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CLASSIFIED CONTENTS TABLE.

Summary of the State of Employment in December	PAGE 1
Special Articles and Reports—	
SICKNESS AND MORTALITY EXPERIENCE OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES	3
RECENT CASES UNDER THE CONCILIATION ACT, 1896:—	
HOURS OF LABOUR OF BOYS APPRENTICED TO LIGHTERMEN	6
DISPUTE IN THE NORTH WALES QUARRY TRADE	6
CO-OPERATION IN GERMANY	4
MINES AND QUARRIES IN 1895	5
RECENT AGRICULTURAL HIRINGS IN SCOTLAND	4
Employment in Special Industries and Districts—	
REPORTS ON SPECIAL INDUSTRIES.	
COAL MINING	11
IRON MINING	11
PIG IRON MANUFACTURE	12
STEEL AND TINPLATE WORKS, PUDDLING FURNACES, AND ROLLING MILLS	12
SHIPBUILDING	14
AGRICULTURAL LABOUR	13
SEAMEN	14
LONDON DOCK AND WHARF LABOUR	13
WOMEN IN TEXTILE TRADES	15
DISTRICT REPORTS.	
LONDON	15
ENGLAND: Northern Counties	16
Lancashire	17
Yorkshire	18
Midland Counties	19
Eastern Counties	20
South Western Counties	21
WALES	21
SCOTLAND	22
IRELAND	23
Labour in the Colonies and Abroad—	
COLONIES	8
FRANCE	8
GERMANY	9
SWITZERLAND	9
BELGIUM	9
HOLLAND	9
AUSTRIA	10
ITALY	10
UNITED STATES	10
Miscellaneous Reports for December—	
LABOUR CASES	7
RECENT PROGRESS IN CO-OPERATION	29
CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION CASES	6
INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS	32
FOREIGN TRADE	31
MISCELLANEOUS TRADE NOTES	32
EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION	32
DISEASES OF OCCUPATIONS	27
Statistical Tables for December—	
TRADE DISPUTES	28
CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES	24
CHANGES IN HOURS OF LABOUR	26
INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS	27
INDUSTRIAL PROSECUTIONS	31
LABOUR BUREAUX	30
PAUPERISM	30
Notes and Reviews—	
NEW FACTORY AND SHOP ACT IN VICTORIA	7
QUEENSLAND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES, TRADE UNIONS, &c.	23
DIVIDENDS ON PURCHASES PAID BY CO-OPERATIVE DISTRIBUTIVE SOCIETIES	5
NEW INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED IN 1896	10
USE OF EXPLOSIVES IN COAL MINES	7
EXAMINATIONS FOR MINING MANAGERS' CERTIFICATES	32
INFORMATION FOR INTENDING EMIGRANTS	29

STATE OF EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER.*

I.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

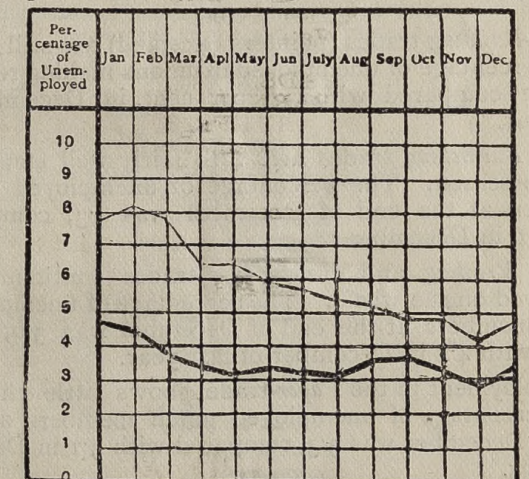
OWING to the Christmas holidays, a comparison of the returns of employment at the end of December with those for November gives a somewhat misleading idea of the tendency of the labour market. The only useful comparison, therefore, in the case of most trades is with the corresponding figures for December 1895. Compared with a year ago, the labour market, as a whole, shows a decided improvement, the Coal, Iron and Steel, Engineering and Shipbuilding trades being among those better employed, while there has been some falling-off in the Textile and Clothing trades. Changes of wages during the month have been almost entirely in an upward direction. The percentage of unemployed members of trade unions making returns, while (as usual) somewhat higher for December than for November, is lower than for any December since 1890.

In the 111 trade unions making returns, with an aggregate membership of 439,881, 14,186 (or 3·2 per cent.) are reported as unemployed at the end of December, compared with 4·8 per cent. in the 88 unions, with a membership of 398,258, from which returns were received for December 1895.

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 month of 1895 and 1896.

[The thick line applies to 1896, the thin line to 1895.]



The proportions of unemployed in the 111 unions making returns may be classified as follows:—

	Unions.	Members.
Under 3 per cent.	72	298,936
3 and under 5 per cent.	20	67,216
5 and under 7 per cent.	6	22,086
7 and under 10 per cent.	5	43,324
10 per cent. and upwards	8	8,319

Employment in Various Industries.—Coal Mining.—Owing to the Christmas holidays less time was worked in December than November, but employment was considerably better than a year ago. The average

* The reports on the State of Employment refer strictly to the month of December, and do not cover any changes which may have occurred between December 31st and January 15th.

number of days worked per week at pits employing 402,848 workpeople was 5.16, compared with 5.31 in November and 4.88 in December 1895. Unemployed miners in trade unions in Northumberland and Durham amounted at the end of December to 1.2 per cent. of the membership, as against 1.4 per cent. at the end of November and 1.7 per cent. at the end of December 1895. (For further details see page 11.)

Iron Mining.—Employment continued very good during December. At 125 mines and openworks the 16,435 workpeople employed worked an average of 5.65 days per week, as compared with 5.84 days in November and 5.57 in December 1895. The number employed was higher by about $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. than a year ago. (For further details see page 11.)

In the **Pig-iron Industry** employment was still considerably better than a year ago. At the end of December the ironmasters making returns had 346 furnaces in blast, compared with 331 in December 1895. The number of workpeople employed was 22,263, compared with 21,276 a year ago. Compared with the end of November, employment shows no change. (For further details see page 12.)

Employment at **Steelworks** at the end of December was much better than a year ago. At 130 works making returns, 36,572 workpeople were employed, as compared with 31,036 at the end of December 1895, an increase of nearly 18 per cent. (For further details see page 12.)

At **Puddling Furnaces and Rolling Mills** employment was better than a year ago, the number employed at 91 works being 17,733 at the end of December, and 16,994 in December 1895, an increase of over 4 per cent. (For further details see page 12.)

In the **Tinplate** trade employment has recovered from the disturbance referred to in the last number of the LABOUR GAZETTE, the number of mills reported to be at work being 328, as compared with 261 at the end of November. (For further details see page 12.)

Employment in the **Engineering** and kindred trades continues good. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of December was 2.5, compared with 5.0 per cent. in December 1895.

In the **Shipbuilding** trades a further improvement in the state of employment is shown; the percentage of unemployed union members having fallen to 7.7 at the end of December, compared with 10.5 in December 1895.

The **Building** trades (painters excepted) are still busy. The percentage of unemployed in unions making returns was 2.1, compared with 3.8 per cent. in December of last year.

The **Furnishing** trades are still fairly well employed for the season. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of December was 4.3, compared with 4.6 in December 1895.

The **Printing** and **Bookbinding** trades continue well employed on the whole. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of December was 3.0, compared with 4.1 in December of last year.

Employment in the **Paper** trade shows little change. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of December was 3.3, compared with 3.1 in December 1895.

Employment in the **Glass** trade remains slack. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of the month was 12.5, compared with 8.8 per cent. in December 1895.

Employment in the **Leather** trade shows but little change. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of December was 2.9, as compared with 4.1 in December 1895.

Employment in the ready-made branches of the **Boot** and **Shoe** trade is very slack, and in the bespoke shows some decline.

Employment in the ready-made **Tailoring** trade continues slack; in the bespoke branch it has declined.

Employment in the **Spinning** branch of the **Cotton** trade is fair; in the **Weaving** branch it continues slack.

Employment in the **Woollen** trade is dull in the principal centres, and shows some decline; the improvement in employment in the **Worsted** trade, noticed in the December GAZETTE, has not been maintained in all branches.

In the **Hosiery** trade employment continues slack in several departments.

As regards the employment of **women** in the **Textile** trades, information respecting 475 mills, employing about 80,000 women and girls, shows that 75 per cent. were in mills giving full employment during the month, compared with 76 per cent. among those for whom returns were received for November, and 91 per cent. for December 1895. (For further details see page 15.)

Dock and Riverside Labour.—In London employment has again improved, the average number of labourers employed daily in the docks and principal wharves being 16,705, as compared with 16,397 in November, and 15,180 in December 1895. (For further details see page 13.)

Agricultural Employment.—Generally the state of agricultural employment was satisfactory in all parts of the country during the month of December. In a few districts there was some slight irregularity of work, chiefly among oddmen, owing to the wet weather. (For further details see page 13.)

Trade Disputes.—Thirty-six fresh disputes occurred in December, involving 6,316 workpeople, as compared with 65, involving about 15,000 workpeople, in November, and 37, involving about 4,000 workpeople, in December 1895. Ten disputes took place in the engineering, shipbuilding and metal trades, 6 in the building trades, 5 in the coal mining industry, 4 in the textile trades, 3 in the clothing trades, 3 in connection with transport (land and sea), and 5 in other miscellaneous industries. Of the 38 new and old disputes (involving 8,244 persons) reported as settled, 18, involving 3,026 persons, were successful from the point of view of the workpeople; 12, involving 3,320, were unsuccessful; and 4, involving 878 persons, resulted in a compromise; in 4 disputes, involving 1,020 persons, the result was indefinite. The aggregate working days lost in December through labour disputes was about 199,000. (For further details see pages 28 and 29.)

Changes in Rates of Wages.—During December changes in rates of wages affecting about 58,500 workpeople were reported, 57,000 receiving increases and 1,500 sustaining decreases. The estimated effect of all the changes is an average increase of 1s. 4d. per week in the wages of the total number affected. About 14,400 coal miners; 7,200 blast-furnacemen, and over 25,000 workpeople engaged in the engineering and shipbuilding industries received increases. The remaining increases included 4,000 glass bottle makers and 4,000 tinplate workers. The only decrease reported was one affecting some 1,500 fustian cutters.

Changes affecting 9,800 workpeople took place under sliding scales, wages boards, &c.; changes affecting about 3,300 workpeople were preceded by strikes. The remainder, involving about 45,400 workpeople, were settled by negotiation or mutual arrangement, or were advances voluntarily conceded by employers. (For further details see pages 24 and 25.)

Pauperism.—In 35 selected urban districts 335,094 persons were relieved on one day in the second week of December. These figures correspond to a rate of 216 per 10,000 of the population of those districts, or 3 more per 10,000 than in November last, but 6 less per 10,000 than in December 1895. (For further details see page 30.)

Emigration.—The number of British and Irish passengers who left the United Kingdom during December for places out of Europe was 6,205, as compared with 6,012 in December 1895. (For further details see page 30.)

SICKNESS AND MORTALITY EXPERIENCE OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.*

For many years past, actuaries and valuers have been under the necessity of using the information with regard to sickness and mortality embodied in the valuable experiences of the Manchester Unity (1866-70), or the Foresters (1871-75), but in the Report under review tables are given embracing not the experience only of an Order, but of the whole registered Friendly Society community, which should greatly assist those entrusted with the finance and stability of these voluntary associations.

Among the most important friendly society problems at the present time are (1st) how to graft juvenile societies on to the adult ones, and so make membership continuous from childhood to old age; and (2nd) the old age pension question. In the consideration of both of these questions the present volume will afford valuable aid.

The objects of a friendly society are to provide for benefits during sickness and old age, and at death. These are usually paid for by a uniform contribution from its members, per month or per quarter, which is not increased as they grow older, being fixed by the age at entry. In order therefore that a society may be in a position to meet the increasing liabilities which the older members entail upon it, the contributions, to be adequate, must be greater than necessary for the expected claims during early life, the difference between the income (from contributions) and the outgo (to sick pay and death benefits) being accumulated at interest, to form a fund available for the years when the contributions will be inadequate to meet the heavy demands upon its resources.

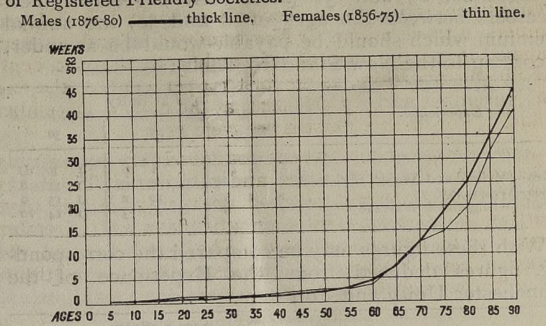
From time to time it is necessary that a valuation should be made, i.e., an investigation whether the future contributions, together with the funds in hand, if accumulated at interest, will suffice to pay the liabilities which the society has undertaken, viz., sick pay, pensions (if any), and death benefits to its existing members. It is therefore very important that the actuary entrusted with this periodical task should be able, as accurately as possible, to forecast the future, both as to the rates of sickness and of mortality.

In view of this, the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows and the Foresters had their own experiences compiled some time ago, and in order that even more trustworthy figures should be available, the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, from 1856 to 1880, collected returns of the sickness and mortality experienced in all registered friendly societies. These returns were then examined, classified and scheduled, and sickness, mortality, and monetary tables at seven different rates of interest were constructed therefrom. The results are contained in the present volume of over 1,300 pages, of which 1,118 contain in complete detail the principal experience in the Report, "Males, England and Wales, 1876-80," which gives results not before tabulated, viz., the sickness for every month during a complete year. The monetary tables of this experience are constructed from the entire facts grouped together, and the experience may be regarded as a Standard Table.

The annexed diagram, prepared for the Labour Department of the Board of Trade on the basis of figures contained in the Report, shows the number of weeks' sickness per annum per member at each age from 5 to 90 years; the thick curve referring to males is based on the principal experience, "Males, England and Wales, 1876-80," while the thin line giving the corresponding particulars for females is based on the experience during the years 1856 to 1875.

*Sickness and Mortality Experience deduced from the Quinquennial Returns made by Registered Friendly Societies for the years 1856 to 1880 inclusive, together with a report by Mr. Sutton to the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies and certain Monetary Tables based thereon at Rates of Interest from 2½ to 4 per cent. inclusive." (H. C. 303—1895.) May be obtained from Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode, or through any bookseller. Price 10s. 6d.

Average amount of Sickness at different ages. Chart showing the number of weeks' Sickness per member per annum, at each age from 5 to 90, based on the experience of Registered Friendly Societies.



It thus appears that a man entering a society at 20, would not expect to average one week of sickness a year for over 11 years. His age would be 49 before two weeks a year might be looked for, and 56 before three weeks might be expected. After that age, however, the number of weeks' sickness increases with very great rapidity to over four weeks at 60, twelve at 70, twenty-five at 80, and forty-five at 90. The rate of mortality in a similar manner is comparatively light at young ages and middle life, increasing rapidly after age 50. (See table below.) Among females, sickness is higher than among males up to age 54, and generally less above that age. This is the first published Table giving the sickness experience of females: it is therefore unique and of great value.

Owing to the absence of sufficiently detailed information in the early returns, the Experiences "Males, England, 1856-60" and "Males, England, 1861-65 and 66-70" were not graduated, and no monetary tables were constructed therefrom. The importance, however, of being in possession of monetary tables derived from a heavy sickness experience led to these being constructed for "Males in Wales, 1856-75," as the majority of the members were employed in collieries and ironworks, or so-called unhealthy occupations. A comparison of the rates of sickness and mortality given by these tables with what has been named above the Standard Table, and with the Manchester Unity and Foresters Experiences, shows that the sickness is on the whole much heavier among the miners, &c., of Wales than among the members generally.

A Comparison of the Adjusted Rates of Sickness and Mortality according to the undermentioned Tables.

Age.	NEW STANDARD TABLE.			MAN- CHESTER UNITY. Males, 1866-1870.	FORESTERS. Males, 1870-1875.	Age.
	Wales, 1856-1875.	England & Wales, 1876-1880.	England & Wales, 1856-1875.			
Sickness.						
No. of weeks Sickness per member per annum at each age stated.						
20	1.07	.89	1.01	.65	.85	20
30	1.08	.96	1.22	.86	.91	30
40	1.38	1.37	1.74	1.15	1.27	40
50	2.06	2.18	2.43	1.96	1.95	50
60	4.17	4.32	3.49	3.98	3.87	60
70	14.74	12.24	12.42	10.38	10.37	70
80	32.99	25.07	19.45	20.72	21.50	80
90	43.78	44.95	40.19			90
Mortality.						
No. dying per annum out of 100 members at each age stated.						
20	.79	.70	.77	.58	.73	20
30	.95	.71	.85	.80	.81	30
40	1.08	1.07	1.09	1.12	1.21	40
50	1.66	1.73	1.20	1.67	1.87	50
60	2.90	3.40	2.45	3.11	3.37	60
70	6.28	7.23	6.14	6.74	7.20	70
80	15.32	14.34	14.39	13.94	14.19	80
90	31.60	27.10	31.44	26.92	25.41	90

As regards the monetary tables, it will suffice here to give a practical illustration of their effect. If it be assumed that a society grants 10s. a week sick pay for all durations of sickness, and £10 at the death of a member, what contribution ought to be

charged? Taking 3 per cent. as the rate at which the funds of the society can be invested, it is found that at ages 20, 25 and 30 (most societies recruit their members between the ages of 18 and 30) the annual premium which should be payable would be as under, according to the New Standard Table:—

Experience.	Ages at Entry					
	20		25		30	
Males—England and Wales, 1876-80	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Males—Wales, 1856-75	1	3 6	1	7 0	1	11 8
Females—England & Wales 1856-75	1	6 6	1	10 3	1	14 10

With these figures may be compared the corresponding figures deduced from the Experience of the Manchester Unity and Foresters.

Experience.	Ages at Entry					
	20		25		30	
Manchester Unity, 1866-70	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Foresters, 1871-75	1	2 2	1	5 5	1	9 9

It appears from a comparison of the two last tables that a scale of contributions which would formerly have been deemed adequate as being based upon the experience of either the Manchester Unity or Foresters is insufficient as measured by the new Standard Table.

The Report calls attention to the influence, on sickness experience, of what may be described as "the personal equation" of a friendly society, *i.e.*, the spirit in which the rules are interpreted and applied. The practice in this respect differs very widely, so that it often happens that friendly societies, apparently nearly alike as regards the occupation of the members, density of population, and other matters, have very different sickness experience.

AGRICULTURAL HIRINGS IN SCOTLAND FROM AUGUST TO DECEMBER 1896.

The rates of wages agreed upon at the various hiring markets, held in Scotland between August and December 1896, were generally the same as those at the corresponding markets in 1895. Information has been received by the Department of the rates of wages paid at 45 hiring markets. In a number of instances it is reported that employers strove to effect a slight reduction in wages, but in almost all cases where farm servants remained on in their summer places the old rates of wages were obtained, though in some instances, in the case of those changing their situations, farmers succeeded in bringing about a reduction of from 10s. to 20s. for the half-year. In most districts women servants were scarce, and, on the whole, their wages tended in an upward direction.

At the yearly hirings in Fifeshire, at Cupar, Dunfermline, and St. Andrews, there was scarcely any change in the rates of wages compared with those obtained at the corresponding markets in 1895. The wages of first and second horsemen for the year generally ranged from £26 to £33, and those of third horsemen from £24 to £29. At the yearly hirings in Perthshire at Alyth, Blairgowrie, Crieff and Perth, a good many ploughmen changing their places had to submit to a reduction of £1, or sometimes a little more, for the half-year. In the county of Kinross a good many farmers hire at the Fifeshire markets in October, and the rates paid in the county are generally about the same as those paid in Fifeshire. In the counties of Aberdeen, Banff, Dumfries, Elgin, Forfar, Kincardine, Lanark, Nairn, and Stirling, the wages at the half-yearly hirings generally varied in the case of first and second horsemen, from £12 to £16 for the half-year.

In addition to the rates of yearly and half-yearly wages quoted, married men get a free house, together with a small garden in some cases; also allowances of milk, oatmeal and potatoes, and coals free, or carted free. Unmarried men are lodged and boarded in the farm houses, or else lodged in bothies, or with married servants and given allowances of food.

