOYMENT AT TINPLATE WORKS* IN FEBRUARY.

EMPLOYMENT in this industry recovered considerably during February, and at the end of the month was better than a year ago.

Forty-four works with 221 mills had all their mills at work, whilst 27 others with 202 mills were giving partial employment, 134 of these mills being at work. Thus in all 355 mills were working and giving employment to an estimated number of 17,826 workpeople, as compared with 323 mills employing 16,259 workpeople at the end of January, and 341 mills employing 17,351 workpeople a year ago.

The following table shows the number of mills and workpeople employed at the works which were giving employment, full or partial,* at each of the three periods:—

Table with columns: Works giving full employment, Works giving partial employment, Total at end of Feb., 1899*, Corresponding Total for January, 1899*, Corresponding Total for February, 1898*, No. of Works open, No. of Mills in such Works (Working, Not Working, Total), Estimated No. of Workpeople employed.

The exports of tinplates and blackplates from the United Kingdom in the months covered by the above table were as follows:—

Table with columns: February, 1899, January, 1899, February, 1898, Tinplates (Tons), Blackplates (Tons).

Thus the exports of tinplates in February, 1899, were greater than in the preceding month, but less than in February, 1898. The exports of blackplates for tinning show an increase both as compared with a month and a year ago.

* The figures in the table relate not only to the manufacture of tinplates but also to the manufacture of blackplates. It will be understood that, in addition to the works returned as giving full or partial employment, a certain number of tinplate works were wholly idle at each of the dates to which the returns relate, but the figures in the table are believed to give approximately the total number of works, mills and persons actually employed.

(f) AGRICULTURAL LABOUR IN FEBRUARY.

THE Agricultural Correspondent to the Department on the basis of 230 returns from all parts of England reports as follows: Generally speaking, agricultural labourers were regularly employed during the month of February, though, owing to the wet and stormy weather which prevailed in the earlier part of the month, some odd hands lost some time, chiefly in the western counties. During the last part of the month fine weather generally prevailed, and reports from all districts state that farmers were exceptionally busy ploughing, sowing, threshing, etc., and that sufficient labourers were frequently very difficult to obtain. Changes in the weekly cash wages of ordinary labourers amounting to a rise of 1s. a week took place in certain districts in the counties of Berkshire, Cambridge, Essex, Hants, Lincoln, Norfolk, Suffolk, Somerset, and Wilts. A change, amounting to a rise of 2s. a week, is reported from a district in Cheshire.

A strike of agricultural labourers took place on four farms out of five at Longstanton, in the Chesterton Union of Cambridgeshire, on 14th February. Sixteen men struck on one farm, six on two, and five on one. The fifth farmer kept his men on, it is stated, at the winter hours pending the result of the dispute. The object of the strike was to obtain shorter hours. The usual hours worked in the winter for six weeks before Christmas, and for six weeks after, are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., with about 1 1/2 hours for meals, and the rest of the year 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with 1 1/2 hours off for meals. In the middle of February, the usual time for changing to the longer hours, the men claimed that the summer hours of work should be from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., with 1 1/2 hours for meals, and refused to work the longer hours. After the men had been out about a fortnight, a compromise was effected, it being agreed that the hours in the summer should be from 6 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., with 1 1/2 hours for meals. By 11th March twenty-two out of the thirty-three men had returned to their situations, five had found work elsewhere, and 6 had neither returned to their former employment nor had secured other work.

Northern Counties.—Reports state that employment was generally regular in February in Northumberland, and in Cumberland in the Unions of Bootle, Brampton, Carlisle, Cockermouth, Penrith, and Whitehaven. A correspondent near Cockermouth writes that extra labour cannot be had, and that wages are slightly on the increase. Reports from North Lancashire and South Westmorland state that everyone is fully employed. It is stated that, owing to the wet weather and floods in previous months, work was backward, but that as a strong staff of hands as can be got is proceeding with sowing and other spring work. A report from the Fylde Union in North Lancashire states that cottages are standing empty in some of the parishes owing to scarcity of hands. The term of engagement in this district for farm servants, both men and women, who are lodged and boarded in the farm houses, is a yearly one, from February 2nd. It is stated that the wages agreed upon this year are frequently £1 to £2 higher than was the case last year.