CO-OPERATION IN GERMANY.*

THE following statement shows the number of the various kinds of Co-operative Societies in Germany at the end of May 1896, compared with the corresponding dates in 1893, 1894 and 1895.

Description of Society.	Year ended 31st May.			
	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.
Loan and Credit Societies ...	No. 4,791	No. 5,489	No. 6,417	No. 8,069
Societies in various branches of industry ...	2,770	3,005	3,188	3,404
Distributive Societies ...	1,283	1,339	1,412	1,400
Building Societies ...	77	101	124	132
Total number of Societies	8,921	9,934	11,141	13,005

Of the above 13,005 societies existing at the end of May 1896, 8,327 are grouped in 17 federations, the three largest of which are (1) the General Federation of Agricultural Societies of the German Empire, numbering 2,447 societies; (2) the Union of Rural Societies (Raiffeisen system), numbering 2,245; and (3) the Federation of German Trade and Economic Societies, numbering 1,496. The annual reports on Co-operation in Germany, from the latest of which these particulars have been extracted, are compiled under the auspices of the last-named federation, established in 1859 by Schulze-Delitzsch.

The 8,069 loan and credit societies existing at the end of May 1896 include some 5,200 rural loan banks, to which category most of the newly-established loan societies are said to belong. A large number of these new rural loan banks are said to exist only in name, and to owe their origin to the activity of itinerant propagandists who promote them sometimes in localities where they are not wanted, or where no persons competent to conduct the business of such societies are to be found.

The aggregate membership at the beginning of 1896, returned by 1,021 loan societies, was 505,331. Fresh loans or renewals of loans, amounting to £82,965,289, were granted in 1895 by 1,068 societies from whom financial statements were forthcoming, the total capital owned by the members of these societies being £8,174,245, the loan capital £23,356,152, and the net profits for the year £470,912. Out of this sum, £336,160 was distributed among members as dividend on shares (4.1 per cent), £111,718 went to the reserve funds, £4,355 to education and objects of public utility, £17,935 was carried forward to next year, the disposal of the balance of £744 not being stated.

The heading "Societies in Various Branches of Industry" includes 1,733 societies for production, as compared with 1,582 at the end of May 1895, the rest consisting mainly of societies for the purchase of raw materials or implements, or for the acquisition of common premises where articles produced by members are sold for their individual profit. The bulk (1,604) of the productive societies are agricultural, no fewer than 1,476 being dairy societies.

Of 129 societies figuring in the statistics as co-operative societies for industrial production, 41 only are said to have a just claim to the title as being societies which "aim at improving the economic condition of persons engaged in a handicraft."

Returns supplied by 460 distributive societies show an aggregate membership of 292,077, a total value of sales in 1895 amounting to £4,134,052, share capital amounting to £347,865, loan capital £372,310; reserve fund £161,444, and nett profits £410,700. Of this sum £13,831 was distributed among members as interest on shares (nearly 4 per cent); £378,424 among members as dividend on purchases (a little over 9 per cent.); £9,993 went to reserve fund; £2,763 was subscribed towards education and objects of public utility, the balance being carried forward to the following year.

* Jahresbericht für 1895 über die auf Selbsthilfe gegründeten deutschen Erwerbs- und Wirthschaftsgenossenschaften. Leipzig, Verlag von Julius Klinckhardt, 1896.

MINES AND QUARRIES IN 1895.*

THE Annual Report for 1895 on the Mineral Industry of the United Kingdom for the first time includes statistics of the numbers employed and the accidents in deep quarries, these returns having been made compulsory by the Quarries Act 1894.

(1) **Numbers Employed and Minerals Raised.**—The following table gives the numbers employed in the various classes of mines and quarries:—

	Under Ground or inside Quarries.	Above Ground or outside Quarries.	Total.	Increase (+) or Decrease (-) compared with 1894.
Iron Ore Mines...	12,409	3,678	16,087	+ 640
Other Mines ...	17,872	12,327	30,199	- 351
Quarries ...	53,915	50,710	104,625	†
Total ...	638,213	200,069	838,282	†

The falling off in the numbers employed in coal mines was spread over nearly all districts, the chief exception being South Wales, where the numbers increased by 1,602. The falling off in Yorkshire amounted to 2,952, and in the Midlands to 1,623.

The total value at the mines and open works of the minerals raised during 1895 is estimated at rather over 69 millions sterling, or about 8½ millions sterling less than July 1894. The decrease in the value of the coal alone amounted to 5½ millions sterling. In spite of the decrease in the numbers employed, however, the actual output of coal in Great Britain for the year was the greatest hitherto recorded. In England and in Wales there was an absolute decrease in the output, outweighed by a large increase in Scotland. It must be remembered that in 1894 the production in Scotland was very small, owing to the wages dispute in that year.

The following table gives the total output and the output per person employed below ground in the various coalfields, together with the increase or decrease compared with the previous year:—

Coalfield.	Quantity raised in thousands of tons.	Increase (+) or Decrease (-) compared with 1894.	Quantity raised per person employed below ground.
Scotch Coalfield...	1,000 tons.	1,000 tons.	Tons.
Northern	28,793	+7,311	411
Yorkshire	39,828	-2,470	382
Lancashire and Cheshire Coalfield ..	40,663	-1,063	332
Midland Coalfield	22,754	-1,143	324
Other English	17,593	- 659	403
North Wales	3,993	- 127	249
South Wales	2,848	- 303	289
Irish	33,040	- 378	310
Total ...	189,653	+1,375	349

(2) **Fatal Accidents.**—(a) **Mines.**—The following table gives the number of fatal accidents of various classes, and the number of deaths caused by them, compared with the corresponding figures for last year. It will be noticed that the number of deaths from explosions is considerably smaller, and the number of deaths from miscellaneous causes is considerably greater than in 1894. With regard to the latter group of causes it appears that there has been an increase under nearly every sub-heading of the group:—

Place or Cause of Accident.	Number of separate Fatal Accidents.	Deaths from the Accidents.	Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with 1894.	
			Separate Fatal Accidents.	Deaths from Accidents.
Explosions of fire-damp or coal dust	20	55	- 2	-262
Falls of Ground...	429	447	-17	- 10
In Shafts ...	86	110	+ 4	+ 17
Miscellaneous, Underground	255	358	+71	+170
" Above Ground	124	126	+ 6	+ 8
Total ...	914	1,096	+62	- 77

Of the 914 fatal accidents, 867 caused one death only, as against 825 out of 852 in 1894. The largest number

* Second Annual General Report upon the Mineral Industry of the United Kingdom for 1895. [C.—8203.] Price 3s. 3d. † No comparison possible with previous year.

of deaths per accident was 77, as against 290 in 1894. The death rate by accidents per 1,000 employed below ground amounted to 1.66, and per 1,000 employed above ground to 0.84, making 1.49 per 1,000 below and above ground, as against 1.59 in 1894.

In coal mines alone the death rate per 1,000 employed was 1.48, as against 1.60 in 1894, and the rate per million tons of mineral raised was 5.3 in 1895 and 5.8 in 1894.

(b) **Quarries.**—The following table shows the fatal accidents of various classes and the number of resulting deaths, together with the death rates per 1,000 persons employed. For accidents inside the quarries the death rates are calculated per 1,000 employed inside, and similarly for accidents outside, the gross total being calculated per 1,000 employed inside and outside:—

Cause of Accident.	Number of Separate Fatal Accidents.	Number of deaths from accidents.	Death rate per 1,000 employed.
Inside the Quarries:—			
Falls of Ground ...	43	43	.80
By Blasting ...	8	8	.15
During ascent or descent ...	1	1	.02
Miscellaneous... ..	30	30	.55
Total inside the Quarries ...	82	82	1.52
Outside the Quarries ...	20	20	.39
Grand Total ...	102	102	.97

It will be seen that no single accident caused more than one death. Attention, however, may be called to the fact that the death rate of inside workers is not far removed from the death rate of persons working underground in mines.

DIVIDENDS ON PURCHASES PAID BY CO-OPERATIVE DISTRIBUTIVE SOCIETIES.

RETURNS showing the rates of dividend paid to members on purchases have been received for the third quarter of 1896 from 657 co-operative distributive societies in the United Kingdom, with a total membership of 968,671, as compared with 494 societies, with a total membership of 808,096, making returns for the third quarter of 1895. The societies making returns are those doing the main bulk of co-operative retail trade, and the table appended may be taken as giving a fairly accurate view of the dividends paid to members by the whole of the distributive societies in the United Kingdom.

The rates of dividend shown are those paid upon the main volume of trade. In a few cases societies paid a higher or lower dividend upon purchases from minor departments, such as butchery, drapery, &c.

With very few exceptions the societies paid a dividend to non-members at one-half the rate paid to members.

Table showing the number and membership of Workmen's Co-operative Societies paying the undermentioned rates of dividend per £1 of purchases in the third quarter of the year 1896.

Rates of dividend per £1 of purchases.	Number of Societies.			Membership of Societies making returns in 3rd quarter of 1896.		Corresponding percentage for 3rd quarter of 1895.
	England and Wales.	Scotland and Ireland.	Total.	Number.	Percentage.	
No dividend ...	4	—	4	741	0.1	0.1
Sixpence ...	4	—	4	929	0.1	0.3
Over 6d. but not exceeding 1s.	22	1	23	9,839	1.0	1.0
" 1s. 0d. " " 1s. 6d.	51	—	51	27,495	2.8	3.0
" 1 6 " " 2 0	90	9	99	130,220	13.4	10.6
" 2 0 " " 2 6	77	19	96	136,073	14.1	17.5
" 2 6 " " 3 0	122	44	166	393,273	40.6	41.8
" 3 0 " " 3 6	95	30	125	181,569	18.8	18.2
" 3 6 " " 4 0	48	20	68	78,815	8.1	6.5
" 4 0 " " 4 6	10	8	18	7,819	0.8	0.8
" 4 6 " " 5 0	3	—	3	1,898	0.2	—
" 5 0 " " " "	—	—	—	—	—	0.2
Totals ...	526	131	657	968,671	100.0	100.0

The figures given in the above table show an average dividend of 2s. 8.04d. in the £ on purchases, as compared with 2s. 7.39d. in the third quarter of 1895.

RECENT CASES UNDER THE CONCILIATION ACT, 1896.

HOURS OF LABOUR OF BOYS APPRENTICED TO LIGHTERMEN.

On Monday, January 11th, a Conference was held at the Board of Trade between representatives of the Association of Master Lightermen and Barge-owners and the Amalgamated Society of Watermen and Lightermen, with regard to the regulation of the hours worked by boys apprenticed to lightermen on the Thames. The meeting was in continuation of a preliminary Conference held on November 6th last. The subject was originally brought under the notice of the President of the Board of Trade in November, 1895, by a deputation representing the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress. In accordance with a promise made on that occasion, the Board of Trade caused inquiries to be made on the subject during the past year, and the recent negotiations have been the result of these inquiries. Each of the Associations sent two representatives to the Conference, and representatives of the Watermen's Company and the Association of Foremen Lightermen also attended to watch the proceedings.

Sir Courtenay Boyle was in the chair, and Sir R. Giffen and two other officers of the Board of Trade were present.

The following agreement was eventually arrived at and signed by representatives of the parties, and countersigned on behalf of the Board of Trade:—

(1) Unless under circumstances beyond the control of the employer (to be allowed in case of complaint by the umpire provided under section 3), no boy under the age of 18 years shall be employed on or about a "dumb" barge—

- (a) On Sunday;
- (b) Between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. on more than two nights in any week, such nights not to be consecutive;
- (c) After the termination of the boy's night work until an interval of 10 clear hours has elapsed.

(2) The above provisions not to apply to any boy who is already apprenticed and ordinarily employed on or about a "dumb" barge before the date of this agreement, and who expresses his desire in writing to the Board of Trade within three months from this date to be exempt from the restrictions, nor to a boy who, having a two years' certificate, applies to the Board of Trade to be exempt.

(3) Any question of interpretation or of breach of this agreement may be referred by either Association to the decision of an umpire appointed by the Board of Trade. The parties undertake to furnish all reasonable information required by the umpire, who may direct the reasonable costs of the reference to be paid by either Association, at his discretion.

(4) Nothing in this agreement shall interfere with Lord Brassey's Award.

(5) Clause 1 (b) and (c) shall not apply to firms working on the Tide System, *i.e.*, from high tide to high tide or low tide to low tide, provided that every boy shall be allowed 10 unbroken hours free from work or attendance at the office between the end of one period of employment and the beginning of the next.

THE DISPUTE IN THE NORTH WALES QUARRY TRADE.

The dispute at the Bethesda Quarries, whereby about 2,600 men have been affected for more than three months, still continues unsettled. The account of the causes which led up to the dispute, and of its history from its commencement on September 28th to the middle of November, will be found in the November number of the LABOUR GAZETTE, page 339. As there stated, an application was made at the beginning of the dispute on behalf of the men to the Board of Trade to take action under the Conciliation Act 1896, with a view to promote a settlement. On November 28th, as a result of informal communications between the Board of Trade

and Lord Penrhyn (the owner of the quarries), a communication was addressed by the Board to the representatives of the quarrymen, informing them that Lord Penrhyn was prepared to have an interview with a deputation representing the men, of which none of the suspended quarrymen should be members. Under pressure from the Board of Trade, the men assented to this condition, and on December 5th, at a mass meeting held at Bethesda, resolutions were passed appointing a deputation of three quarrymen, and expressing a strong desire "that one or more representatives of the Board of Trade should, if possible, be present at the first interview," and the opinion that the deputation should be accompanied by its own interpreter and also by its own shorthand writer, if any notes of the proceedings were to be taken. The Board of Trade communicated these resolutions to Lord Penrhyn, and expressed a willingness, if desired, to send a representative to the conference in accordance with the men's request. Lord Penrhyn, in reply, stated that he was prepared to receive the deputation upon receiving in writing a request from them to that effect, accompanied by a statement giving an outline of the points which they proposed to lay before him. He declined the men's suggestion that a Board of Trade representative should be present, and stipulated that any interpreter or shorthand writer brought by the men should be selected from among his late employees not included among the 71 who were suspended. It appeared on inquiry from the men's representatives that a competent interpreter and shorthand writer could not be found among such employees, and as Lord Penrhyn declined to modify his conditions, the Board of Trade felt themselves compelled to desist from the attempt to promote a Conference for the settlement of the dispute, seeing no reasonable prospect that such effort would at present lead to a useful result. The result of the negotiations was communicated to the men on December 19th. The quarries are stated to have been closed, and a certain number of old quarrymen who had continued to work during the stoppage have been pensioned off by Lord Penrhyn. It is said that a large number of the quarrymen affected have secured work elsewhere. Others are being supported by a relief fund.

OTHER CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION CASES.

Arbitration in the Engineering Trade at Blackburn.

On October 12th the labourers employed by an engineering firm in Blackburn struck work for an advance of 1s. per week, and within a few days other engineering firms in the town locked out their labourers. On October 20th the dispute terminated, an agreement being come to that the question of wages to be paid by the firm at which the dispute arose should be referred to arbitration. At a meeting of representatives of both sides on December 4th, the Mayor of Blackburn and Alderman Hibbert, of Chorley, were agreed upon as arbitrators. The result of the arbitration was received by the Town Clerk of Blackburn on December 19th. The arbitrators found that the firm was paying as much, and, in some cases, more than their competitors in any part of Lancashire. They accordingly adjudged against the claim of the men.

Board of Conciliation for the Ironfounding Industry of the North-East Coast.

This Board has given an advance of wages to ironfounders of 5 per cent. on piece rates, and 1s. per week on time rates, to take effect from the first full pay in February next, to be followed by an increase of 6d. per week in time rates from the first full pay in the following April. About 2,000 men are affected.

Board of Conciliation for the Patternmaking Industry of the North-East Coast.

This Board has given an advance of 1s. per week, from 35s. 6d. to 36s. 6d., to the patternmakers on the North-East Coast. The advance dates from 28th December and affects 600 workmen.

LABOUR CASES IN DECEMBER.

The following are among the more interesting legal cases of the month, specially affecting labour. The accounts are based principally upon reports appearing in local newspapers.

(1) EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT.*

Machinery in Course of Construction.—A stoker in the employment of a firm of tube drawers sued his employers for damages for injuries to his hand caused by the cogwheels of a draw bench. Plaintiff was assisting his brother, a machinist and fitter, to adjust the machinery and make preparations to start it on the following day. His brother, while engaged in watching the running of a chain on the drum, directed him to stop the machine. In putting out his right hand to do so he placed it on the cogwheels, the existence of which, it was stated, he was in ignorance of, the result being that his index finger was cut off, and his hand sustained other injuries which had made him incapable of following his employment since the accident. In support of the plaintiff's case a factory inspector was called, who said that the cogwheels were dangerous and ought to be fenced. For the defence it was urged that there was no defect in the machinery because it was in course of construction and was not complete. Further that had there been fencing it would have had to have been removed in order to carry out the work necessary to perfect the machine. The following questions were left to the jury, who answered them all in favour of the defendants: (1) Was the bench at the time of the accident working machinery or was it in course of construction? (2) Were the defendants negligent in leaving the cogwheels unfenced? (3) Was the accident due to the negligence of the plaintiff in putting his hand against the wheels?—*Birmingham County Court, December 9th.*

Precautions in Dangerous Employment.—This was an appeal by the plaintiff in the case of an action brought under Lord Campbell's Act by the widow of a man who had died from the effects of sulphuretted hydrogen gas while working in a sewer belonging to the defendants. Four other men also lost their lives in attempting to rescue the deceased (*see LABOUR GAZETTE for November, p. 344*). The contention on behalf of the plaintiff was that the defendants had been negligent in not having the sewer properly ventilated, in not applying some test to ascertain whether gas was present in the sewer and in not having a life-cord fastened round deceased. The judge at the trial held that there was no evidence of negligence on the part of defendants, and directed judgment to be entered for them. The Court of Appeal directed that there should be a new trial.—*Court of Appeal, December 9th.*

(3) FACTORY ACTS.

The use of Shuttle Guards.—This was an appeal against the decision of a Recorder who had quashed the conviction by the magistrates of a firm of cotton manufacturers for not fencing certain machinery (*see LABOUR GAZETTE for May, p. 151*). An accident had occurred to one of the weavers employed by defendants owing to the flying of a shuttle. This, it was contended, was not securely fenced, and the magistrates convicted and imposed a fine of 20s. In the case stated by the Recorder for the opinion of the Court it was shown that the accident was caused by the negligence of the weaver. Further, that shuttles were in the habit of flying out in consequence of the shuttle not being true; in consequence of the negligence of the weaver; in consequence of some obstruction getting into the shuttle race; and in consequence of some defect in the yarn or thread used in the loom. The contention on the part of the respondent had been that machinery liable to become dangerous was a "dangerous machine," but the Recorder held that the machinery must be dangerous in the ordinary course of working, not dangerous from some accidental or abnormal cause. The Court allowed the appeal, and sent the case back for rehearing. They expressed the opinion that where in the ordinary course danger might reasonably be anticipated from machinery or parts of machinery then the case came within the Act. They further stated that it could not be maintained on the one hand that because an accident had occurred machinery was dangerous, nor, on the other hand, that machinery could not be dangerous unless it was dangerous in the course of careful working.—*Divisional Court, Queen's Bench, December 12th.*

On January 8th and 9th the Recorder re-heard the case and decided that, having considered the evidence then before him, he must, in view of the decision of the Queen's Bench, find that looms and shuttles were dangerous. He therefore affirmed the decision of the Justices with costs.—*Blackburn Quarter Sessions, January 8th and 9th.*

(4) MISCELLANEOUS.

Action to Recover Strike Pay.—A bricklayer's labourer sued the secretary of a trade union for 16s. 8d., being 10 days' strike pay. The plaintiff and other workmen in the same employment went out on strike, with the approval of the union, and received strike pay up to September 18th. The following day the dispute was settled, but plaintiff was refused work, according to the statement of a foreman, because his employers had as many men as they required, and not because of his connection with the union. He did not get work elsewhere until October 1st, and in consequence sued the secretary of the union for 10 days' strike pay, under the following rule of the society: "If any member who has been in receipt of strike pay is refused employment, through being connected with the society, by his late employer or his foreman, such member or

*Under this heading are also included actions at Common Law to recover from employers compensation for injuries to workpeople.

members, supplying satisfactory proof in writing to the branch committee, shall receive strike pay until they obtain employment elsewhere." For the defence it was urged that, apart from the merits of the case, the Court had no jurisdiction, under the Trade Union Act, 1871. The judge upheld the objection and nonsuited the plaintiff.—*Leeds County Court, December 21st.*

NEW FACTORY AND SHOP ACT IN VICTORIA.

The "Factories and Shops Act, 1896," passed July 28th, 1896, by the Colony of Victoria, has special reference to factories, workrooms and shops in towns; but the Governor in Council may extend its provisions to country districts (as to shops, on the petition of a majority of the shopkeepers in the locality). There is to be exhibited in every factory and workroom a record showing the names, work and wages of all employees, with age of all under 16 years, and also a record of all fines inflicted. Every manufacturer of clothing (including boots and shoes) giving out materials to be made up outside his premises must keep, and forward to the Chief Inspector at such times as may be prescribed, a copy or summary of a record of the description and quantity of the work so given out, and of the name and address of the persons by whom the same is done, and the prices paid for such work. In regard to clothing, furniture, and bread baking, the Governor in Council may appoint a Board (one-half representing employers, and one-half representing employees) to determine the lowest rates of pay (such rates in the case of outside work to be piece work) payable to the employees, and also the number of apprentices and improvers who may be employed, contravention of the decisions of the Board being punishable by fine (up to £10 for a first offence, from £5 to £25 for a second, and from £50 to £100 for subsequent offences); a third conviction is to cancel the registration of the premises. It is also enacted that "no person whatsoever unless in receipt of a weekly wage of at least 2s. 6d. shall be employed in any factory or workroom." The working hours for persons under 16 and women and girls over 16 are not to exceed 48 per week, or 10 per day, subject to special exemptions to meet an unforeseen press of work, or the exigencies of trade, conditional upon the payment by the employer of specified extra remuneration, including in all cases 6d. each evening for tea money, and time and a half overtime for time-wage workers, and 3d. per hour overtime for piece workers.

All Victorian-made furniture is required to be stamped with the name of the manufacturer and place of manufacture, with a statement whether made by European (including Colonial and American) or by Chinese labour.

Occupiers of shops must provide sitting accommodation for their employees, in the proportion of one seat to three employees, and must allow them to use such accommodation at all reasonable times. The Governor in Council may make regulations limiting the total number of hours per week during which persons under 16, and women and girls over 16, may be employed in certain shops, and providing that all persons employed in connection therewith shall have a weekly half-holiday, and in no case (except by special permission granted under certain conditions by the Chief Inspector) may a person under 16 or a woman or girl over 16 work in connection with any shop more than 52 hours (excluding meal times) in any week, or than 9 hours (excluding meal times) in any day, except on one day in each week, when 11 hours may be worked. All shop assistants are to have a weekly half-holiday.

This Act, which has already come into operation, is to continue in force until the end of the session of Parliament next ensuing after January 1st, 1900.

USE OF EXPLOSIVES IN COAL MINES.*

An order, dated the 19th December 1896, regulating the use of explosives in collieries, has been made by the Home Secretary under the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1896 (section 6). The order prohibits the use of any other than certain specified "permitted explosives" in coal mines in which inflammable gas has been found within the previous six months, or which are not naturally wet throughout, such prohibition taking effect from 1st July, 1897, as regards the roads, and from 1st January, 1898, as regards all other parts of the mine; as from the last-named date "permitted explosives" may only be used in such mines subject to the observance of specified conditions. From 1st July 1897, the use of explosives, except under certain conditions, is prohibited in the main haulage roads and main intakes of all coal mines.

* Explosives in Coal Mines Order, 1896. (Published by Eyre & Spottiswoode East Harding Street, E.C. Price 1d.)

LABOUR IN THE COLONIES.*

(Monthly report, compiled by the Emigrants' Information Office, 31 Broadway, Westminster, S.W., from official and other reports, newspapers, &c., mostly received in December and January.)

Canada.—The present season of the year is not suitable for emigrants to go to Canada.

New South Wales.—The number of unemployed persons is now inconsiderable. The coal trade is active, especially at the Southern collieries. The prospects of the Colony generally are improving.

Victoria.—A strike has occurred among the marine engineers, which, if it continues, may injuriously affect the whole of the inter-colonial shipping trade. Otherwise the state of the labour market is unchanged.

South Australia.—A good demand has lately prevailed for married couples, without encumbrances, for station, farm, and domestic service.

Western Australia.—The numerous public works under construction continue to provide employment for large numbers of mechanics and labourers. The partial strike of masons and bricklayers at Perth is over; no uniform rate of wages has been agreed upon. This being the dry season of the year, the demand for miners on the Coolgardie and other gold fields is not so large as at other times.

Tasmania.—The labour market at the mining town of Zeehan, on the West Coast, is well supplied with miners, and there is not a large amount of labour employed outside the mines; the building trade is increasing.

New Zealand.—There has been plenty of work lately in the building, engineering, boot, and clothing trades. Mechanics in large towns like Auckland, Napier, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin have all been busy, as well as in many smaller places as Tauranga, Masterton, Wanganui, Marton, Palmerston North, Otaki, Nelson, Hokitika, and Timaru. Work at Westport and Invercargill, however, has not been so brisk. Unskilled labour has also been fully employed in gum-digging, road-making, railway work, shearing, and bush-felling. A report from the Province of Taranaki states that the co-operative dairy factories there are in a flourishing condition.

Cape Colony.—According to a large number of official reports from all parts of the colony, dated the end of 1896, the cost of living has considerably increased owing to drought and the approach of rinderpest. There is a good demand for female domestic servants, but there is little or none for agricultural labour, which is almost entirely performed by natives or other coloured persons. In most districts, including considerable towns like Aliwal North, E. London, Kimberley, and King William's Town, there is an ample supply of mechanics. At Fort Beaufort, however, masons have been in demand for the construction of the new railway; at Graaff-Reinet "European and other labourers are in great demand on account of the construction of the railway"; at Hope Town "European labourers are barely sufficient for present requirements"; at Humansdorp there is "probably an opening for one or two good carpenters and bricklayers"; at Middelburg "mechanics are very difficult to get, and there are openings for a good many stone-cutters, masons and bricklayers"; at Grahamstown "there is work in the town and district for a limited number of skilled mechanics and ordinary labourers at fair wages, but there is not room for any increase to the present supply"; at Queenstown "the demand for masons, carpenters and bricklayers has been fully equal to the supply, other tradesmen, such as stone-cutters and painters, have also been fully employed, and steady men in all branches have no difficulty in finding work at fairly remunerative wages"; at Port Elizabeth "there is a fair demand for bricklayers, carpenters and tinsmiths, and a small demand for shoemakers—labourers are plentiful"; and, lastly, at Cape Town "there is a large amount of building going

on, and the wages of masons, bricklayers, carpenters, and painters have a tendency to harden. There is much activity in the saddlery and harness-making business."

Natal.—The output of coal last year showed a considerable increase; but it is still insufficient to supply the local demand.

South African Republic—(Transvaal).—A trustworthy correspondent at Johannesburg writes under date of 6th December:—"There is no demand for labour at Johannesburg. This has been brought about by many causes, but chiefly by the depressed state of the share market, the closing down of several of the mines, which has thrown a number of artisans out of employment, and the continued influx of mechanics from Australia, England, America, and elsewhere."

LABOUR ABROAD.

FRANCE.*

Employment in December.—Three hundred and seventeen trade unions, with 92,420 members, reported 8.3 per cent. unemployed on December 15th, compared with 8.5 per cent. in November. Employment continues fairly plentiful in Mining, Smelting, Printing, &c., and in the Spinning branch of the Textile trades. Employment is not so good as it was last month in the Weaving—specially Flax and Silk—Tailoring and Hatmaking trades. The Building and Leather-working trades remain slack; in the former the daily working hours have, as usual at this season, been cut down.

Coal Mining in November.—The average number of days per week on which coal was hewn and wound in November was 5.96, as compared with 5.97 in October. In November full time (six days and over) was worked by 92 per cent., and from five to six days by 7 per cent. of the miners, while in October the percentages were 98 and 2 respectively. The pits making these returns employ over three-fourths of the coal miners of France.

Labour Disputes in December 1896.—Twenty disputes were notified to the French Labour Department as having begun in December, compared with 23 in the preceding month and 86 in December 1895. In addition, five disputes begun before the 1st of December were still unsettled on that date. The number of workpeople known to have participated in 18 out of the 20 new disputes was 2,225, the trades involved in these 20 disputes being as follows:—Textile, seven disputes; leather, four; metal, three; unclassified, six. Only three of the disputes affected more than one firm. Nine were for an advance in wages, accompanied in three cases by other requests; two were against a reduction in wages; four were for the dismissal of foremen or managers, and five for other causes. Of the 20 new disputes 18 were terminated by the end of the month, in addition to 4 old disputes; the workpeople were successful in five disputes, were partially successful in five, and failed in ten; in the other two cases the results are unknown.

Conciliation and Arbitration in December.—Attempts to apply the Conciliation and Arbitration Law were made in six cases. In two cases Conciliation Committees were formed, in one case without success; in the other, a dispute affecting 250 textile workers, three points were conceded by the employer; a further point was referred unsuccessfully to arbitration, but was eventually conceded through the intervention of a local official. In one case, affecting 110 textile workers, the employers suggested arbitration, and the workpeople refused, and eventually secured a partial success. In three cases the initiative came from the workmen and the refusal from the employers, the dispute continuing in one case, and resulting in the failure of the workpeople in the two other cases.

* Information supplied through the courtesy of the French Labour Department.

GERMANY.

The Dispute in the Hamburg Docks.—No material change has occurred in the situation in the Hamburg Dock dispute, as reported in last month's GAZETTE. The Senate has been asked by the strikers to bring about a preliminary conference, with a view to effecting an agreement as to the constitution of a board of arbitration, and the conditions which should govern the acceptance by both sides of any award it should pronounce. The men have also suggested the formation of a permanent board of conciliation for preventing future disputes. The Senate, in their reply, expressed the opinion that the strike might have been avoided, had it not been for the conduct of the men, which rendered the calm consideration of their demands impossible. The men must first of all resume work—so far as this was possible under the altered conditions—so that the strike might be regarded as being at an end. When this had been done, the Senate would cause a searching inquiry to be made into the conditions of work in the docks, so as to pave the way for the removal of grievances by negotiations between employers and workers. This reply was discussed at five meetings on December 19th, the advice of the Senate being rejected by 7,265 votes, as against 3,671 votes in favour of complying with it. The employers insisted on the strike being unconditionally abandoned, after which they would be willing to co-operate with a certain number of senators in the abolition of any existing abuses.

The police have forbidden picketing within the docks, and the making of house-to-house collections. The rate of strike pay as reported last month has been maintained, the amounts distributed on December 22nd and 29th being, it is said, £9,623 and £8,250 respectively.

Some idea of the situation of work in the harbour may be obtained from the following statement, the figures in which have been taken from the accounts of the dispute which have appeared in the *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger*.

Dates.	No. of ships in harbour.	No. of ships on which work was being done.	No. of gangs employed.
December 16th 1896	213	181	386
" 22nd "	210	171	355
" 29th "	243	187	387
" 30th "	236	206	488
January 4th 1897	219	175	390
" 5th "	221	185	413
" 6th "	250	153	304

Other Disputes in December.—The number of disputes, additional to the above, reported on in the *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger* in December was 18, of which 14 were reported for the first time. Of these 14 disputes 5 were in the metal, 3 in the textile and 2 in the boot and shoe trades, the rest being among building carpenters, ship carpenters, tobacco workers and diamond polishers, the last-named being the only noteworthy dispute. Hanau, where this dispute has occurred, is the centre of the German diamond-cutting industry; at all but three of the establishments the men, 207 in number, have left work owing to the proposed introduction of a reduced piece-wage list. They have appealed to the Industrial Court to act as a board of conciliation, but the associated employers refuse to accept the intervention of this tribunal on the ground that no dispute exists, the men having given regular notice before leaving, and being free to return under the new conditions.

Conciliation and Arbitration.—A Conference of workmen assessors of Industrial Courts assembled at Halle on November 15th and 16th, delegates attending from 42 Industrial Courts of different parts of the Empire. The chief object of the Conference was to discuss the provisions of the proposed law relating to handicrafts by which it is intended to increase the powers of Trade Guilds in establishing courts of arbitration, and a resolution was passed calling on the Reichstag to reject the proposal. With regard to the existing law as to Industrial Courts, the Conference recommended that appeals from their decisions (allowed when the amount in dispute exceeds £5) should no longer be permitted, and that the jurisdiction of these Courts be extended to mercantile employees and domestic servants.—*Gewerbegericht*.

Württemberg Municipal Labour Registries in November.—The eleven municipal labour registries of Württemberg found work in November for 1,487 persons (1,125 males and 362 females). The situations applied for by the workpeople numbered 4,889, and those offered by the employers, 2,460.

SWITZERLAND.

Labour Disputes.—With the exception of a strike of 25 shawl-makers at an establishment in St. Immer (Canton Bern) against wages deductions for defective work, no new disputes have been reported in the *Grütliener* during December.

A strike of cloth weavers at a mill in Menziken (Canton Aargau) begun last August, and a strike of metal workers at Sursee (Canton Lucerne) begun in November, both of which have been referred to the GAZETTE, were still in progress at the end of the month.

BELGIUM.*

Employment in December.—No change has been reported with reference to the Smelting, Engineering, or Coalmining trades, in all of which employment is very good. The condition of the Glass trade is reported to be satisfactory, a number of furnaces having been re-lit. The Leather trade continues depressed, owing, it is said, to the continued high price of unstripped hides. In the Printing trade a temporary revival has been caused by the New Year customs. The Clothing and Building trades are slack. The Woollen trade is not so busy, except in the Carding branch. The Cycle-making trade is very busy in some parts, but getting slack in others.

Dockers in Antwerp.—So far, the strike of dockers in Hamburg has produced no effect on the workers employed in the Port of Antwerp, all of whom have quietly continued at their work.

Labour Disputes in December.—Thirteen strikes, affecting some 1,100 workpeople directly, and 340 indirectly, were reported to the Belgian Labour Department in December. Coalminers and textile operatives were each involved in four disputes, trimmings makers in two, the rest being among stovemakers, smelters, and quarrymen. Seven strikes were for an increase, and two against a reduction, of wages. The workers were successful in two and unsuccessful in seven out of nine disputes, of which the results have been reported. Three strikes resulted in 52 workpeople losing their situations.

Agitation among Coalminers.—An agitation has for some time been in progress among coalminers, for an advance in wages, owing to the present prosperous condition of the coal trade, the coal proprietors meanwhile maintaining that, owing to existing contracts, they have to dispose of the bulk of the output at the old prices. A congress of miners from the four coalfields of Belgium met on January 10th to discuss the question of a general strike for increased wages, but decided against such a step.

Fair Wage Clauses in Public Contracts.—It has been decided that minimum rates of wages (equivalent to the standard rates for the locality) shall be inserted in the specifications of Government contracts, to be paid by the contractors. (See GAZETTE, Aug. 1896, page 245).

The report to the Provincial Council of West Flanders on the effects of the introduction of minimum wage clauses in contracts carried out for the Provincial Administration states that the system has been attended with complete success. The expenditure of the Province has been increased by 2.7 per cent.; the whole of the additional cost was on account of wages, and is said to be compensated for by the better quality of the work. The interests of contractors have not suffered, and the objection brought against the system that it would sacrifice the older workpeople has not been verified. With regard to the fixing of a maximum working day, the report states that the fact that the workers are asking that it be raised from 10 to 12 hours proves them unaware of the fact that overtime is permissible so long as it is paid for at a higher rate per hour.

The Communal Councils of Brussels and Mons have adopted, and that of Liège has rejected, the principle of minimum wage clauses for municipal contracts. Brussels has fixed a minimum wage of 2s. 5d. a day to workpeople in the direct employment of the town.

HOLLAND.

Agreement among Employers in Diamond Trade.—The *Deutscher Reichs-Anzeiger* of December 12th 1896, reports that in anticipation of a general strike in the Amsterdam diamond and jewellery trades, a resolution was passed on December 11th, at a meeting of about 100 employers in that city that an agreement, binding for 6 months, should be signed, under which the employers pledged themselves: (1) to uphold the existing wages scale, (2) in the event of a strike due to other causes than a reduction of wages, to lock-out, pending the duration of such strike, all members of trade unions which have brought it about or supported it. Nearly all the employers who attended the meeting have, it is said, signed the agreement.

* Information supplied through the courtesy of the Belgian Labour Department.

* And the South African Republic.
† Free circulars and penny handbooks on the different colonies may be obtained from the office, post free.

AUSTRIA.

Labour Disputes in December.—Seven disputes, including two outstanding from previous months, were reported on in the chief Austrian labour papers* in December. Of the newly-reported disputes—three of which were among metal-workers, and one each among straw hatmakers and furniture-makers—the most important appears to have been a strike of 250 ironfounders and others employed in an iron furniture factory in Vienna, the immediate cause of which is said to have been the proposed dismissal of a number of the workpeople who were trade union officials. The men asked and obtained the intervention of the factory inspector; but, though a number of conferences have taken place, no settlement had been arrived at up to the end of December.

One of the two disputes outstanding since previous months is the strike of 420 porcelain operatives of a factory in Dallwitz, begun on September 15th, and reported on in previous numbers of the GAZETTE.

Uniform Working Day in the Austrian Printing Trade.—In accordance with the decision arrived at in November, 1895 (see GAZETTE, December, 1895, p. 374) at a conference of the Austrian employers in the printing trade, a working day of nine hours was introduced from January 1st, 1896, in most of the printing works throughout Austria. In certain smaller establishments in rural districts, however, a 9½-hours day was to obtain till the end of 1896. The interval having now expired, the 9-hours day comes into operation for all printing works in Austria from January 1st of the present year.—*Arbeiter Zeitung.*

Second Austrian Trade Union Congress.—At the second Congress of the trade unions of Austria, held in Vienna on Christmas Day and the four succeeding days, there were present 228 delegates from 253 unions of Austria, besides representatives of other Austrian unions not subscribing to the Central Executive Committee, and therefore not entitled to vote, and of the Hungarian and the German trade unions and of the Austrian and Hungarian Social Democratic Parties. Besides questions relating to trade union organization and the conduct of strikes, the main subject discussed was "the progress of social legislation," and a lengthy resolution was adopted embodying demands with regard to hours of labour, work of women and children, truck, employment registries, factory and workshop inspection, and industrial insurance.

ITALY.

Night-work in the Cotton Industry.—In a report to the Foreign Office, dated December 17th, 1896, Mr. J. Armstrong, H.M. Consul at Milan, gives an account of a meeting of the Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers and the Cotton Exchange Association, which took place in Milan on December 15th. The object of the meeting, at which about 1,500,000 spindles were represented, was to consider the best means of alleviating the crisis which is said to prevail at present in the Italian cotton trade. This meeting of employers expressed the opinion that night-work in the factories should be abolished. In order to attain this object, the Government should be invited to present to Parliament a Bill for regulating the hours of labour of women and children, such Bill to contain a clause absolutely prohibiting night-work for males under 15 and for females of any age. Night-work is very general in the Italian factories, especially where there is water-power, and it may be taken as representing about one-third of the actual production.

UNITED STATES.

CHICAGO CONSULAR DISTRICT.

The following is based on a report prepared for the Foreign Office by Mr. A. G. Vansittart, H.M. Consul at Chicago, under date of December 23rd, 1896:—

The strike of silver miners in Leadville (Colorado).—This strike still remains unsettled, but the withdrawal of troops from Leadville has begun.

Other Disputes.—100 men employed by a contractor on works connected with the new county jail of Chicago, struck on December 12th, in compliance with the order of the Building Trades Council. The dispute was caused by the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers' Union demanding that certain work, for which the contractor was hiring boiler-makers, should be given to members of the Union. The strikers have been given to understand that, unless they return to work, the county will waive the clauses of the contract requiring union men to be employed.

*Die Arbeiter Zeitung, Die Gewerkschaft, &c.