Employment is said to be regular in Durham in the Unions of Chester-le-Street and Darlington (Durham and Yorks). A large employer of labour in the last-named Union states that, "I cannot get a man if I want one." Favourable reports come from Yorkshire, from the Unions of Beverley, Bridlington, Easingwold, Guisborough, Howden, Malton, Ouseburn, Pocklington, Ripon, and Thirsk. Nearly all the reports from Yorkshire refer to an increasing difficulty in procuring men. A report from the Howden Union states that there has been some difficulty in getting hired farm servants, also that higher wages have been paid to extra men for threshing this year. Another report from the same Union attributes the difficulty of getting sufficient men for threshing partly to the large crop of corn last harvest, and partly to the open winter which has kept all hands busy at out-door work, such as ploughing, getting in roots, and draining. A correspondent writes from the Ripon Union that work is very plentiful, and labourers need not be a day out of work. He states that farmers in the district complain that "the men are scarce, and bad to do with," and that one employer offered to advance his men 1s. a week if they would work until 5.30 p.m., instead of 5, but they declined. A

CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES REPORTED IN FEBRUARY, 1899.

(Based on information obtained from all available sources, verified and corrected by direct application to the Employers, Trade Unions and other parties concerned.)

Summary.—The changes in wages reported during February affected about 272,400 workpeople, and the net effect of all the changes on the weekly wages of those affected was an increase of about 1s. 5½d. per head.

Increases.—The principal increases were those of 7½ per cent. (in two instalments) to 240,000 coal miners in certain districts of the Miners' Federation of the United Kingdom, similar advances to 10,000 miners in South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire, 5 per cent. to 2,225 steel smelters, and 2½ per cent. to 307 gas producers in England and Scotland, 5 per cent. to 2,500 steel millmen in the same district, and ½d. per hour to 2,500 bricklayers in Birmingham, all arranged under Conciliation Boards, and of 10 and 5 per cent. to 3,000 blast-furnace employees in the West of Scotland.

Decreases.—The principal decrease was that of 6½ per cent., to 1,700 tinplate makers at Llanelly.

Methods of Arrangement.—Changes affecting about 2,800 workpeople were preceded by disputes, causing stoppage of work. Changes affecting 251,900 workpeople were arranged under Conciliation Boards. The other changes, affecting about 17,700 workpeople, were arranged by direct negotiation between employers and workpeople, or conceded voluntarily by the employers.

Summary for First Two Months of 1899.—For the two months, January and February, the number of workpeople (separate individuals) reported as having received advances or sustained decreases is about 441,000. The net effect of all the changes on the weekly wages of those affected is estimated at an increase of about 11½d. per head.

NOTE.—It will be understood that increments accruing under scales of pay, as in the case of policemen, some municipal employees, and many railway servants, &c., are not recorded here. The same remark applies to the changes in pay of individuals, the grant of extra pay as compensation for extra work, &c.

Table with columns: Locality, Occupation, Date from which change takes effect in 1899, Approximate Number of workpeople affected by, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of Wages in a full week, Increase or Decrease in full week.

Table for BUILDING TRADES. Includes entries for Stonemasons, Bricklayers, Plumbers, Carpenters and Joiners, etc.

Table for MINING AND QUARRYING. Includes entries for Coal Hewers and other Underground Workers, Coal Miners and other Underground Workers, etc.

Table for IRON AND STEEL MANUFACTURE. Includes entries for Steel Smelters, Gas Producers, Basic Labourers, etc.

* Exclusive of overtime. † Where the winter and summer hours are known to differ in any trade, the weekly rate given in the table is the result of averaging the wages for five summer weeks and two winter weeks.

CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES REPORTED IN FEBRUARY—(continued).

Table for ENGINEERING AND SHIPBUILDING TRADES. Includes entries for Shipwrights, Brassfounders, Braziers and Sheet Metal Workers, etc.