A strike, begun some weeks ago at a large printing firm in Chicago, threatens to extend to a half-dozen other printing plants shortly. The cause of this threatened extension of the dispute is a report to the officers of the Typographical Union, to the effect that the *Typotheta*, the organisation of employing printers of Chicago, has decided to help the firm whose workpeople have struck.

State Board of Arbitration and Coal Dispute.—The State Board of Arbitration of Illinois has given its decision with regard to a dispute in which 250 miners, employed by the Wabash Coal Company and the Athens Coal Company in this State, struck some weeks ago for an increase in the rate of mining per ton gross weight from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 5½d., which they declared to be the prevailing price in Springfield District. The award of the Board was, that the wages for hard mining be increased from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 4½d. per gross ton; that loaders, drillers and shooters be paid 10d. per gross ton, and loaders only 6½d.; this scale to date from December 1st. The wages paid in machine mines are to remain the same as heretofore.

NEW INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED IN 1896.

The following table is based upon the monthly returns supplied to the Department by the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies and shows the number of each of the various classes of industrial organisations registered during the year 1896 in England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, together with the totals for the United Kingdom and the corresponding totals for the years 1894 and 1895.

During 1896 a total of 849 new organisations were registered, as compared with 1,100 in 1895—a decrease of 251, or 22·8 per cent. The decrease is mainly in friendly societies and branches, the number of these registered in 1896 being 660, as compared with 897 in 1895—a decrease of 26·4 per cent. The number of trade unions newly registered shows a decrease of 17. The number of registrations of industrial and provident societies shows a decrease in Scotland and Ireland, but an increase of 20 societies registered in England and Wales makes the total result an increase of 4 per cent. over 1895. The practical stoppage in the formation of building societies shown last year is continued, the total number of new building societies registered in 1896 being only 3, as compared with 5 in 1895.

Table showing number of New Industrial Organisations registered in 1896 in England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, together with the totals for the United Kingdom, and the corresponding totals for the years 1894 and 1895.

Description of Organisation.	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	Total United Kingdom.
Trade Unions	47*	2	7	56
Employers' Associations	1	—	1	2
Totals	48	2	8	58
Industrial and Provident Societies:				
For Distribution	34	3	1	38
" Production	21	—	35	56
" Miscellaneous purposes	33	1	—	34
Totals	88	4	36	128
Friendly Societies:				
Ordinary Friendly	66	3	2	71
Working Mens' Clubs	64	—	—	64
Dividing	44	—	—	44
Specially Authorised	38	—	2	40
Juvenile	12	1	—	13
Female	8	—	—	8
Tontine and Collecting	7	—	—	7
Medical	2	—	—	2
Cattle Insurance	1	—	—	1
Benevolent	1	—	—	1
New Branches of Existing Societies	337	58†	14	409
Totals	580	62	18	660
Building Societies	—	3	—	3
Total Industrial Organisations registered in 1896	716	71	62	849
Corresponding Totals for 1895	981	101	78	1,100
" " " 1894	1,061	96	66	1,203

* Including one Federation.

† Including one district.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—SPECIAL INDUSTRIES.

REPORTS ON SPECIAL INDUSTRIES.

(a) COAL MINING IN DECEMBER.

(NOTE.—The following tables only profess to state the number of days (allowance being made in all the calculations for short days) on which coal was hewn and wound at the collieries included in the returns received. It is not necessarily implied that all the persons employed at these collieries worked the whole number of days.)

Summary.—Employment in this industry was considerably better during December than a year ago. As compared with the previous month the average number of days worked per week shows a slight falling off, due to the Christmas holidays.

Returns received respecting 1,246 pits, employing 402,848 persons, show that during the four weeks ended December 26th an average of 5·16 days* per week was worked, as compared with 5·31 days in November and 4·88 days in December 1895. The following table gives the average number of days worked in each division of the United Kingdom:—

District.	No. employed in Dec. 1896 at the Collieries included in the Table.	Average number of days worked per week by the pits in four weeks ended		
		26th Dec. 1896.	28th Dec. 1895.	28th Nov. 1896.
England and Wales	370,476	5·13	4·84	5·50
Scotland	31,715	5·51	5·37	5·40
Ireland	657	4·96	4·25	5·36
United Kingdom	402,848	5·16	4·88	5·31

The following table gives the average number of days worked at pits in which the coal raised was chiefly of the class named.

Description of Coal.	No. of Workpeople employed.	Number of days worked per week.		Increase(+) or Decrease (-) in Dec.
		December	November.	
Coking Coal	21,665	5·36	5·49	-13
Gas "	33,321	5·27	5·47	-20
House "	71,821	5·12	5·36	-24
Manufacturing Coal... ..	20,397	5·23	5·38	-15
Steam "	121,803	5·06	5·20	-14
Mixed "	133,841	5·20	5·31	-11
All Classes of Coal	402,848	5·16	5·31	-15

If the workpeople be classified according to the number of days worked by the pits at which they were employed, it will be seen that 71·2 per cent. were employed at pits working 5 or more days per week, a proportion that compares very favourably with that for December 1895, when only 52·3 per cent. were employed in such pits.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE WORKPEOPLE ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF DAYS WORKED IN FOUR WEEKS BY THE COLLIERIES.

Number of days on which Coal was hewn and wound in four weeks.	December 1896, at 1895.		Corresponding percentages in—	
	No. of Workpeople employed.	Percentage proportion to total.	December 1895.	November 1896.
24 days (full time)	11,679	2·9	2·8	15·3
20 and under 24 days	275,084	68·3	49·5	60·6
16 " " 20 " "	100,184	24·9	37·0	19·5
12 " " 16 " "	13,442	3·3	7·9	3·6
8 " " 12 " "	1,573	·4	2·1	·7
Under 8 days	866	·2	·7	·3
Total	402,848	100·0	100·0	100·0

The number of workpeople now employed at pits covered by returns is greater by 7,522 than a year ago, there being increases in England and Wales and Ireland of 9,079 and 101 respectively, and a decrease of 1,658 in Scotland.

Comparison by Districts.—In no case was employment during December inferior to a year ago, the improvement in no less than six districts amounting to more than half a day per week, viz., in North Wales (where it reached three-quarters of a day per week), Ireland, Staffordshire, Gloucester and Somerset, Salop, Warwick, and Worcester, and Yorkshire.

The highest average during the month was worked in

* Allowance is made in all the calculations for short days.

the Lothians (5·76 days). No other districts worked an average of 5½ days; but only four districts worked less than 5 days, viz., Nottingham and Leicester (4·53), South Wales and Monmouth (4·93), Derbyshire (4·95), and Ireland (4·96).

COMPARISON OF THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS WORKED BY COLLIERIES IN DECEMBER 1896 AND 1895, AND IN NOVEMBER 1896.

District.†	No. employed in Dec. 1896 at the Collieries included in the Table.	Average No. of Days worked per Week by the Collieries in four weeks ended		
		26th Dec. 1896.	28th Dec. 1895.	28th Nov. 1896.
(a) Districts in which December 1896 exceeds December 1895.				
North Wales	10,876	5·28	4·53	5·42
Ireland	657	4·96	4·25	5·36
Staffordshire	24,405	5·22	4·52	5·51
Gloucester and Somerset	8,070	5·30	4·66	5·42
Salop, Warwick and Worcester	6,988	5·27	4·68	5·71
Yorkshire	41,873	5·21	4·69	5·31
Cumberland	6,754	5·49	5·02	5·03
Northumberland	30,946	5·00	4·55	4·81
Nottingham and Leicester	23,364	4·53	4·23	4·48
Derbyshire	29,401	4·95	4·67	5·26
Lancashire and Cheshire	43,635	5·28	5·15	5·31
Durham	81,454	5·34	5·24	5·57
The Lothians	2,375	5·76	5·68	5·58
West Scotland	17,868	5·37	5·32	5·51
Fife	11,472	5·27	5·24	5·18
Total and averages for group	340,138	5·20	4·87	5·31

(b) District in which December 1896 is the same as December 1895.

South Wales and Monmouth	62,710	4·93	4·93	5·31
Grand Total and Averages	402,848	5·16	4·88	5·31

The percentage of unemployed miners in trade unions in Northumberland and Durham amounted to only 1·2 per cent. at the end of December, as against 1·2 per cent. at the end of November, and 1·7 per cent. at the end of December 1895.

Exports of Coal.—The quantity of coal, coke, cinders and patent fuel exported during December was 2,565,193 tons, as compared with 2,715,375 in November and 2,468,392 in December 1895.

(b) IRON MINING INDUSTRY IN DECEMBER.

EMPLOYMENT in this industry was good during December. The average number of days worked was, though not so high as in November, yet not very far short of full time, and higher than a year ago. The number of workpeople employed is greater by about 4½ per cent. than a year ago.

At 125 mines and open works included in the returns an average of 5·65 days* per week was worked during the four weeks ended December 26th, as compared with an average of 5·84 in November last and 5·57 in December 1895. The only important falling off was in Staffordshire and Shropshire. The number employed at the 125 mines and open works was 16,435 at the end of the period dealt with, or 709 more than at the corresponding period of 1895. Of these workpeople 8·2 per cent. were employed full time, as against 12·1 per cent. in December 1895; on the other hand, 95·1 per cent. worked five or more days per week, compared with 90·2 per cent. a year ago.

The tables below summarise the returns received:—

(1) Days worked per week by the mines in each district:—

District.	No. employed in Dec. 1896 at the Mines included in the Table.	Average number of days worked per week by the mines in 4 weeks ended		
		26th Dec. 1896.	28th Dec. 1895.	28th Nov. 1896.
ENGLAND—				
Cumberland and Lancashire	6,037	5·64	6·61	5·92
Cleveland	6,323	5·72	5·66	5·90
Lincolnshire and Leicestershire	724	5·78	·80	5·91
Northamptonshire... ..	576	5·59	·74	5·63
Staffordshire and Shropshire	1,254	5·24	4·58	5·68
Other places in England	246	5·79	5·40	5·39
SCOTLAND	1,000	5·71	5·84	5·36
IRELAND	275	5·84	5·91	6·00
Total	16,435	5·65	5·57	5·84

† The coal districts are arranged according to the differences in the number of days worked in December 1896 and December 1895.
† Amended figures.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—SPECIAL INDUSTRIES (continued).

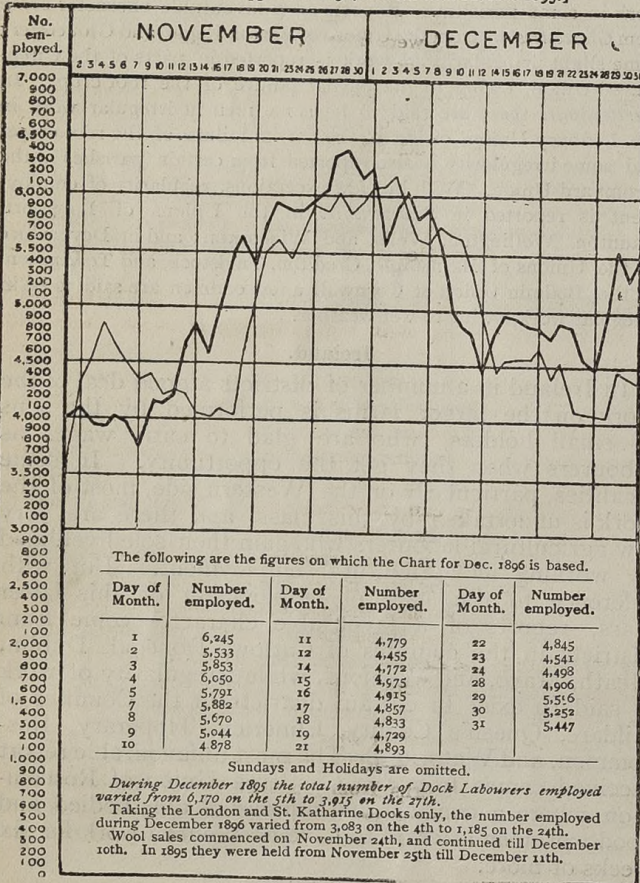
estimated daily average number of dock and wharf labourers employed in each week of the month:—

Period.	Labourers employed in Docks.			Total Dock and Wharf Labourers included in Returns.
	By Dock Companies or through Contractors	By Ship-owners, &c.	Total.	
1st week of December	8,962	2,394	11,356	17,497
2nd " " "	8,064	2,446	10,510	16,861
3rd " " "	7,656	2,241	9,897	15,992
4th " " "	7,763	2,605	10,368	16,348
Average for 4 weeks ending Dec. 26, 1896	8,143	2,405	10,548	16,705
Average for 4 weeks ending Dec. 28, 1895	7,604	1,542	9,286	15,180
Average for 5 weeks ending Nov. 28, 1896	8,134	1,948	10,082	16,397

(2) The daily fluctuation in the number of dock labourers employed by the London and India Docks Joint Committee during November and December is shown on the chart below. The numbers in December ranged from 6,245 on the 1st to 4,455 on the 12th.

Chart showing the total number of Dock Labourers* employed by the Joint Committee at the London, St. Katharine, East and West India, Victoria and Albert Docks, and the Town Warehouses, for each day during the months of November and December 1896. The corresponding curve for November and December 1895 is also given for comparison.

[The thick curve applies to 1896, and the thin curve to 1895.]



The following are the figures on which the Chart for Dec. 1896 is based.

Day of Month.	Number employed.	Day of Month.	Number employed.	Day of Month.	Number employed.
1	6,945	11	4,779	22	4,845
2	5,533	12	4,455	23	4,541
3	5,853	13	4,772	24	4,498
4	6,550	14	4,875	25	4,906
5	5,791	15	4,915	26	5,259
6	5,882	16	4,857	27	5,252
7	5,670	17	4,833	28	5,447
8	5,644	18	4,729	29	
9	5,644	19	4,893	30	
10	4,878	20		31	

Sundays and Holidays are omitted.

During December 1895 the total number of Dock Labourers employed varied from 6,170 on the 5th to 3,015 on the 27th. Taking the London and St. Katharine Docks only, the number employed during December 1896 varied from 5,083 on the 4th to 1,185 on the 24th. Wool sales commenced on November 24th, and continued till December 10th. In 1895 they were held from November 25th till December 11th.

Employment in mid-stream has been good. Coal porters, winchmen and tankmen, and deal porters and lumpers have had fair employment, lightermen and stevedores have been busy, grain porters very busy.

The fruit porters in Thames Street have been fully employed. The average daily number employed has been 411, as compared with an average of 381 for November.

(g) SHIPBUILDING.

(1) Tonnage under Construction.

The gross tonnage of vessels (except warships) under

* Dock Labourers employed by Shipowners direct, Stevedores, and Coal Porters are not included. † By "tonnage under construction" is meant the gross tonnage of the vessels when completed. As at any given time the ships are in various stages of completion, the "tonnage under construction" is not an exact measure of the amount of work remaining to be done.

construction on December 31st amounted, according to returns compiled by Lloyd's Register, to 784,711 tons. This is greater than at the end of the previous quarter by 125,070 tons, and than at the end of 1895 by 73,149 tons. The tonnage of warships under construction at the end of December in Government and private yards was 330,005 tons displacement, an increase on the figures for September 30th of 61,975 tons displacement, and on the figures for December 31st 1895 of 23,425 tons displacement.

The following table summarises the above figures:—

Date of Return.	Merchant Vessels.		War Vessels.
	Tons gross.	Tons displacement.	
At 31st December 1896	784,711	330,005	
At 30th September 1896	659,641	268,030	
At 31st December 1895	711,562	306,580	

Of the 390 merchant vessels under construction, 343, with a gross tonnage of 755,975 tons, were steam vessels, and 47, with a gross tonnage of 28,736 tons, were sailing vessels. The former tonnage is greater by 77,657 tons, and the latter less by 4,508 tons than the tonnages under construction a year ago.

The gross tonnage of vessels (exclusive of warships) under construction in the principal districts at the end of December 1896 and 1895 is given in the table below, which includes about 94 per cent. of the total tonnage under construction.

District.	At			Increase (+) or Decrease (-) of Col. 2 as compared with	
	Dec. 31st 1896.	Sept. 30th 1896.	Dec. 31st 1895.	Col. 3.	Col. 4.
Clyde ...	257,466	213,224	217,178	+44,236	+40,282
Belfast ...	129,242	124,851	95,737	+4,391	+33,505
Wear ...	124,647	81,639	134,719	+43,008	-10,072
Tyne ...	121,321	113,626	128,897	+7,695	-7,576
Middlesbrough and Stockton	63,112	45,594	47,337	+17,518	+15,775
Hartlepool and Whitby ...	35,540	30,090	40,856	+5,450	-5,316
Barrow, Maryport and Workington	9,680	11,490	11,330	-1,810	-1,650

It will thus be seen that, as compared with September 1896, the tonnage under construction on the Clyde and Wear shows an increase of over 40,000 tons in each case, and Barrow, Maryport and Workington is the only district in which there has been a falling off. As compared with a year ago, the tonnage is in excess on the Clyde, at Belfast, and at Middlesbrough and Stockton, but is less in the other centres.

(2) Total Output in 1896.

The total number of vessels launched during the year was 751, of which 696 were merchant vessels with a gross tonnage of 1,159,751 tons. This is the greatest tonnage launched in any year since 1890, when it was exceeded. The number of warships launched was 55, with a displacement of 163,958 tons, as compared with 148,111 tons in 1895. Of these 55 vessels, 8, with a displacement tonnage of 66,370 tons, were built at Government yards, the remaining 47 being built at private yards.

(h) EMPLOYMENT OF SEAMEN IN DECEMBER.

(Data supplied by the Marine Department of the Board of Trade.)

The number of men shipped as the crews of foreign-going vessels from certain selected ports (at which over 80 per cent. of the total tonnage of vessels in the foreign trade is entered and cleared) was 30,765 in December, being 819 more than in December 1895. The number shipped during the year 1896 shows an increase of 13,938 over the figures for the previous year. The supply of seamen and firemen during December was reported as equal to or greater than the demand at nearly all ports. At Newcastle and Middlesbrough the supply of seamen was scarcely equal to the demand; and at Dublin seamen for sailing vessels were scarce.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—DISTRICT REPORTS.—LONDON.

DISTRICT REPORTS FROM LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS AND OTHERS.

LONDON.

Employment in various Industries.—Due allowance being made for the holidays, the state of employment on the whole continued good in December, and compared favourably both with November and with the corresponding month of last year. Returns from 400 branches of 105 unions, with an aggregate membership of 70,797, show that 2,368 (or 3·3 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of December, compared with 3·7 for the 80 unions making returns in December 1895. The corresponding percentage for last month was 2·7.

The Engineering, Metal and Shipbuilding trades have still further improved, and continue busy. Reports from 115 branches of 24 unions, with a membership of 22,429, show that 593 (or 2·6 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of December, compared with 3·3 in November and 4·0 per cent. in December of last year.

The Building trades remain well employed, the painters and decorators alone excepted. Reports from 181 branches of 8 unions paying unemployed benefit, and having a membership of 11,086, show that 241 (or 2·2 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of December, compared with 1·2 per cent. in November, and 2·1 in December 1895. The bricklayers and mill sawyers describe employment as good; the carpenters and joiners, plasterers, stonemasons and stonecarvers as fair; the plumbers as moderate; the painters and decorators as dull.

Employment in the Furnishing trades is not so good. Reports from 35 branches of 9 unions, with a membership of 5,194, show that 429 (or 8·3 per cent.) were unemployed, as against 2·0 per cent. in November and 5·5 per cent. in December 1895.

The Coopers are still busy. Two societies, with a membership of 960, again report less than 1·0 per cent. unemployed, as in October and November. The percentage for December 1895 was 1·4.

The Coachbuilding trades are scarcely so well employed. Reports from 12 branches of 9 unions, with a membership of 1,238, show that 51 (or 4·1 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of December, compared with 2·6 in November and 3·8 per cent. in December 1895.

The Printing and Bookbinding trades continue well employed. Reports from 19 unions, with a membership of 20,578, show that 566 (or 2·8 per cent.) were unemployed, compared with 1·5 per cent. in November and 3·5 per cent. in December of last year.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in the wholesale clothing trade has been slack, in the East-end bespoke trade bad, in the West-end bespoke trade dull; in the mantle trade slack, with a slight improvement towards the end of the month, in the hat trade unusually dull, in the cap trade moderate. The fur skin dressers have been fairly busy, the furriers less so.

Boot and Shoe Trades.—The machine branch remained quiet, improving slightly at the end of the month, though short time is still the rule; the high-class bespoke branch has been slack, as is usual at this season; the slipper-makers are still well employed.

Employment in the Leather trades remains good. Returns from 6 societies, with a membership of 1,676, show that 41 (or 2·4 per cent.) were unemployed, compared with 1·2 per cent. in November and 3·6 per cent. in December 1895.

Glass and Pottery Trades.—Employment in these trades shows a further falling off. Returns from 7 unions with a membership of 1,594, show that 119 (or 7·5 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of December, compared with 4·8 in November and 7·5 per cent. in December of last year.

Workers in Fibre, Hair, &c.—Employment in these trades is not so good. Returns from 6 societies with a membership of 972 show that 60 (or 6·2 per cent.) were unemployed, compared with 1·8 in November and 5·6 per cent. in December 1895.

The Gold and Silver trades are well employed. Reports from 6 societies with a membership of 1,114, show that 13 (or 1·2 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of December, compared with 1·4 per cent. in November and 2·1 per cent. in December 1895.

The Tobacco trades remain fairly well employed on the whole. Reports from three societies, with a membership of 2,093, show that 71 (or 3·4 per cent.) were unemployed, compared with 2·9 per cent. in November and 5·4 per cent. in December of last year.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—The improvement in employment continued at the docks; at the wharves there was a slight falling off. During the four weeks ended December 26th an average daily number of 16,705 was employed at all the docks and the principal wharves, compared with 16,434 in November and 15,042 a year

Particulars of the increases which have taken place during the month in the rates of wages at Bristol, Liverpool, Leith, Glasgow, Grangemouth, Newport and Belfast will be found on page 26.

Table showing the number* of men, &c., shipped as the crews of foreign-going vessels at some of the principal ports of the United Kingdom in December 1896 and 1895 respectively, together with the number* shipped in the twelve months ended 31st December in each of these years:—

Principal Ports.	Number of Men, &c., shipped in December 1896.			Total in Dec. 1895.	Total number shipped in 12 months ended December.	
	In Sailing Vessels.	In Steam Vessels.	Total in Dec. 1896.		1896.	1895.
ENGLAND.						
East Coast.						
Tyne Ports ...	12	2,780	2,792	2,542	36,662	35,766
Sunderland ...	12	421	421	407	7,043	7,474
Middlesbrough	302	302	454	8,817	6,483
Hull ...	4	1,181	1,185	914	14,694	12,777
Grimsby ...	8	15	23	31	1,171	1,604
Bristol Channel.						
Bristol ...	1	189	190	151	2,827	2,347
Newport, Mon. ...	29	772	801	985	13,098	12,987
Cardiff ...	153	5,392	5,545	5,080	63,698	60,661
Swansea ...	93	587	680	593	7,887	7,438
Other Ports.						
Liverpool ...	371	8,886	9,257	9,664	117,704	115,561
London ...	230	5,406	5,636	5,292	72,156	66,656
Southampton ...	21	1,427	1,448	1,630	16,027	17,659
SCOTLAND.						
Leith, Kirkcaldy, Methil and Grangemouth	13	549	562	440	8,476	8,314
Glasgow ...	130	1,570	1,700	1,666	26,624	24,756
IRELAND.						
Dublin ...	29	64	93	40	811	430
Belfast	130	130	57	2,202	1,679
Total Dec. 1896	1,094	29,671	30,765	...	396,529	...
Ditto, Dec. 1895	1,563	28,383	...	29,946	...	382,591

(i) EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN THE TEXTILE TRADES IN DECEMBER.

ACCORDING to returns from women correspondents, employment for women in the cotton trade showed no change during December. In the woollen and worsted trade there was a marked decline. Information has been received with regard to the employment of women and girls in 475 cotton, woollen, worsted, and silk mills, which is summarised as follows:—

State of Employment.	December 1896.			Corresponding Percentages in—	
	Number of Mills.	Approximate No. of Women and Girls employed.	Per-centage.	Nov. 1896.	Dec. 1895.
Full time ...	396	60,210	75	76	91
Ditto, but partial employment	38	13,090	16	14	4
Short time ...	36	5,180	7	9	4
Closed for repairs, bad trade, disputes, and other causes...	5	1,680	2	1	1
Total ...	475	80,160	100	100	100

Cotton Trade.—The number of women and girls usually employed in the cotton mills reported on is 66,100. Of these, 77 per cent. were employed in mills working full time (to be compared with the same percentage in November, and with 89 per cent. in December 1895); 16 per cent. in mills running full time, but giving only partial employment; 5 per cent. in mills running short time; while mills employing 2 per cent. were closed during the whole or part of the month.

Woollen and Worsted Trades.—The number of women and girls usually employed in the woollen and worsted mills reported on is 13,050. Of these 70 per cent. were employed in mills working full time (compared with 80 per cent. among those for whom returns were received in November, and 97 per cent. in December 1895); 20 per cent. in mills running full time but giving only partial employment; and 10 per cent. in mills running short time.

* It will be understood that the numbers given are the numbers of separate engagements, not of separate individuals. † Including Barry and Penarth.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—DISTRICT REPORTS (continued).—NORTHERN COUNTIES.

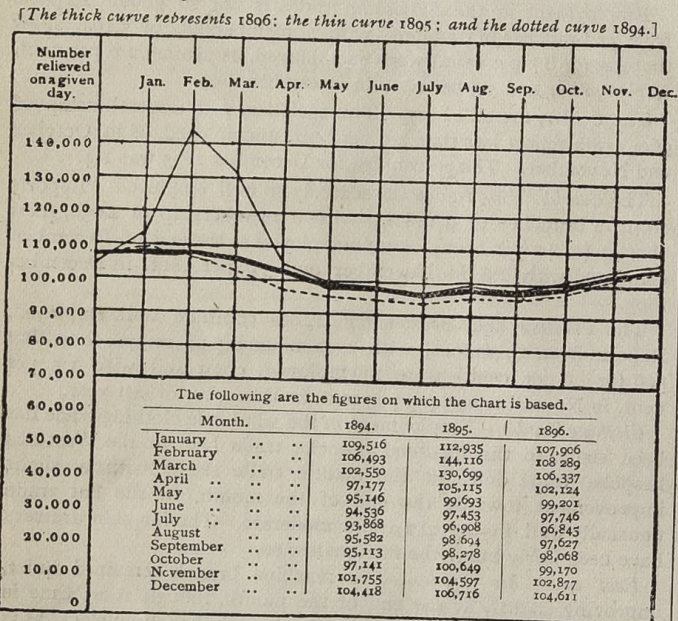
ago. Employment was good in mid-stream, fair with coal porters, winchmen and tankmen, and deal porters and lumpers. Lightermen and stevedores have been busy, grain porters very busy, fruit porters fully employed. For further details, see p. 13.

Disputes and Trade Movements.—Two small disputes have been reported as arising during the month in the French polishing and basket-making trades, together involving only 21 persons. Five disputes in the cabinet-making and tailoring trades have been settled (see p. 28). The cab dispute on the "privilege" system, referred to in previous numbers of the GAZETTE, still remained unsettled at the close of the month.

Labour Bureaux.—The six London Bureaux which furnished returns for December both in 1896 and in 1895, registered 879 fresh applications for work during the month, being 1,093 less than in the previous December. Work was found during the month through these bureaux for 814 persons (375 being engaged by private employers and 439 by local authorities), as compared with 1,736 persons (1,293 by private employers and 443 by local authorities) during December 1895.

Pauperism.—The number of persons relieved on the last day of the second week of December was 104,611. This is an increase of 1,734 on the number relieved on the corresponding day of November. As compared with December 1895, there was a decrease in all the Metropolitan districts, except the Western, which showed a slight increase. The total decrease amounted to 2,105.

The following chart shows the seasonal variations in the volume of pauperism in London at the middle of each month for the years 1894, 1895 and 1896:—



The number of vagrants in London on one day in the second week in December was 1,148, as compared with 1,268 in December 1895. In West Ham the number of paupers on one day in the second week was 8,601 in December, 8,581 in November, and 9,162 in December 1895.

ENGLAND: NORTHERN COUNTIES.
Tyne and Wear District.

Coal Mining.—*Northumberland.*—The collieries, allowing for holidays, have worked much better during December. Steam coal pits have averaged 4.85 and house coal pits 5.07 days per week, as against 4.50 and 5.40 respectively in November. Of the 20,059 union miners 125, or 0.62 per cent. are unemployed, as against 55 (or 0.17 per cent. of the membership) in November. *Durham.*—House and gas coal collieries continue busy, while those producing coking-coal have worked more regularly. Collieries hewing several classes of coal have been fully employed. Returns from 67 pits, employing about 40,000 men and boys, show an average of 5.25 days per week, as against 5.46 in November. The number of union miners idle through bad trade is 838 (or 1.4 per cent.) as against 1.8 per cent. in November. In addition, 247 miners are idle through other causes. Durham coke-workers are better employed.

Metal Mining.—Full time continues to be worked at the iron mines in Weardale. Employment in lead mines is only moderate.

Quarrying.—Quarries in and around Gateshead, and limestone quarries in the Stanhope District, have had much broken time owing to bad weather and holidays. Whinstone quarries are fairly busy.

Engineering and Shipbuilding.—*On the Tyne.*—Platers, riveters and caulkers are well employed. Engine builders continue brisk. The Elswick ordnance works maintain activity. There is a demand for turners, fitters and machine men. Repair work in all branches is good. Of the 10,905 union members 585 (or 5.4 per cent.) are idle, as against 550 (or 5.1 per cent. of the membership) in November. *On the Wear.*—Employment in the engine shops is fairly busy; several men, however, have been suspended owing to seasonal causes. Iron shipbuilders are also well employed. Branches of these trades with 3,990 members have 430 (or 10.8 per cent. out of work, as against 399 (or 9.4 per cent. of their membership) in November. Shipwrights on the Tyne have none idle. Sailmakers have a large percentage unemployed. Pattern-makers, moulders and joiners (house and ship) on both rivers have none unemployed. Out of 600 plumbers, 10 (or 1.6 per cent.) are idle. Local smelting shops, steel plate and angle mills, and blastfurnaces are working full time. The iron mills at Consett are working 5 days per week.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—The demand for sailors and firemen is fair. Trimmers and teamers report a slight falling-off in shipments, but upon the whole employment continues good. Coal porters and shippers are better employed on gas and house coal.

Building Trades.—Slaters and tilers on the Wear are slack. Masons report no improvement. Bricklayers in the Newcastle district have 3 per cent. of their members idle. Plasterers are moderately employed.

Woodworking Trades.—Millsawyers on both rivers are well employed. Coopers employed in breweries are working full time.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Of the nine paper mills furnishing returns, five have worked 128 shifts out of a possible 234; two, 5 and 6 shifts respectively; one other, 12 shifts, or full time; while at another mill only one machine has worked during the last week of the month. Letterpress printers are busier on the Tyne, and slack at Sunderland. Bookbinders have none idle.

Glass and Chemical Trades.—Glass bottle makers continue busy. Pressed glass makers report employment as exceptionally good; three furnaces, however, have been put out for repairs. Employment in chemical factories continues bad; in cement and white lead works it is fair. Copper workers are somewhat slack.

Fishing.—The catches of the line boats have not been good; steam trawl fishing, however, has been better. The prices of all classes of fish have been good.—*J. Ratcliffe.*

Middlesbrough, Stockton, and District.

Iron Mining.—Employment with the Cleveland miners is reported as fairly good.

Iron and Steel Trades.—Employment continues good at the iron and steel works, blast furnaces, bridge works, and foundries.

Engineering.—Employment shows a further improvement at Hartlepool and Stockton; it is practically unchanged at Middlesbrough. Pattern-makers and moulders report employment as good throughout the district; 18 branches of these trades, with a membership of 3,174, report 24 (or 0.8 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 44 (or 1.4 per cent. of their membership) in November.

Shipbuilding.—Employment is reported as good, but alterations and enlargements have somewhat interfered with work at one or two yards. Shipjoiners and shipsmiths report employment as good.

Building Trades.—All branches report employment as good. The bricklayers have none unemployed.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—Sailors and firemen report employment as fair at both ports. Dock labour is fair at Middlesbrough, quiet at the Hartlepoons. Riverside labour is fair.

Miscellaneous.—Employment with tailors is slack at Middlesbrough, moderate at Hartlepool, quiet elsewhere; with printers and salt-workers it is moderate.—*A. Main.*

Cumberland and Barrow District.

The following is a summary of the returns received as to the state of employment in the above district:—

Iron and Steel Trades.—The number of furnaces in blast in Cumberland and North Lancashire at the end of December was 39, being one more than at the end of the previous month, and than a year ago. The number of workpeople employed at these furnaces was 2,945, an increase of 12 on November, and of 189 compared with December 1895. The blast-furnacemen in Cumberland and at Askam, Barrow and Ulverston have secured increases of 3 or 3½ per cent. in wages under sliding scale agreements.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—DISTRICT REPORTS (continued).—LANCASHIRE.

Shipbuilding.—According to Lloyd's Return the gross tonnage of merchant vessels under construction at the end of December was 9,680, showing a decrease of 1,650 tons, compared with December 1895, and a decrease of 1,810 as compared with September 1896.

Engineering.—The engineers, with a membership of 1,088, report 83 (or 7.6 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 13.4 per cent. in December 1895.

Coal Mining.—Employment in this industry was considerably better in Cumberland during December than a year ago, the number of days per week worked by the pits included in the returns received being 5.49, as against 5.02 in December 1895. The number of workpeople employed at these pits was 6,754, an increase of 1.7 per cent. over December 1895.

Iron Mining.—Employment at iron mines in Cumberland and North Lancashire continues good. Returns from 44 mines employing 6,037 workpeople show an average of 5.64 days per week worked during December, as compared with 5.92 in November and with 5.66 in December 1895.

LANCASHIRE AND NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS.

Oldham and District.

Cotton Trade.—Employment in the spinning branch is reported as fair in Stalybridge, Oldham, and surrounding districts; as moderate in Rochdale, Stockport and Mossley; and as slack in Ashton-under-Lyne. Out of 9,148 union members, 300 (or 3.3 per cent.) are on unemployed benefit, as against 250 (or 2.7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. The Oldham cardroom operatives, with a membership of 10,953, have 223 (or 2 per cent.) on unemployed benefit, as against 276 (or 2.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November; while the Mossley cardroom operatives have 70 on unemployed benefit out of a membership of 900. One mill is closed, and a large firm in Stalybridge is working short time in the weaving department. Ring spinners and twiners continue to be well employed. The power-loom overlookers and weavers report employment as slack in the velvet trade, and irregular in the calico trade; as slack in winding, good in fancy reeling, quiet in plain reeling, and moderate in sectional warping.

Woollen Trade.—Employment is reported as slack in Rochdale, Milnrow, and Stockport districts.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—The engineers, with 2,327 members, report employment as moderate amongst the members in 8 branches, and as good in 2 branches; 48 (or 2.1 per cent.) are on unemployed benefit, as against 35 (or 1.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. The pattern-makers, machine moulders, brassfounders, tinplate workers, gas meter makers, and irongrinders report employment as good; the spindle and flyermakers, ironfounders and boiler-makers as fair.

Building Trades.—Employment is reported as moderate with bricklayers, plumbers, and carpenters and joiners; as fair with plasterers; and slack with painters.

Coal Mining.—Employment is reported as moderate in Oldham, Royton and Shaw.—*T. Ashton.*

Bolton and District.

Cotton Trade.—*Spinning.*—Employment in Bolton and district and in Bury shows no change. The improvement in Chorley has been maintained. Cardroom operatives in Bolton are fairly well employed; in Bury moderately so; employment in Chorley continues normal. *Weaving.*—Employment in Bolton is irregular; in Bury there is considerable waiting for warps. In Chorley many are unemployed, two firms are working short time, and there is much waiting for warps at others.

Engineering and Iron Trades.—The engineers report employment as busy in most departments in Bolton and district. The iron machine-making firms are well employed; 6 branches of engineers, representing 1,800 members, report 13 on the out-of-work books. In Wigan, Bury and Chorley activity prevails among engineering firms; irongrinders, steel smelters, steel roller makers, and allied trades are busier than for some time past.

Coal Mining.—In Bolton, Walkden, Little Lever, Darcy Lever, Little Hulton, Radcliffe and vicinity a considerable improvement is reported, many collieries now working six days per week. In Wigan most collieries are better employed.

Building Trades.—Employment in Bolton is fair with carpenters and joiners, paviors, plumbers, flaggers and bricklayers; slack with painters, plasterers, masons, slaters, stonedressers, and general labourers. All branches in Wigan, Bury and Chorley continue slack.

Miscellaneous.—Corporation servants, gasworkers, ironfoundry labourers, cloggers, coachmakers, cab and tram drivers, brush-makers and leather workers are fairly well employed.—*R. Tootill.*

Blackburn, Burnley, and District.

Cotton Trade.—*Weaving.*—Employment has improved during the month. In Blackburn few looms are working short time, but a number are stopped for want of warps. In Burnley the number of looms totally stopped is 5,300, and the number working daylight only is from 18,000 to 20,000, as compared with 30,000 at the end of last month; in Darwen a number of looms are stopped for warps; in Nelson about 3,000 looms are working short time, about half as many as at the end of the previous month; in Colne three firms are working daylight, and a number of looms are waiting for warps. In the hardwaste trade employment continues good, overtime being prevalent; in the coloured goods trade it is improving; the warp-dressers are better employed. Employment in the looming and drawing industry in the Blackburn district is very irregular; in Burnley work is still slack. *Spinning.*—Employment is good in the Preston, Accrington and Darwen districts, fairly good in Blackburn. Cardroom workers are fully employed. Branches of cotton spinners, twisters and drawers, and warp dressers, with 2,944 members, have 135 (or 4.6 per cent.) unemployed, as against 134 (or 4.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Building Trades.—Employment continues good. Three branches of carpenters and joiners, with 429 members, have only three members unemployed. Painters are slack, but with few unemployed.

Engineering and Iron Trades.—Employment is good, especially in the moulding, fitting and machine erecting departments. All branches are on full time, and in some departments overtime is being worked.

Coal Mining.—Miners as a rule are working full time.

Miscellaneous.—Letterpress printers, calico printers and dyers are fully employed. Tailoring is slack.—*W. H. Wilkinson.*

Manchester and District.

General.—Branches with 23,118 members return 613 (or 2.7 per cent.) as unemployed, the same percentage of their membership as at the end of November.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—The engineers at Manchester, Northwich and Stockport report employment as moderate; the steam-engine makers as good; the ironfounders in Manchester as good, at Stockport and Macclesfield as moderate; the boiler-makers in Manchester as moderate, and at Northwich as good; the machine-workers, brassfounders and finishers, and sheet metal-workers as good; smiths and strikers as moderate. Wire-drawers and wire-weavers are fully employed; file smiths moderately so. Branches with 9,874 members return 1.7 per cent. unemployed, the same as at the end of November.

Textile Trades.—Employment in cotton spinning continues fair; in Macclesfield cotton-workers in general are well employed. Employment in the silk trade has been bad, particularly in the weaving departments; silk dyers are moderately well employed; bleachers and dressers, dyers and finishers, and plush-raisers report employment as moderate; fustian-cutters in Macclesfield and district are moderately well employed.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in the bespoke department of the tailoring trade is described as moderate, having declined throughout the district. Boot and shoe makers report employment as bad, and felt hat makers and felt hat trimmers as moderate. In the wholesale tailoring department and in cap-making, shirt-making and umbrella-making employment is moderate, and in the mantle and waterproof trades it is dull.

Building Trades.—Employment generally is reported as moderate, but with painters is bad throughout the district. Branches with 6,011 members return 0.6 per cent. as unemployed, as against 0.7 per cent. at the end of November.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Employment in letterpress printing and bookbinding in Manchester shows an improvement; in lithographic printing and pattern card making it has declined. In Stockport employment is slack.

Woodworking and Coachbuilding Trades.—Cabinet-makers in Manchester, Stockport and Warrington report employment as good, and the upholsterers and French polishers as moderate; the coopers as good throughout the district. Coach-makers in Manchester, both at the railway shops and in private trade, still continue busy; in Warrington they are on three-quarter time. Branches with 1,566 members return 63 (or 4.0 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 53 (or 2.7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

G. D. Kelley.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—DISTRICT REPORTS (continued).—LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE.