Table for OTHER METAL TRADES. Includes entries for Rivet makers, Tinplate makers, etc.

Table for TEXTILE TRADES. Includes entries for Slubbing and yarn dyers, Bleachfield Workers, etc.

Table for EMPLOYEES OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES. Includes entries for Gas Stokers, Cleansing Department Employees, etc.

Table for PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING TRADES. Includes entries for Letterpress Printers, Compositors, etc.

Table for MISCELLANEOUS TRADES. Includes entries for Carters and Rolleymen, Lath Splitters, etc.

Table for SEAMEN. Includes entries for Steam Vessels, Sailing Vessels, etc.

* Exclusive of overtime. † See also under Changes in Hours of Labour. ‡ New work. § Old work. Rise in Agricultural Wages.—In some of the districts of Berkshire, Cambridge, Essex, Hants, Lincoln, Norfolk, Suffolk, Somerset, and Wilts, wages of agricultural labourers were increased by 1s. per week, and in one district of Cheshire by 2s. per week.

TRADE DISPUTES.

(Based on information, obtained from all available sources, verified and corrected by direct application to the Employers, Trade Unions, and other parties concerned.) Disputes involving less than 10 workpeople, and those which lasted less than one day have been omitted, except when the aggregate duration exceeded 100 working days.

Trade Disputes.—Thirty-six fresh disputes were reported as beginning in February, 1899, compared with 26 in January, and 25 in February, 1898. In these 36 disputes, 4,734 workpeople were directly, and 614 indirectly affected, a total of 5,348, which compares with 2,194 in January, and 3,568 in February, 1898.

Trades Affected.—In the building trades 3 disputes took place, involving 777 workpeople; mining and quarrying, 7 disputes, involving 2,019 workpeople; metal, engineering, and shipbuilding trades, 11 disputes, involving 938 workpeople; textile trades, 8 disputes, involving 524 workpeople; and in other industries, 7 disputes, involving 1,090 workpeople.

Causes.—Of the 36 new disputes, 21 were chiefly on wages questions, 5 in connection with working arrangements, 5 on matters of trade unionism, 2 on hours of labour, and 3 arose on other questions.

Results.—Twenty-three new disputes, involving 4,528 workpeople, and 15 old disputes, involving 3,267 workpeople, were reported as settled. In the 38 new and old disputes terminated, 10, involving 1,719 persons, were settled wholly in favour of the workpeople; 13, involving 1,721 persons, wholly in favour of the employers; and 15, involving 4,355 persons, resulted in a compromise. At the end of February, 12 old disputes were known to be still unsettled, involving altogether about 2,100 workpeople.

Duration of Disputes in Working Days.—No dispute of any great magnitude was in progress in February, and the total duration of all the disputes of the month, new and old, was only about 118,000 working days, compared with 157,000 in the preceding month of January, and 139,000 in February, 1898.

Table with 6 columns: Locality, Occupation, Number of Workpeople Affected (Directly, Indirectly), Date when Dispute began, Duration of Dispute in Working Days, Alleged Cause or Object, Result.

I.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN IN FEBRUARY, 1899.

Table for I.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN IN FEBRUARY, 1899. Includes sub-sections for BUILDING TRADES (777 Workpeople affected), MINING AND QUARRYING (2,019 Workpeople affected), and METAL, ENGINEERING AND SHIPBUILDING TRADES (938 Workpeople affected).

Table for METAL, ENGINEERING AND SHIPBUILDING TRADES (938 Workpeople affected). Includes entries for Sheffield, Birkenhead, Manchester, St. Helens, Birmingham, The Lye, Llanelly, River Clyde, Dundee, Paisley, and Port Glasgow.

Table for TEXTILE TRADES (524 Workpeople affected). Includes entries for Bradford, Haslingden, Ramsbottom, Macclesfield, Nottingham, Kidderminster, Stirling, and Galashiels.

* The occupations printed in italics are those of workpeople "indirectly affected," i.e., thrown out of work at the establishments affected by dispute, but not themselves on strike. The statements of cause and result do not apply to these persons.

TRADE DISPUTES—(continued).

Table with 6 columns: Locality, Occupation, Number of Workpeople Affected (Directly, Indirectly), Date when Dispute began, Duration of Dispute in Working Days, Alleged Cause or Object, Result.

I.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN IN FEBRUARY, 1899.

Table for I.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN IN FEBRUARY, 1899. Includes sub-sections for MISCELLANEOUS TRADES (1,090 Workpeople affected) and BUILDING TRADES.

II.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN BEFORE FEBRUARY, 1899, AND WERE SETTLED IN THAT MONTH.

Table for II.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN BEFORE FEBRUARY, 1899, AND WERE SETTLED IN THAT MONTH. Includes sub-sections for BUILDING TRADES and MINING AND QUARRYING.

Table for MINING AND QUARRYING. Includes entries for Sherburn, Durham and Castleford.

Table for METAL, ENGINEERING AND SHIPBUILDING TRADES. Includes entries for Liverpool, Willenhall, Llanelly, Glasgow, Belfast, and Dublin.

Table for MISCELLANEOUS TRADES. Includes entries for Marsden, Edinburgh, and Leicester.

III.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN BEFORE FEBRUARY, 1899, AND WERE STILL UNSETTLED AT THE END OF THAT MONTH.

The following 12 disputes, which have been previously reported in the monthly statement of disputes, were still unsettled at the end of February. The number of workpeople then involved was about 2,100. The month in which each dispute commenced is stated in brackets.

- Building Trades:—Plasterers, Stockport (Oct.); joiners, Halifax; and plasterers, Kilmarnock (Jan.).
Mining:—Coal miners, Normanton (Sep., 1897); Pontefract (April, 1898); East Kirkby, Notts (Nov.); Barnsley (Nov.).
Metal Trades:—Ironfounders, Barnsley (Oct.); brass-casters, Doncaster (Nov.); wire-drawers, etc., Birmingham (Dec.).
Textile Trades:—Dyers, Honley (Sept.).
Other Trades:—Brushmakers, London (Sept.).

* The occupations printed in italics are those of workpeople "indirectly affected," i.e., thrown out of work at the establishments affected by dispute, but not themselves on strike. The statements of cause and result do not apply to these persons.

EXAMINATION FOR MINING MANAGERS' CERTIFICATES.

South Wales District.—An examination for Certificates of Competency as Manager or Under-Manager of a Mine will be held on the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th May. Intending candidates should communicate on or before 1st May with the Secretary to the Examination Board, Mr. Robert T. Rees, Glandare, Aberdare.
Liverpool District.—An examination for Certificates of Com-

petency as Manager or Under-Manager of a Mine will be held shortly. Intending candidates should at once communicate with the Secretary to the Examination Board, Mr. T. Ratcliffe Ellis, 18, King Street, Wigan.

North Staffordshire District.—An examination for Certificates of Competency as Manager or Under-Manager of a Mine will be held shortly. Intending candidates should at once communicate with the Secretary to the Examination Board, Mr. Joseph Knight, Newcastle, Staffs.

INDUSTRIAL PROSECUTIONS IN FEBRUARY.

I.—Under Factory and Workshop Acts.*

Nature of Offence.	Cases taken.	Con- victions	Amount of Penalties.	Amount of Costs.
By Owners, Managers, &c.:-				
Neglecting to Limewash	5	5	£ 3 5 6	£ 1 3 7
Making false entry in Register, etc.	2	2	8 0 0	1 10 8
Neglecting to Fence Machinery	9	7	30 10 0	2 15 9
Employing Young Persons without necessary Certificates	28	28	10 16 6	10 0 3
Illegal Hours or Times of Employment—				
Before or after the legal hour	39	39	28 3 0	12 13 6
During meal times, or without proper intervals for meals	55	53	16 18 0	18 11 0
Beyond legal hour on Saturday or day substituted	6	6	1 6 6	1 3 6
At night	13	13	16 10 0	4 0 6
Employing children full time, otherwise than in morning and afternoon sets, &c.	6	6	6 7 6	2 8 9
In Workshop and in Shop beyond total legal period	2	1	2 0 0	0 11 4
Neglecting Rules as to Registers, Abstracts, Notices, &c.—				
Not keeping Registers	19	19	14 7 6	7 12 2
Not affixing or properly filling up Notices and Abstracts	12	12	4 9 6	4 13 6
Not sending Notices required by Act	2	2	0 9 0	1 3 0
Other Offences	4	2	3 5 0	1 0 0
By Workmen:-				
Making false entry in Register, &c.	1	1	0 5 0	0 7 6
Obstructing an Inspector in the execution of his duty	2	2	5 0 0	0 14 4
Prosecutions for Breach of Special Rules	1	1	0 5 0	0 8 0
Total for February, 1899	206	199	151 18 0	70 17 4
Total for February, 1898	148	146	131 1 6	66 1 6