Liverpool and District.

Engineering and Shipbuilding.—Boiler-makers and iron-shipbuilders report employment as having slightly fallen off; engineers and pattern-makers as fair; brassfounders, whitesmiths and iron and steel dressers as fairly good; ironfounders, shipwrights and ship-joiners as moderate; ship painters as dull. Branches with 3,654 members, return 317 (or 8·7 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 274 (or 7·5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Cabinet-makers and French polishers are fairly employed; upholsterers, wheelwrights, mill sawyers and coopers moderately so; coachbuilders report no change.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—The sailors and firemen report employment as fair at Liverpool, slacker at Bootle. Dock labourers report employment as good; Mersey flatmen as fair; quay and railway carters as not so good.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Letterpress printers report employment as fair, lithographic printers as good, bookbinders and stereotypers as fair. Branches with 1,241 members report 56 (or 4·5 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 54 (or 4·4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Clothing Trades.—The bespoke tailors report employment as fair; in the ready-made branch it has been rather quiet. In the boot and shoe trade employment has slightly fallen off.

Building Trades.—Plumbers report employment as moderate, painters as slack, joiners as slightly fallen off in Liverpool, but good in Cheshire. All other branches are fully employed.

Coal Mining and Quarrying.—Coalminers report an average of 20 days worked during the month at St. Helens. In the Skelmersdale district they are fully employed. Quarrymen continue well employed.

Glass and Chemical Trades.—Glass bottle makers are well employed. Employment with chemical workers is improving.—C. Rouse.

A report from Winsford states that employment has improved in the salt trade at that place in some branches, but has fallen off at Middlewich. Employment in the chemical trade at Middlewich continues normal. Moulders at Winsford are working short time. Fustian cutters are rather slack at both Winsford and Middlewich. At both places employment in the building trade is moderate.

YORKSHIRE.

Hull and District.

Shipbuilding and Engineering.—The engineers, machine-workers, smiths and strikers, iron and steel dressers, and boiler-makers report employment as good; the pattern-makers, ironfounders, drillers and hole cutters as moderate; the shipwrights as fair; the general shipyard and engineering labourers as good. Employment on repair work is fair. The engineers at Doncaster report employment as dull. Societies with 5,948 members return 134 (or 2·3 per cent.) as unemployed.

Building Trades.—Employment continues fairly good, except with painters, who report about three-fourths of their numbers unemployed. Branches of these trades (except painters) with a membership of 2,422, have 31 (or 1·3 per cent.) unemployed, as against 21 (or 0·9 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. At Grimsby employment is reported as moderate. At Goole bricklayers are moderately employed; joiners are slack.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—The sailors and firemen report employment as moderate; the dock labourers as good, with fewer unemployed. Dock labourers at Grimsby and Goole are moderately employed.

Fishing Industry.—The steam trawling engineers and firemen, and the twine spinners and dressers, report employment as good; the fishermen as normal.

Seed Crushing, Oil, Paint and Colour Works.—Employment in the seed crushing mills has been fairly good. Most of the mills are in full operation with day and night shifts. Employment in the paint and colour works continues good.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Branches with 400 members return 14 (or 3·5 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 10 (or 2·5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Miscellaneous.—The coachbuilders report employment as moderate in Hull and Doncaster; the carriers at Doncaster as good; the brushmakers at Hull as fair; the cabinet-makers and coopers as good; the tailors at Doncaster as moderate; the flour millers at Hull as bad.—W. G. Millington.

Leeds and District.

General.—Branches of societies with 7,970 members have 297 (or 3·7 per cent.) unemployed, as against 282 (or 3·5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Engineering in Leeds continues brisk; at Wakefield there is a slight improvement. Ironfounders in Leeds and Stanningley are well employed. Employment with pattern-makers keeps steady; with boiler-makers it is good in Leeds and quiet at Stanningley; with machine-workers and whitesmiths it is brisk. Branches with 3,476 members have 52 (or 1·5 per cent.) unemployed, as against 74 (or 2·1 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in the boot and shoe trade has fallen off both at Leeds and Bramley. In the ready-made clothing trade short time is general. Bespoke tailors are quiet.

Textile Trades.—Employment in mills has been only moderate at Leeds. Willeyers and fettlers and blanket raisers report employment as dull. Linen and flax workers are busy. At Wakefield work has been fair, at Stanningley and Pudsey only moderate; at Yeadox and Guiseley declining, the majority of the operatives being on short time, and a number out of work.

Building Trades.—Joiners, bricklayers and masons are fairly well employed; plumbers and painters are slack. At Wakefield, Stanningley and Harrogate employment is fairly good.

Mining.—In Leeds and the surrounding districts employment at the collieries has been good, a majority of the pits working full time. Ironstone miners are fully employed.

Leather Trades.—Tanners report employment as quiet, curriers and leather shavers as slack.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Employment with letterpress printers has fallen off; with lithographers it is fair; with bookbinders and machine rulers good. Paper mill workers are fully employed.

Glass Bottle Trade.—Employment is fairly good at Leeds, Castleford and Wakefield.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Cabinet-makers and brush-makers are well employed; coachmakers are slack.—O. Connellan.

Bradford and Huddersfield District.

Worsted Trade.—The slight improvement in employment noticed last month has only been maintained in some branches of the worsted trade in Bradford. The weavers and spinners seem to have suffered more than the sorters and combers. Employment in Keighley, Halifax and Huddersfield seems rather worse. In the last town only one firm has been working overtime during the greater part of the month. At one firm the weavers have had much waiting for warps. Another large firm has put a number of looms on pattern weaving.

Woollen Trade.—Employment in the woollen trade in and around Huddersfield shows a marked decline, especially in the Colne valley. The holidays at many firms have been extended. In the heavy woollen trade employment shows no change.

Other Textile Trades.—Employment in the silk trade is reported as slack in all departments at Manningham, bad at Halifax, and not so good as last month at Brighouse. Employment with cotton spinners is reported as slightly fallen off at Brighouse, and unchanged at Huddersfield.

Metal Trades.—The engineers report employment as good at Halifax and Dewsbury; moderate at Huddersfield, Bradford and Keighley. The ironfounders report employment as moderate at Huddersfield, and good at the other towns. Branches of these societies, with 2,543 members, have 86 (or 3·4 per cent.) unemployed, as against 89 (or 3·5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Building Trades.—Employment is reported as fair.—A. Gee.

Sheffield, Barnsley, and Rotherham District.

General.—Societies and branches (exclusive of coal miners), with a membership of 15,604, have 111 (or 0·7 per cent.) unemployed, the same number as at the end of November.

Iron and Steel Industries.—The improvement in employment is well maintained, except in the armour plate trade, which continues exceedingly quiet. Engineers, merchant iron rollers, iron and steel foundries, steam engine and boiler makers, and makers of railway material and patent shot and shell are well employed; blast furnacemen, Siemens steel smelters, Bessemer steel workers, and crucible steel makers are all making good time; makers of small steel and malleable iron castings of all kinds and of cycles are busy. Branches with 5,306 members have 62 (or 1·2 per cent.) unemployed, as against 72 (or 1·4 per cent.) of their membership at

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—DISTRICT REPORTS (continued).—YORKS. AND MIDLAND COUNTIES.

the end of November. At Rotherham, Iccles, and Masbrough employment in the steel and iron trades has improved. Stove-grate, bath, and wagon-wheel makers are well employed. At Parkgate the blast-furnacemen, puddlers and Siemens steel workers are well employed. At Barnsley engineers and ironfounders are well employed. At Penistone there is a fair amount of work on steel forgings and railway material.

Cutlery and Tools.—Employment is good in most branches. The toolmakers, table-knife cutlers and filemakers, grinders, cutters and hardeners are exceptionally busy. The sawmakers are well employed, and in the various branches of the razor and scissor trades employment has much improved.

Other Metal Trades.—The silver and electro-workers and spoon and fork and brass workers are busy. Branches with a membership of 1,032 have only 3 out of work. The brass trade in Rotherham is good in every department.

Coal Mining.—The improvement in this industry continues. Of 38 collieries 17 are working 6 days per week, and 17 are working 5 or more, the remainder working 4½ days—an average of 5·4 days per week. The men thrown out by the stoppage of several seams a few months ago are gradually finding places in other pits.

Building Trades.—In Sheffield stonemasons and painters are slack; other branches are fully employed. Branches of carpenters and joiners and plumbers with 696 members have only 2 on unemployed benefit. In Rotherham employment is fair; in Barnsley quiet.

Linen Trade.—There is no change in employment, short time being the rule.

Clothing Trades.—Employment with tailors is quiet on bespoke work; fair in the ready-made branch; in the boot and shoe trade it is improving.

Glass Trades.—At Rotherham, Mexborough and Barnsley employment in the bottle trade has much improved; the flint glass workers are fairly well off for work.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Employment with the letterpress and lithographic printers continues to improve; bookbinders are well employed.

Miscellaneous.—Cabinet-makers and railway-carriage and wagon builders are exceedingly busy; coachmakers are well employed, and potters fairly so.—S. Uttley.

ENGLAND: MIDLAND COUNTIES.

Derbyshire District.

General.—Branches of societies (exclusive of coalminers) with 5,999 members have 75 (or 1·3 per cent.) on unemployed benefit, as against 35 (or 0·6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Engineering and kindred Trades.—Employment remains good in the engineering branches; in the bridge, girder and boiler yards it continues fair. Employment with ironfounders is reported as improving in Derby, as good in Butterley, Chesterfield, and Codnor. Iron wagon builders in Long Eaton continue brisk. Lace machine builders are slack. Cycle-makers continue well employed. Stove-grate workers in Derby are quiet, in Langley Mill and Belper fairly busy. Ironworkers generally in Ilkeston, Sandiacre, Langley Mill and Draycott are well employed. Branches with 2,348 members have 15 (or 0·6 per cent.) on unemployed benefit, as against 19 (or 0·8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Coal Mining.—Returns from 36 collieries, employing over 12,500 workpeople, show an average of rather more than 4½ days per week, as against 5½ days for November. Employment generally may be considered as fair.

Quarrying.—Employment continues fair in limestone quarries.

Building Trades.—Branches of bricklayers, masons, carpenters and joiners, plasterers, plumbers and painters in Derby, Burton, Buxton, Chesterfield, Glossop, Ilkeston and Long Eaton, with 1,398 members, have 34 (or 2·4 per cent.) on unemployed benefit, as against 8 (or 0·6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. Employment generally is good, except with brick-makers and with painters.

Textile Trades.—Employment with cotton spinners and weavers in Belper and Borrowash is quiet, in Glossop fair. Hosiery workers in Belper are slack; surgical bandage makers report employment as dull, elastic web weavers as bad; lacemakers in Long Eaton and Ilkeston as fair. Silk and merino manufacturers in Lea and Holloway are well employed. Calico printers and engravers report employment as fair.

Clothing Trades.—Tailors and dress and mantle makers continue

fairly well employed. Boot and shoe operatives report employment as dull, many working short time.

Coachbuilding Trades.—Employment with railway carriage and wagon-builders in Derby continues to improve, and in some departments full time is being worked; wagon-builders in Long Eaton are busy. Carriage-builders in private shops continue fairly well employed.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Cabinet-makers and brush-makers report employment as good. In Burton-on-Trent the coopers report employment as good, with no unemployed. In most timber yards employment is regular.

Printing and allied Trades.—The letterpress and lithographic printers report employment as moderate; the bookbinders and machine-rulers as fair.—C. White-Deacon.

Nottingham and District.

Lace Trade.—The plain net branch continues well employed; the levers branch reports an improvement; the curtain branch no change; the warp lace branch is slack; designers and draughtsmen, curtain readers and correctors report employment as bad; auxiliary laceworkers and female workers as moderate. Bleachers are fairly well employed; dyers are moderately employed at Basford, slack at Nottingham; silk dressers are working 5 days a week.

Hosiery.—Framework knitters are brisk on dress goods; the circular branch is busy on pants, slack in other departments. The hand frame branch is well employed; the rib top branch is slack. Wool, fall, and Shetland shawl workers are slack at Hucknall Torkard. Elastic bandage makers are not quite so brisk. Hosiery trimmers again report employment as moderate.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—The engineers report employment as moderate at Mansfield and Newark. At Beeston, Colwick, and Nottingham the cycle branch is busy, overtime being general. Machine builders are well employed. Boiler-makers, kitchen range-makers, ironfounders, tool machinists, brassworkers, carriage straighteners, bobbin and carriage-makers, blast furnacemen at Bulwell, report employment as good; ironfounders at Mansfield as moderate; farriers, wheelwrights and blacksmiths, and iron and steel dressers as moderate. Branches with 2,610 members have 77 (or 3·0 per cent.) unemployed, as against 45 (or 1·7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Building Trades.—Employment is fairly good except with painters, who are dull. Branches (not including painters) with 3,022 members have 33 (or 1·1 per cent.) unemployed, the same percentage as at the end of November.

Coal Mining.—Returns from 27 collieries employing over 16,000 workpeople show that the improvement has been well maintained, an average of 4½ days per week having been worked, as against 4½ days last month.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress printers report employment as having declined; the lithographic printers as moderate; the bookbinders as improving.

Miscellaneous.—Coachmakers report employment as fair; boot and shoe makers as slack; tailors as quiet; boxmakers as busy. W. L. Hardstaff.

Leicester and Northampton District.

Boot and Shoe Industry.—Employment has been slack throughout the district. At the Leicester labour bureau upwards of 600 shoe-workers have registered themselves as wholly unemployed during December, and a large number have been on short time for months. Throughout Northamptonshire, however, the army and other contracts already placed will give better employment to the workpeople. Tanners and leather dressers are busier.

Clothing Trades.—Workpeople in the wholesale clothing trade have been well engaged, but work is slack in the bespoke branch. Corset-makers are busy. Milliners and dressmakers are quieter. Employment is slacker in all branches of the hatting trade.

Hosiery, Yarn and Wool-spinning Trades.—Employment is reported as unsatisfactory in nearly all departments of the hosiery trade at Leicester, Hinckley and Loughborough. It is quieter in the yarn, woolspinning and trimming trades, and slack with dyers and scourers.

Elastic Web Trade.—In the cord and braid branches employment is fairly regular, but it is slacker in the gusset and other departments.

Engineering and Cycle Trades.—Work is brisk in most branches of the engineering trade. Machine constructors, turners and pattern-makers are making overtime. Employment is good with boiler-makers, smiths, cycle-makers and electrical fitters; moderate with ironfounders. Shoe machinery makers are not so busy.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—DISTRICT REPORTS (continued).—MIDLAND AND E. COUNTIES.

Mining and Quarrying.—The miners at the South Leicestershire pits have been making slightly better time. Returns from 15 collieries, employing nearly 4,500 men, show an average of 4.52 days worked per week. Stone quarrymen and ironstone workers continue well employed.

Printing and Bookbinding Trades.—The letterpress printers at Leicester, Northampton, Kettering, Loughborough and Rugby have been fully employed. Work is reported as moderate with lithographic printers. Bookbinders are busy.

Building Trades.—Bricklayers, builders' labourers, stonemasons and plasterers are fully employed at Leicester and Northampton, moderately so at Kettering and Loughborough, and slack at Hinckley. Employment generally continues fairly good with carpenters and joiners, plumbers and gasfitters. It is much slacker with painters.

Furnishing and Coachmaking Trades.—Work is not so regular in the furnishing and upholstering trades. It is good with coach-makers, road and tramcar builders and railway wagon builders and repairers.

Miscellaneous.—Employment is reported as good with all kinds of railway workers at Leicester, Northampton, Rugby and Wellingborough; it is good with cigar-makers, gas-stokers, saddlers, leather trunk makers, sawyers, bakers and confectioners; and fair with woodcutting machinists and basket-makers.—*T. Smith.*

Potteries District.

Pottery Trades.—Hollow-ware pressers report a further decline, and employment as slack, averaging less than 3 days per week, with a small percentage out of work. Sanitary pressers are moderately employed. Flat pressers are slack, with a number unemployed, and the rest averaging less than 2 days per week. Women gilders and decorators are moderately employed, and men artists on best goods are busy. Throwers and turners on common goods are slack, but in the china, furniture and electrical departments they are well employed. Encaustic tilemakers are fairly busy. Ovenmen, kilnmen, and sagger-makers are slack, averaging less than 2 days per week. The Christmas holidays in all departments have been extended, averaging fully three weeks.

Iron and Steel Trades.—The improvement in all branches continues, and no ironworkers are out of employment. Anchor chainmakers at Ford Green remain busy.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—The engineers at Crewe, Stafford and the Potteries, with 2,276 members, have only 2 unemployed. At two firms at Stoke night turns are being worked; at Burslem short time prevails; at Longport brassmoulders on heavy castings are busy, and finishers are working overtime. Copper-workers at Frogghall and Oakamoor are busy in all departments. Agricultural engineers at Uttoxeter are slack; at Rugeley they are well employed; at Crewe boiler-makers are working full time; steel-moulders are working overtime; malleable moulders are slack.

Coal Mining.—Miners throughout the Potteries district are well employed, only a small percentage working short time. At Cheadle a further improvement is reported, all pits working full time.

Textile Trades.—At Leek silk trimming weavers report employment as good for time of year. Hard silk workers report a decline; but dyers are well employed. At Congleton silk weavers report employment as indifferent; two firms have closed. Silk dressers are well employed; throwsters are slack; fustian cutters are working full time. At Cheadle and Tean silk weavers are still on short time. Tape workers report improvement.

Clothing Trades.—Tailors report employment as quiet in the Potteries; as good at Crewe. Shoemakers at Stafford and Stone are slack, the majority working short time. Corsetmakers at Uttoxeter are less busy.

Building Trades.—Bricklayers in the Potteries are well employed. Carpenters and joiners report employment as good for the time of year. Bricklayers' labourers are slack. Employment at Newcastle-under-Lyme is dull; at Leek, fair; at Stafford and Crewe lack. Plumbers and painters throughout the district are well employed for the season.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress printers report an improvement, but with several still unemployed. Bookbinders are well employed.

Miscellaneous.—Stone quarrymen at Alton and Hollington are busy, with none out of work; tanners at Rugeley are busy; colour-makers report further improvement; gas-workers report employment as good; railway servants are busy.—*I. S. Harvey.*

Wolverhampton and District.

Iron and Steel Trades.—In South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire employment continues good in the steel and iron bar trades; but in the sheet trade it is not so good as in November. Mills and forges are reported as fully employed. In South Shropshire the steel works and forges are running full time; wire-rollers maintain their improvement.

Engineering and Allied Trades.—Employment in the engineering trade is good in all branches, overtime being worked by several firms. Boiler, bridge, girder, tank, and gas-holder makers in South Staffordshire and Shropshire report employment as good. The moulders are busy. At Coalbrookdale ironfounders report employment as good; at Wednesbury makers of coach axles, springs, and iron work are busy, and some departments are working overtime; at Madeley and Tamworth employment continues moderate.

Hardware Trades.—All branches of the chain trade report employment as good. Makers of anchors, vices and anvils, tubes, locks and keys, latches, edge-tools, plantation hoes, traps, nuts and bolts, wrought-iron odd work, builders' ironmongery, iron fence and hurdles, bedsteads, malleable nails and protectors, stamper and piercers, galvanizers, tinplate-workers and brassworkers all report employment as good. Makers of cycle accessories and castings and filesmiths are working overtime. The ironplate-workers, japanners, and makers of steel toys and wrought and cu nails are moderately employed.

Coal Mining.—On Cannock Chase and in South Shropshire employment has improved, full time being worked at all collieries.

Building Trades.—Carpenters and bricklayers report employment as good; plasterers as moderate; plumbers and painters as slack.

Glass Trade.—Employment continues good in all branches.

Textile Trades.—Employment in the Kidderminster carpet trade has been fairly good, and most of the looms are running full time. In the spinning industry it is good. At Bridgnorth employment is fair.

Clothing Trade.—Employment in the tailoring trade is good in the ready-made branch; in the home-made branch it fell off during the month. Employment in the boot and shoe trade is good.

*C. Anthony.***Birmingham and District.**

Engineering.—All branches are busy and many working overtime.

Brass and Copper working.—All branches are well employed, and there is overtime in chandelier and cabinet work in tubes, metal-working and rolling, fender and fire brass work, and out-casting.

Jewellers, Silversmiths and Electro-platers.—Jewellers continue fairly busy; silversmiths are steadily employed; electro-plate work is good, many firms making overtime.

Other Metal Trades.—Employment is fair with bedstead-makers, good with ironfounders, file and steel pen makers, iron and steel tube workers, and cycle-makers. The Redditch needle trade is now active, full work being the rule.

Building Trades.—Carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers, plumbers, and stonemasons are well employed. All branches are abnormally busy in Coventry.

Glass Trades.—Employment with glass blowers continues to improve; other branches are well employed. Overtime is being worked by half the bevellers and silverers.

Woodworking Trades.—Coopers are busy, and there is a fair demand for cabinet work, especially for school furniture. Railway carriage and wagon-workers are fully employed.

Miscellaneous.—Employment in the ivory button trade is quiet. Employment is good with tailors, better with printers; gasworkers and labourers of all kinds are in full employment. Employment in the silk trade at Coventry is inactive, but in the elastic web trade is better. Employment in the Walsall trades generally is good.

*W. J. Davis.***ENGLAND: EASTERN COUNTIES.****Norfolk and neighbouring District.**

General.—Branches of societies with 2,917 members have 207 (or 7.1 per cent.) unemployed, as against 157 (or 5.4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Clothing Trades.—Employment at the clothing factories is fairly good; in the boot and shoe trade it is slack; bespoke tailors are well employed.

Building Trades.—At Lowestoft, Yarmouth, Cromer and Sherringham employment is good; at Cambridge, Newmarket and Wisbech fair for the time of year; at Lynn and Dereham it is dull; and at

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—DISTRICT REPORTS (contd.).—EASTERN AND S.W. COUNTIES.

Norwich bad. Branches with 1,413 members have 66 (or 4.7 per cent.) unemployed, as against 37 (or 2.6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Engineering and Shipbuilding.—Engineers throughout the district are fairly well employed. Shipwrights at Yarmouth are nearly all idle, and many have left the town. At Lowestoft employment is bad.

Textile Trades.—The crape and silk factories at Yarmouth and Norwich continue on full time.

Fishing Industry.—Trawling has been fair at both Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

Printing Trades.—Letterpress printers are fairly well employed at Norwich and Fakenham. Lithographic printers at Norwich are busy.—*G. Cleverley.*

Suffolk, Essex, and District.

Engineering and Shipbuilding.—Employment with the engineers continues good at Bury St. Edmunds, Beccles, Colchester, Chelmsford, Braintree, and Halstead; moderate at Ipswich, Leiston, and Earl's Colne. The boiler-makers at Ipswich report employment as moderate; the shipwrights as fair.

Clothing Trades.—In the wholesale tailoring trade at Ipswich employment is reported as moderate. The boot and shoe-makers report employment as slack at Ipswich, Colchester, and Braintree; the corset-makers as moderate at Ipswich, good at Sudbury.

Textile Trades.—The mat-weavers at Sudbury, Long Melford, and Lavenham report employment as good; at Glemsford as moderate; at Hadleigh as bad; the horse-hair weavers at Lavenham as good. The silk weavers report employment as moderate at Sudbury; silk operatives at Halstead and Bocking as good.

Building Trades.—Employment generally is reported as good at Ipswich, Felixstowe, and Chelmsford; moderate at Halstead and Southend; dull at Sudbury and Hadleigh; fair with the carpenters and dull with the bricklayers at Colchester. Painters at Ipswich are still slack.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress printers report employment as good at Ipswich and Beccles; the lithographic printers and bookbinders at Ipswich have been busy.

Miscellaneous.—Employment is reported as good with brickmakers at Chelmsford and brushmakers at Braintree; fair with horticultural builders at Ipswich and Chelmsford; and dull generally with labourers. Shipping and dock labour has been moderate at Ipswich.—*R. W. Mather.*

ENGLAND: SOUTH-WESTERN COUNTIES.**Bristol, Somerset, and Gloucestershire District.**

General.—Societies and branches (not including miners) with 6,945 members have 113 (or 1.6 per cent.) unemployed, as against 89 (or 1.3 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Building Trades.—The masons and bricklayers report employment as good; the joiners and plasterers as moderate; the painters as slack; the brick and tile makers as brisk. Branches with 2,351 members have 49 (or 2.1 per cent.) unemployed, as against 27 (or 1.1 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Coal Mining and Quarrying.—Employment in the Forest of Dean is reported as good in house and steam coal pits; fair in quarries. The miners in the Bristol coalfield report an improvement. In the Radstock district an average of five days a week is being worked, with some pits working full time.

Engineering and Allied Trades.—Employment in these trades continues good. Branches with a membership of 2,934 have 21 (or 0.7 per cent.) unemployed, as against 29 (or 0.8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—Seagoing men report employment as brisk, grain-handlers as busy, and an improvement is reported in the general cargo trade.

Clothing Trades.—The bespoke tailors report employment as quiet; the wholesale garment makers as slack with most firms.

Boot and Shoe Trades.—Employment in the Kingswood district shows no improvement; at Bristol it is slightly better.

Textile Trades.—Employment has improved slightly at Wellington. The Westford mills keep busy. At Trowbridge employment continues slack in the worsted and heavy goods branches, and fairly good on ladies' costumes. Cotton workers in Bristol are reported to be slack.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress printers report employment as good; the lithographic printers as moderate; the bookbinders and machine rulers as quiet.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—The brushmakers and cabinet makers report employment as good; the upholsterers as fair; the box and packing case makers as slack.—*J. Curle.*

Plymouth and South-Western District.

Mining, Quarrying and Clay Industries.—The metal mining industry has shown no improvement. The clayworkers and quarrymen continue well employed generally.

Engineering and allied Trades.—Employment in these trades continues fairly good. Branches of engineers, iron-founders, brass-founders and finishers and boiler-makers, with a membership of 1,476, have only 3 unemployed. The smiths and wheelwrights remain moderately employed.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in both branches of the tailoring trade continues slack. The boot and shoe operatives again report employment as moderate; the bespoke branch is quiet.

Building Trades.—Employment has shown a further seasonal falling-off with the carpenters, painters and plasterers. Branches of carpenters and joiners, masons, bricklayers, plasterers, plumbers and painters, with a membership of 2,438, have 63 (or 2.6 per cent.) unemployed, as against 31 (or 1.3 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—Seamen find it difficult to obtain berths, except for the coasting trade. Coal porters have been busy; deal carriers, corn porters and general cargo men quiet.

Printing Trades.—The letterpress printers again report employment as fair. Lithographic printers report a slight improvement.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—The mill-sawyers, cabinet-makers, upholsterers and polishers are moderately employed; the brushmakers are slack.

Miscellaneous.—The gasworkers are busy; those employed at Plymouth works, after a stoppage lasting a few hours, have been conceded an 8-hours' day and other advantages referred to in the table on p. 29; the brickyards continue busy; the fishing industry continues depressed; general labourers are slack.—*J. Welland.*

WALES.**North Wales District.**

Mining.—Employment at the various collieries in North Wales has been good. Of 23 coal mines in Flintshire and Denbighshire, 15 worked from 5 to 6 days per week, 6 from 4 to 5 days, and 2 from 3 to 4 days. The lead mines of Flintshire are fully employed.

Quarrying.—Employment continues good in the slate quarries of North Wales, except at the Penrhyn quarries, which are still closed. The granite sett workers are fairly employed. Employment is good in freestone and limestone quarries.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Employment is good at the iron works at Mostyn, and fair at the steel works at Brymbo, though the dispute at the latter place remains unsettled. Engineers are briskly employed at Cefn and Ruabon, slack at Hawarden. Railway coach-makers are moderately employed. Railway wagon-builders at Johnstown, Ruabon, are working overtime.

Building Trades.—The bricklayers at Wrexham report employment as moderate; the plasterers as fair; the painters as slack. The carpenters and joiners at Oswestry report employment as slack; the labourers as moderate. Employment continues good in all branches in the Rhos, Cefn and Ruabon districts.

Brick and Terra-cotta Industries.—Employment continues good in all branches, at Rhos, Ruabon, Penybont, Wrexham and Buckley. The enamel and encaustic tile works at Rhos are working full time.

Chemical Trades.—Employment at Flint continues bad. At Ruabon full time is being worked.

Miscellaneous.—The letterpress printers at Oswestry report employment as bad. The bespoke tailors are only working half time. Tweed operatives of Montgomeryshire are briskly employed for the time of year. Pattern-weavers are slack.—*G. Rowley.*

South Wales District.

Coal Mining.—Several collieries that worked irregularly (in the Rhondda Valley especially) during November have made full time during the month. A large number of colliers, however, are unemployed, and considerable distress prevails. In the Blaenavon district the colliers have worked regularly; at Ebbw Vale about 4 days a week; at Tredegar 5 days; in the Western district and Garw Valley about 5 days a week. Returns from 49 collieries in the Rhondda and Ferndale district give a mean of 4 days' stoppages during the month.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—DISTRICT REPORTS (contd.)—WALES AND SCOTLAND.

Building Trades.—Employment is not so good. The masons, plasterers, plumbers, painters and paper-hangers report a number out of work; the bricklayers report employment as moderate. Branches of carpenters and joiners, with a membership of 1,252, have 43 (or 3·4 per cent.) unemployed, the same number as at the end of November.

Ship-repairing and Engineering.—Employment at the dry docks' pontoons and slipways throughout the month has been good, but at the end of the month the shipwrights and the boiler-makers report a large percentage out of work. Branches of engineers return 49 (or 2·0 per cent.) unemployed out of a membership of 2,455, as against 118 (or 4·7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. Moulders report employment as moderate about the seaports, and good in inland and colliery districts.

Iron and Steel Trades.—Returns from Blaenavon, Briton Ferry, Ebbw Vale, Dowlais, Cyfarthfa, Tredegar and Llanelly show employment as good, with mills and furnaces going regularly. A large steel works has been re-started at Neath. The steel works at Cardiff are not going very regularly, only one furnace out of four being in blast. In some departments the men are only making about half time.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—Sailors and firemen have had fairly brisk employment. Coal shipments have been fairly good, especially at Barry. General cargo shipments have been moderate. The corn porters, pitwood men, and iron ore workers report employment as good; dock hoblars as fair.

Miscellaneous.—Copper smelters and chemical workers are dull; fuel-workers are slack; wagon-builders and lifters report employment as moderate; springmakers as busy; bookbinders and compositors as good.—T. Davies.

The Tinplate Trade in South Wales, Monmouth and Gloucestershire.—During the month the number of unemployed has steadily decreased, and there is a general improvement throughout the trade. About 4,000 workpeople in addition to those mentioned in the November GAZETTE have obtained advances in wages (see page 25). At 89 works, respecting which returns have been made, 328 mills were at work at the end of December, as compared with 261 at the end of November. Fifty-four works, with 295 mills, were giving full employment, and 25 works, with 149 mills, were idle. The remaining 10 works were giving partial employment, 33 of the mills being at work and 15 idle.

SCOTLAND.

Edinburgh and District.

General.—Branches of societies, with 15,218 members, have 351 (or 2·3 per cent.) unemployed, as against 381 (or 2·6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Coal Mining.—Employment continues good in the Lothians, and the miners generally are working full time.

Mineral Oil Trades.—This industry continues busy, and all classes of workers are fully employed. Full time was worked in December at the 27 shale mines in Mid and West Lothian from which returns have been received. The number of men employed at these mines was 3,630, as against 3,709 in December 1895.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Branches of these trades in Edinburgh and Leith with 2,229 members have 32 (or 1·4 per cent.) idle, as against 41 (or 1·9 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Branches of the engineering and metal trades in Falkirk with 1,907 members again return none idle.

Shipbuilding.—The shipwrights report employment as dull, with 6·9 per cent. unemployed.

Textile Trades.—In Dunfermline employment in the linen industry continues to improve. The carpet weavers in Midlothian report employment as still good. In Hawick the woollen mills, with one exception, continue to run full time, but many workers are only partially employed. In Selkirk and Galashiels several of the woollen mills are running short time. Employment in the hosiery industry in Selkirk is fairly good; in Hawick it is not so good as in November.

Building Trades.—Branches of these trades with 5,354 members have 120 (or 2·2 per cent.) idle, as against 106 (or 2·1 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Branches with 1,035 members have 7 (or 0·7 per cent.) idle, as against 4 (or 0·4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—The sailors and firemen, coal porters and dock labourers report employment as good.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Branches with 2,207 members have 34 (or 1·5 per cent.) idle, as against 29 (or 1·3 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Miscellaneous.—The settmakers, glassmakers and glasscutters report employment as good; the bakers and stoneware throwers as fair; the saddlers, shoemakers and tailors as quiet.—J. Mallinson.

Glasgow and West of Scotland.

Shipbuilding.—Employment has been good on all the Clyde reaches. Branches with 7,692 members return 183 (or 2·4 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 158 (or 2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—From all branches throughout the district favourable reports have been received. Branches with 23,052 members return 391 (or 1·7 per cent.) as idle, as against 428 (or 1·8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Mining.—In Stirlingshire employment has not been so good: the majority have not worked ten days a fortnight. In Dumbartonshire men have been working full time, and the usual holidays have been curtailed. In Ayrshire coal mining has been good; the ironstone miners have averaged about four days a week. In Renfrewshire all the men are well employed. In Lanarkshire work was seriously interfered with by want of wagons.

Building Trades.—Employment throughout the district is exceptionally good, except with painters. Branches (not including painters) with 10,350 members return 31 (or 0·3 per cent.) as idle, as against 69 (or 0·6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Employment continues good in and around Glasgow. Branches with 3,955 members return 46 (or 1·2 per cent.) as idle, as against 66 (or 1·7 per cent.) of their membership at the end of November.

Textile Trades.—The report for Glasgow is not so good as last month. The weavers of all classes of white or cotton goods are fully employed. Employment in coloured weaving, on woollen and mixed goods and on silk is bad. Carpet weaving is not brisk; in Newmilns and neighbourhood employment is fairly good; in Kilbirnie, except in the net works, it is good; in Port Glasgow canvas weavers, rope spinners, and other textile workers are all on full time; in Paisley the thread mills are now running full time, and carpet weavers are fairly busy; in Glasgow power beamers, dyers and warpers report employment as bad.

Clothing Trades.—The bespoke tailors report employment as worse, the clothiers' operatives and the slipper makers as dull, the boot and shoe operatives as still only moderate, the curriers as not so good.

Dock Labour and Transport Trades.—The sailors and firemen are still dull; the dock labourers report employment as good; railway and tramway men have been exceptionally busy; the carters and hackney carriage drivers report employment as good.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress printers report employment as bad, the lithographic printers and bookbinders as good.

Miscellaneous.—The spindle and flyer makers and scale beam makers report employment as busy, many working overtime; the potters are busy, all branches working full time; brushmakers and bottle-makers report employment as dull.—A. J. Hunter.

Dundee and District.

Textile Trades.—Employment in all branches of the jute trade continues good; in the linen trade it keeps fairly steady, more looms being now at work.

Coal Mining.—Employment at the pits in Fife has been fairly steady. Returns from 34 pits, employing about 11,000 workpeople, show a weekly average of five days worked during the four weeks ending 26th December.

Engineering and Shipbuilding.—Employment in the engineering trades shows a slight falling off. In the shipbuilding industry it is moderate. Eight branches of these trades, with 1,973 members, report 111 (or 5·6 per cent.) as idle, as compared with 128 (or 6·3 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Building and Woodworking Trades.—Employment in the building trades remains fairly good. In the cabinet-making and furnishing trades it has continued brisk. Returns from societies with 1,411 members show 46 (or 3·3 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 10 (or 0·7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Dock and General Labour.—Employment at the docks and jetties has continued fairly steady. City labourers have been moderately employed.

EMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER—DISTRICT REPORTS.—SCOTLAND AND IRELAND.

Fishing Industry.—The unsettled weather has again interrupted the haddock line fishing.

Miscellaneous.—Employment in the printing and kindred trades has continued fairly good. Tailors report employment as bad, and boot and shoe makers as quiet.—P. Reid.

Aberdeen and District.

General.—Societies with 5,088 members have 108 (or 2·1 per cent.) unemployed, as against 101 (or 2·0 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Quarrying.—Blockers, drillers, cranemen, labourers and sett-makers report employment as good, stonecutters as dull, granite polishers as moderate.

Building Trades.—Branches of the joiners, painters, plumbers, masons, slaters, plasterers and sawmillers, with a membership of 224, have 62 (or 2·8 per cent.) idle, as against 42 (or 1·8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. The joiners, painters and plumbers report employment as moderate, the slaters as fair, the masons and sawmillers as good.

Shipbuilding and Engineering.—The boiler-makers and iron ship-builders report employment as still improving, the shipwrights as moderate, the ironmoulders, blacksmiths, engineers, pattern-makers, brassfounders and finishers, tinplate-workers and horse shoers as good. Branches with 1,073 members return 37 (or 3·4 per cent.) as idle, as against 44 (or 4·2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Employment in these branches is reported as good.

Clothing and Textile Trades.—The tailors report employment as quiet; the boot and shoe riveters and finishers as moderate; the hand-sewn workers as good; flax, jute, and cotton operatives as good; the carpet weavers as bad.

Fishing.—In December at the port of Aberdeen the trawl and line boats landed 42,330 cwt., realising £30,137, as against 44,819 cwt., realising £24,993 in November.

Miscellaneous.—Employment is reported as good with railway servants. Saddlers, combmakers, bakers, upholsterers and cork-cutters report employment as dull, carters and general labourers as moderate, sailors and firemen and dock labourers as fair.

W. Johnston.

IRELAND.

Dublin and District.

Building Trades.—Employment is good with the carpenters and joiners, bricklayers, plasterers, and stonecutters; fair with the slaters, sawyers, and lathsplitters; dull with glaziers and paviors; bad with painters. Branches with 3,752 members return 478 (or 12·6 per cent.) as idle, as against 279 (or 7·2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Woodworking Trades.—Branches with 753 members return 59 (or 7·8 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 38 (or 5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Metal Trades.—Work has been dull with the engineers, fair with smiths and boiler-makers. The brassfounders report employment as brisk; the tinsmiths as moderate.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress and lithographic printers report employment as good; the stereotypers and binders as dull. Branches with 1,267 members return 50 (or 3·9 per cent.) as idle, as against 57 (or 4·6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of the month.

Clothing Trades.—The bespoke tailors report employment as bad; the bespoke boot and shoe makers as fair, the riveters as moderate.

Dock and Transport Labour.—The dock and riverside labourers report employment as fair; the sailors and firemen have been dull; the railway men and tramway men have been fairly employed.

Miscellaneous.—The bottle-makers, ropemakers, corkcutters, electrical workers, and engine-drivers report employment as good; the grain weighers and hairdressers as dull; general labourers as moderate, with several unemployed.—J. P. Nannetti.

Belfast and District.

General.—Societies with a membership of 19,687 have 626 (or 3·2 per cent.) unemployed, as against 533 (or 2·7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November.

Shipbuilding and Engineering Trades.—Societies with 8,645 members report 161 (or 1·9 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 173 (or 2·0 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. The

boiler-makers and iron shipbuilders report employment as moderate; the platers' helpers and general labourers as fair; the blacksmiths, helpers and strikers, engineers, iron turners, machine workers, pattern-makers, shipwrights, carpenters and joiners, furniture workers and ironfounders as good.

Linen Trades.—Societies with 4,248 members report 93 (or 2·2 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 69 (or 1·6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. The power-loom tenters report employment as bad; power-loom yarn dressers as improving; flax roughers, linen-lappers, yarn bundlers and women workers as fair; the beetling enginemen, flaxdressers, spindle and flyer-makers and hackle and gillmakers as good.

Building Trades.—Societies with 2,906 members return 170 (or 5·8 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 182 (or 6·3 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. The painters report employment as bad; the plumbers as moderate; the carpenters and joiners and plasterers as fair; the bricklayers, bricklayers' helpers and machinemen as good.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Societies with 603 members report 40 (or 6·6 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 21 (or 3·6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. The coach-builders report employment as bad; the French polishers as dull; the upholsterers as quiet; the cabinet-makers and packing-case makers as fair, and the coopers as good.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Societies with 870 members return 46 (or 5·3 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 23 (or 2·7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. The letterpress printers report employment as moderate, the bookbinders as fair, and the lithographic printers and lithographic artists as good.