II.—Under Mines and Quarries Acts.*

Nature of Offence.	Prosecu- tions.	Con- victions.	Cases with- drawn.	Cases dis- missed.	Amount of Fines and Costs.
UNDER THE MINES ACTS.					
By Owners, Managers, &c.:-					
Registers, Notices, Returns, Plans, &c.	2	2	—	—	£ 6 10 6
Ventilation	1	1	—	—	2 0 0
Miscellaneous	1	1	—	—	2 0 0
By Workmen for offences re- lating to:-					
Safety Lamps	4	4†	—	—	3 4 0
Shot-firing and Explosives	3	3	—	—	4 19 6
Timbering	5	5	—	—	5 14 6
Lucifer Matches, Smoking, &c.	2	2	—	—	1 12 6
Riding on Trams	15	15	—	—	10 8 0
Miscellaneous	19	18	—	1	20 13 6
Total for February, 1899	52	51	—	1	87 2 6
Total for February, 1898	52	51	—	1	61 3 0
UNDER THE QUARRIES ACT.					
By Owners, Managers, &c.:-					
Registers, Notices, Returns, &c.	1	1	—	—	£ 1 4 0
By Workmen:-					
Explosives and Blasting	2	2	—	—	2 12 6
Total for February, 1899	3	3	—	—	3 16 6
Total for February, 1898	14	10	4	—	47 4 6

III.—Under Merchant Shipping Acts.

(Supplied by the Solicitor's Department, Board of Trade.)

Nature of Offence.	Prosecu- tions.	Convic- tions.	Total Penalties.	Total Costs.
By Owners or Masters of Ships:-				
Carrying excessive Deck Cargoes	2	2	£ 3 0 0	£ 1 8 0
Not providing Lights	1	1	5 0 0	2 19 0
By Seamen and others:-				
Misdealing with Wreck	3	3	3 0 0†	—
Total for February, 1899	6	6	11 0 0	4 7 0
Total for February, 1898	12	12	57 0 0	10 9 6

Attachment of Wages in Victoria.

AN Act of the Colony of Victoria, passed on December 5th, 1898, exempts from attachment under judicial order the wages of clerks, servants, labourers, and workmen, except in so far as the wages of any such person may exceed £2 a week, when the surplus over that rate, but no more, can be attached. No costs or expenses of any such attachment, other than for court fees or stamps, shall be chargeable against such person, unless his wages exceed £4 a week. The Act is to remain in force until January 1st, 1902, and thence until the end of the next ensuing session of Parliament.

* Supplied by the Home Office.

† Sentenced in one case to three months hard labour without the option of a fine.

‡ And costs or 14 days imprisonment in each case.

INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS

REGISTERED OR DISSOLVED IN FEBRUARY.

(Supplied to the Department by the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies.)

FROM the following summary of the changes in the Register of Industrial Organisations in February, it will be seen that 5 Trade Unions, 2 Co-operative Societies for Distribution, 20 Co-operative Societies for Production, 2 Miscellaneous Societies, 46 new Friendly Societies, 68 branches of existing Friendly Societies, and 2 Building Societies were added to the Register for the United Kingdom during February. Two Trade Unions, 36 Building Societies, and 49 Friendly Societies (including 30 branches) are reported as having ceased to exist, to have commenced "winding-up," or to have had registration cancelled.

ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED.

Trade Unions.—England and Wales.—General Tram and Bus-workers Union, 48, Crowndale-road, N.W.; Salford and District Hairdressers' Trade Union and Sick and Burial Union, Duke of York Hotel, Regent-road, Salford; Bishop Auckland Branch Builders' Labourers' Trade Society, Station Hotel, South-road, Bishop Auckland; Birmingham Jewish Tailors', Machinists', and Pressers' Benefit Trade Union, Red Lion Hotel, Smallbrook-street, Birmingham; National Union of Drivers, Horsemen, Tram-men and Carters, 101, John Bright-street, Birmingham. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*None.

Industrial and Provident Societies.—(A) Associations for Distribution.—England and Wales.—East Harptree Co-op. Soc., Ltd.; Co-op. Stores, East Harptree, Bristol; Coxlodge and Fawdon Ind. and Provident Soc., Ltd., 43, Riddell terrace, Coxlodge, Newcastle-on-Tyne. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*None. **(B) Associations for Production.—England and Wales.—**Birmingham Mutual Bakery, Ltd., 12, Cannon-street, Birmingham. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*Co-op. Agricultural and Dairy Societies at Kenneigh, Macroom, Kilnamartyra, Hornhill, (co. Cork), Ardagh (co. Mayo), Tisara, Cam, Dysart (co. Roscommon), Ferns (co. Wexford), Garrison, Brookeborough (co. Fermanagh), Ahoghill (co. Antrim), Blackwatertown (co. Armagh), Dromore (co. Tyrone), Clonmany Co-op. Poultry Soc., Clonmany (co. Donegal), Bunlin, Cratlagh, and Milford Co-op. Poultry Soc., Milford (co. Donegal); Carrigart Co-op. Agric. and Poultry Soc., Carrigart (co. Donegal); Glenvar and Killygarvon Co-op. Poultry Soc., Kilkeel (co. Donegal); Newmarket Co-op. Poultry Soc., Newmarket (co. Cork). **(C) Miscellaneous.—England and Wales.—**Hoddesdon and District Liberal and Radical Club, Ltd., Brockett-road, Hoddesdon; Kelmscott Club Society, Ltd., 29, The Grove, Hammersmith, W. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*None.

Friendly Societies.—(A) New Friendly Societies.—England and Wales.—Ordinary Friendly, 10; Dividing, 10; Collecting, 2; Specially Authorised, 5; Working Men's Clubs, 14. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*Specially Authorised, 5.

(B) New Branches of Existing Societies.—England and Wales.—55. *Scotland.—*13. *Ireland.—*None.

Building Societies.—England and Wales.—2. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*None.

ORGANISATIONS DISSOLVED.

Trade Unions.—England and Wales.—Onward Society of Drillers and Hole-Cutters, White Swan Hotel, Silver-street, Stockton; Good Intent Society of Galvanizers' Enamellers, Earl Grey Inn, Walsall-street, Wolverhampton. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*None.

Industrial and Provident Societies.—England and Wales.—None. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*None.

Friendly Societies.—England and Wales.—By instrument of dissolution: Ordinary Friendly, 6; Dividing, 1; Female, 1; Orders, 1; Specially Authorised, 1. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*None. Registration cancelled, Ordinary Friendly, 1; Dividing, 1; Juvenile, 2. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*None. Dissolved otherwise: Ordinary Friendly, 1; Juvenile, 3; Specially Authorised, 1; Branches, 30. *Scotland.—*None. *Ireland.—*None.

Building Societies.—England and Wales.—By instrument of dissolution, 6; notice of commencement of dissolution, 6; notice of termination of dissolution, 7; registrations cancelled in December, 1898 (advertised in February, 1899), 14. *Scotland.—*By instrument of dissolution, 3. *Ireland.—*None.

H.M. Inspectors of Factories.—New Appointments.—Mr. William Dennett Kirkwood, of 25, Bow Road, E., and Mr. Ernest Shepperson Wilson, of Bristol House, Sutton Court Road, Sutton, Surrey, have been appointed Inspectors of Factories and Workshops.

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