Clothing Trades.—The boot and shoe operatives and tailors, with 843 members, report employment as bad, with 67 (or 7·9 per cent.) out of work.

Miscellaneous.—Societies with 1,568 members report 49 (or 3·1 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 65 (or 4·1 per cent. of their membership) at the end of November. The butchers report employment as quiet, the bakers, carters and paviors as fair, the locomotive engine drivers, sailmakers, railway servants and tinplate workers as good.—R. Sheldon.

Cork and District.

Shipbuilding and Engineering.—The boiler-makers and iron ship-builders report employment as busy in Cork, fair in Waterford and Limerick; engineers as bad in all branches; shipwrights, riggers, sailmakers and ironfounders as fair.

Building Trades.—Employment in all branches of these trades is fair.

Clothing Trades.—Flax and tweed operatives are exceptionally busy. Employment with tailors and boot and shoe makers is dull.

Furnishing and Woodworking.—Employment with cabinet-makers, coachmakers and mill-sawyers is fair, with coopers bad.

Miscellaneous.—Employment with letterpress printers is fair; with locomotive and stationary engine men, railway servants, corporation employees and gas workers good; with coal porters and quay labourers fair.—P. O'Shea.

QUEENSLAND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES, TRADE UNIONS, &c.

THE eleventh report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, Building Societies and Trade Unions in Queensland, gives the financial membership of the registered Friendly Societies at the end of 1895 as 18,200, compared with 15,677 at the end of the previous year. Of this increase, 1,724 is the increase in the membership of the branches which sent in returns in both years.

The receipts per financial member during 1895 amounted to £3 12s. 2d., and the benefits paid to £2 10s. 10d. The capital of the societies increased from £146,420 at the end of 1894 to £160,267 at the end of 1895. It is estimated that the Friendly Societies throughout the Australasian Colonies have a membership of 250,000, and a capital of 3 millions sterling.

Of the 3 Industrial Trade Societies on the register at the end of 1895 one has practically lapsed and one has since been converted into a company by special resolution.

The number of Trade Unions on the register amounts to 24, of which only 12 (seven societies of employees and five of employers) appear to be in existence. No single union showed any increase of membership during 1895.

CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES REPORTED IN DECEMBER.

(Based on information obtained from Local Correspondents, Superintendents of Mercantile Marine, and from Newspapers* and other sources, with corrections and additions supplied by many Employers, Employers' Associations and Trade Unions.)

Summary.—The changes in rates of wages reported during December affected a total number of 58,500 workpeople, and the estimated general effect of all the changes on the wages of these persons was an average increase of 1s. 4d. per week. About 57,000 received increases amounting on the average to 1s. 6d. per week, and 1,500 sustained decreases.

Increases.—The coal miners in the East of Scotland, to the number of 14,400, have been conceded advances equal to about 3d. per day. In the West of Scotland, as reported last month, the miners secured the restoration of the reduction of 6d. per day made at the beginning of 1896. Owing to the increase in the selling price of pig-iron, 7,202 blast-furnacemen in Cleveland, Cumberland and Lancashire have obtained advances under sliding scales. Important advances, affecting over 25,000 workpeople, are again reported in the engineering and shipbuilding trades. The engineers on the Clyde and at Belfast have obtained advances of 1d. per hour or 1s. per week, and several other classes of workpeople have secured increases. Altogether about 12,000 workpeople employed at these two centres are reported to have benefited. On the North-East Coast 7,800 shipbuilders have arranged for a 5 per cent. advance on piece rates and of 1s. per week on time rates, to date from 17th February. Two thousand ironfounders and 600 pattern-makers have secured advances under Conciliation Boards. In the Yorkshire glass bottle trade an agreement has been signed regulating wages until 7th February 1898; the standard wages of the men have been advanced 3s. per week, and the rates for overwork increased. Advances in the tinplate trade have been reported affecting about 4,000 workpeople.

Decreases.—About 1,500 fustian cutters have accepted reductions in piece prices at Congleton, amounting to about 20 per cent.

Method by which Changes of Wages were made.—Of the 58,500 workpeople whose wages were changed, 7,200 received advances under sliding scale agreements and 2,600 under Trade Conciliation Boards. About 45,400 had their wages advanced without any strike after negotiation, mutual arrangement or by the voluntary concession of employers. The changes in the case of the remaining 3,300 workpeople were preceded by strikes, although, in some cases, only a section of the workpeople whose wages were altered actually struck work.

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 changes in the pay of individuals, the grant of extra pay as compensation for extra work, &c.

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate Number of workpeople directly affected, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of Wages in a full week, exclusive of overtime, Increase or Decrease in a full week, exclusive of overtime. Includes sections for BUILDING TRADES, COAL MINING, IRON AND STEEL TRADES, ENGINEERING AND SHIPBUILDING TRADES, and RAILWAY SERVANTS.

* In all cases the accuracy of newspaper reports is enquired into before the information is used here. † 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. When a change in wages is accompanied by a change in hours of labour, the weekly wages before and after change are computed on the basis of the old and new hours respectively. ‡ The ultimate number affected will be about 350. § The weekly wages have been computed on the basis of five days constituting an average full week's work for coalminers in Scotland.

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

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate Number of workpeople directly affected, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of wages in a full week, exclusive of overtime, Increase or Decrease in a full week, exclusive of overtime. Includes sections for ENGINEERING AND SHIPBUILDING TRADES, TINPLATE TRADE, OTHER METAL TRADES, GLASS BOTTLE TRADES, TEXTILE TRADES, EMPLOYEES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES, and RAILWAY SERVANTS.

* See also Changes in Hours of Labour. † The rate of pay for Sunday duty has also been increased from time to time-and-half.

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

Table with multiple columns: Port, Voyage, Occupation, No. shipped at new Rate during Dec., Particulars of Change, Monthly Rates, Weekly Rates, In-crease, De-crease.

* See also under Changes in Hours of Labour.

Changes in Agricultural Wages.—Details of some changes in the weekly rates of wages of agricultural labourers in certain English counties during December will be found in the article on Agricultural Labour on page 13.

Erratum.—The increase in the rates of wages of agricultural labourers in some of the Poor Law Unions of Norfolk, noted on page 384 of THE LABOUR GAZETTE for December, should have been from 10s. to 11s. per week, and not 9s. to 10s., as reported.

CHANGES IN HOURS OF LABOUR REPORTED IN DECEMBER.

The changes in hours of labour reported during December affected 1,967 workpeople. Of this number 1,912 had their working hours shortened by an average of 5.6 per week, and 55 had them lengthened by 8 hours per week.

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate number of work-people directly affected, Hours of labour in a full week (exclusive of overtime), Extent of change per week.

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate number of work-people directly affected, Hours of labour in a full week (exclusive of overtime), Extent of change per week.

INCREASES. Matrix-making (Linotype Machines) Manchester† 17th Dec. 55 females 48 56 8

* See also under Changes in Wages. † This increase in hours of labour is to continue till spring, when the hours of labour will be reduced to 50. Wages have been advanced from 17s. to 17s. in consequence of the longer hours of labour.

Reduction in the Hours of Labour of Thames Lighter Boys.—As the result of the agreement respecting the hours of labour of boys apprenticed to lightermen on the Thames (see page 6), the working hours of many of these boys will be reduced.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS REPORTED IN DECEMBER.

The numbers of workpeople of the undermentioned classes killed or injured by accidents reported in December 1896 and 1895 respectively were as follows:—

Summary table with columns: Occupations, Killed (Dec. 1896, Dec. 1895), Injured (Dec. 1896, Dec. 1895).

* No returns.

The particulars are given in greater detail in the following Tables:—

I. Railway Servants. (Supplied by the Railway Department of the Board of Trade.) Table showing the number of railway servants reported as killed or injured by accidents in which the movement of railway vehicles was concerned during the month of December 1896.

Table with columns: Class of Service, Killed, Number of Persons Injured, distinguishing Class of Accident.

NOTE.—In addition to the above the companies have reported 4 servants killed and 987 injured by accidents occurring on the companies' premises, but in which the movement of vehicles was not concerned, during December.

II. Seamen (Fatal and Non-fatal Accidents). (Supplied by the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen.)

Table showing the number of persons forming the crews of registered vessels of the undermentioned classes, belonging to the British Islands, reported during the month of December 1896 as having been killed or injured by accidents at sea, or in rivers or harbours.

[The returns of non-fatal injuries are probably far from complete, the tabulation being first made in February last.]

Table with columns: Cause and Class of Accident, Number reported as Killed or Injured, Total for 3 months Oct. 1896 to Dec. 1896, Corresponding total for 3 months of 1895.

NOTE.—Deaths or injuries on yachts and vessels employed exclusively in rivers and inland navigation, and injuries on fishing vessels employed in and out of Scottish Ports, and on vessels trading exclusively between Scottish Ports, or to Asiatics serving under Asiatic articles of agreement, are not included.

III. Miners and Quarrymen.*

Table showing the number of persons reported as killed or injured in and about mines and quarries during the month of December 1896. [The number of persons employed in and about mines was returned as 733,657, and in and about quarries as 104,625 in 1895.]

Table with columns: Cause of Accident, Number of Persons (Killed, Injured), Cause of Accident, Number of Persons (Killed, Injured).

* Supplied by the Home Office.

IV. Factory and Workshop Operatives.*

Table showing the number of persons reported to H.M. Chief Inspector by Certifying Surgeons as killed or injured during the month of December 1896.

[The classes of accidents reported are those specified in Section 18 (2) of the Factory and Workshop Act of 1895.]

Table with columns: Killed, Number of Persons Injured, distinguishing Class of Accident, Total persons Injured.

* Supplied by the Home Office. † There were also 1,784 other non-fatal accidents only required to be reported to H.M. Inspectors.

V. Accidents reported under Notice of Accidents Act, 1894.

(Supplied by the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen.) Table showing the number of persons killed and injured in accidents reported to the Board of Trade under the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894, during the month of December 1896.

Table with columns: Nature of Works, &c., Construction or Repair, Use or Working, Number of Persons, Injured.

* Accidents during the working of railways being reportable under other Acts are not notified under the Act of 1894. † Authorised by any local or personal Act of Parliament. ‡ Or other steam engine or machine in the open air.

DISEASES OF OCCUPATIONS.

(Based on Home Office Returns.)

DURING December 114 cases of lead poisoning in factories and workshops were reported, as compared with 100 cases in November. Of those affected 60 were men, 47 women, and 7 young persons (2 lads and 5 girls).

TRADE DISPUTES IN DECEMBER.

(Based on information obtained from Local Correspondents, returns from Employers and Trade Unions, and newspaper reports. Applications for particulars are made to the Employers and Trade Unions affected in each dispute, and the information so obtained up to the time of going to press is used.)

Number and Magnitude.—Thirty-six fresh disputes occurred in December 1896, compared with 65 in November and 37 in December 1895. In these disputes 6,316 workpeople were involved, compared with 14,083 in November and 3,931 in December 1895.

Trades Affected.—In the building trades 6 disputes occurred, involving 95 workpeople: mining, 5 disputes, involving 2,559 workpeople; engineering, shipbuilding and metal trades, 10 disputes, involving 1,232 workpeople; textile trades, 4, involving 1,194 workpeople; clothing, 3, involving 135 workpeople; transport, 3, involving 755 workpeople; and, in the miscellaneous group of industries, 5, involving 346 workpeople.

Causes.—Of the 36 disputes, 15 arose chiefly on wages questions, 11 on questions of working arrangements or quality of material supplied; 6 were upon the question of reinstatement of discharged colleagues or in support of other men on strike or locked out; 2 were upon the employment of non-unionists, and 2 were upon questions of demarcation of work.

Results.—Twenty-six new disputes, involving 5,316 workpeople, and 12 old disputes, involving 2,928 workpeople, were reported as settled during the month of December. In 18 of these disputes, involving 3,026 persons, the workpeople were successful; in 12, involving 3,320 persons, unsuccessful; in 4, involving 878 persons, partially successful; and in the remaining 4 disputes, involving 1,020 workpeople, the results cannot at present be definitely stated.

Number of working days lost.—The number of working days lost in December, owing to labour disputes new and old, was about 199,000.

Trade.	Locality.	Date when Dispute Began	Alleged Cause or Object.	No. of Workpeople Affected.	Total Duration of Dispute in Working Days.	Result.
I.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN IN DECEMBER 1896.						
Building.		Dec.				
Plumbers ...	Haddington ...	7	For advance in wages of 1d. per hour and other concessions as to working rules	8	22	Work resumed at old rate of wages.
Ditto ...	Dundee ...	9	Alleged breach of working rules by employer ...	14	4	Employer conceded the demands of the men.
Ditto ...	Nottingham ...	14	Refusal to work with non-unionists ...	6	—	Still unsettled.
Plasterers ...	Douglas, Isle of Man	18	In support of labourers who struck work for reinstatement of a discharged fellow-workman	30	—	Ditto.
Plasterers' Labourers...	Ditto ...	14	For reinstatement of a discharged fellow-workman	17	—	Ditto.
Bricklayers' Labourers	Leeds ...	15	Ditto ...	20	3	Non-unionists joined the union.
Engineering and Shipbuilding and Metal.						
Engineering—						
Fitters, &c. ...	Earlestown ...	5	For advance in wages of 2s. per week ...	About 210	—	Advance of 1s. per week immediately and a further advance of 1s. in three months conceded by two firms employing four-fifths of the men. Work resumed at old rate of wages.
Locomotive Drivers and Firemen	Shotts ...	7	For advance in wages... ..	18	6	Ditto.
Smiths & Hammermen	Shotts ...	7	For advance in wages of 2s. 6d. per week ...	15	1	New and satisfactory gas burners supplied.
Railway Carriage and Wagon Workers	Saltley, Birmingham	10	Alleged insufficient supply of gas ...	140	3	Work resumed pending further arrangements.
Boiler-makers (Caulkers, Riveters and Platers)	Jarrow ...	15	Claim by caulkers to work of bending tubes for "Reed" Water Tube Boilers	150	3	Advances granted of 2d. on men's and 4d. on women's cycle frames of the new pattern. Still unsettled.
Filers (Cycle Trade) ...	Wolverhampton	16	For advance of 4d. per frame on new patterns	28	10	Work to be resumed on 13th Jan. under pressure from the trade union.
Ditto ...	Ditto ...	22	Men refused to accept piecework, and were discharged	11	—	Still unsettled.
Shipbuilding—						
Caulkers ...	Low Walker	12	Against an arbitration award in a demarcation dispute with drillers (see LABOUR GAZETTE for December, p. 371)	147	26	Work to be resumed on 13th Jan. under pressure from the trade union.
Other Metal.						
Timplate Workers ...	Lydney, Glos.	14	For an increase in wages ...	500	6	Advance of 2½ per cent. granted with promise of an additional 7½ per cent. on 1st January, 1897. Men returned to work out proper notice.
Rivet-makers ...	Old Hill ...	14	For advance in wages of 6d. per cwt. ...	13	*...	Men returned to work six days a week.
Mining.						
Coal Miners ...	Uddingston ...	2	Men locked out for taking an "idle" day ...	500 dir. 50 indir. 800	2	Work resumed on old conditions pending negotiations with employers
Ditto ...	Blaina... ..	4	Against a sectional alteration in working arrangements	1	—	Still unsettled.
Ditto ...	Hirwain, Glam.	7	Dispute as to price to be paid for coal cutting in 4 foot seam	45	—	Work found for discharged hands in other parts of the colliery.
Ditto ...	Near Barnsley	8	Against the closing of an alleged unprofitable seam, throwing about 250 hands out of employment	848 dir. 159 indir.	3	Men returned to work unconditionally.
Ditto ...	Barnsley ...	8	Workmen objected to the re-tarcing of the corves	140 dir. 17 indir.	7	Still unsettled.
Textile.						
Spinners and Cardroom Hands	Bolton... ..	3	Against the grinders being required to perform additional work	About 600	—	Employer refunded reduction.
Cotton Spinners ...	Rochdale ...	24	Against being paid according to a reduced list of prices	4	1	Employer promised to endeavour to improve material.
Jute Weavers ...	Aberdeen ...	4	Alleged bad material ...	180	2	Work resumed.
Jute Spinners ...	Dundee ...	28	In sympathy with foreman, who left on account of complaint of reduced spinning	60 dir. 350 indir.	5	Still unsettled.
Clothing.						
Boot and Shoemakers	Edinburgh ...	11	Men locked out by one firm and withdrawn by union from two firms on account of a dispute in other firms (see December GAZETTE, p. 379)	10	—	Work resumed at old prices.
Women Machinists (Clothing Trades)	Leeds ...	5	Against proposed reduction in wages ...	70	1	Still unsettled.
Blockers & Finishers (Hat-making)	Denton ...	23	Inability to agree upon a piece-price list for new machines	55	—	Still unsettled.
Transport (Land and Sea).						
Sailors and Firemen ...	Glasgow ...	4	For advance in wages ...	About 600	13	Men on "tramp" steamers received advance of 5s. per month, [others resumed at old rate of wages. Boys to be provided with capes and leggings. Demands granted.
Trace Boys (Tramway)	Edinburgh ...	7	Boys complained of being too much exposed to wet weather	35	1	
Grain Porters ...	Sharpness, Glos.	30	For extra assistance on account of damaged cargo	120	1	

* In this case the exact number of working days lost cannot be stated, but it is believed to have been very small.

TRADE DISPUTES IN DECEMBER—(continued).

Trade	Locality.	Date when Dispute began.	Alleged Cause or Object.	No. of Workpeople Affected.	Total Duration of Dispute in Working Days.	Result.
I.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN IN DECEMBER 1896—continued.						
Miscellaneous.						
Basketmakers ...	London, S.E. ...	19	Against discharge of two men for complaining that insufficient prices were paid	16	1900	Still unsettled.
Composing Machine Matrix makers	Manchester ...	10	Against reduction in piecework prices and increase in hours from 48 to 53 per week.	55 (Women)	7	Fifty-six hours per week to be worked but prices to remain unaltered; time workers to be paid <i>pro rata</i> for extra hours.
French polishers ...	London, E. and E.C.	8 and 12 below	In support of cabinet makers on strike (see below)	5	6	Work resumed on termination of cabinet makers' dispute.
Gas Stokers ...	Rotherham ...	3	Men objected to wheel their own coal to the retorts	30	2	Work resumed on Sheffield basis as to wages, and the other questions in dispute submitted to arbitration.
Gasworkers ...	Plymouth ...	18	For a reduction in hours, increase in wages and other concessions	240	5 hours	Demands granted.

II. DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN BEFORE DECEMBER, AND WERE SETTLED DURING THAT MONTH.

Building Trades.						
Bricklayers ...	Pendlebury, Swinton and district	4th Nov.	For advance in wages from 9½d. to 10d. per hour	93	28	Advance to be granted from 1st May 1897.
Engineering and Shipbuilding.						
Engineering—						
Engineers ...	Hull ...	12 Oct.	Against the employment of machineman on a milling machine, and of brassfinishers on certain work claimed by engineers	300 dir. & indir.	51	Particular machine in dispute to be worked by fitter or turner, and other points in dispute referred to arbitration. Settled under Conciliation Act (See LABOUR GAZETTE for December, page 368).
Moulders... ..	Leigh ...	2 Nov. 1895	For advance in wages from 36s. to 38s. per week of 53 hours	17	46	Advance granted.
Fitters ...	Dowlais ...	14 Nov.	For advance in wages ...	218	339	Work resumed at old rate of wages.
Mining.						
Coal Miners ...	Whitcroft, Glos.	19 Oct.	Disagreement as to tonnage rate for coal getting	40	43	Work resumed, the dispute in question being referred to the local Conciliation Board for settlement.
Textile Trades.						
Fustian Cutters ...	Congleton ...	1 Sept.	Against a reduction in prices ...	1,500	81	Reduction accepted (Settled under Conciliation Act, see LABOUR GAZETTE for December, page 369).
Cotton Spinners ...	Preston ...	26 Nov.	Against proposal to change from payment by length to payment by weight	57 dir. 100 indir.	19	Firm agreed to continue payment by length on basis of Preston list for weight.
Cotton Weavers ...	Elton, Bury ...	27 Nov.	Alleged bad material ...	170 dir. 100 indir.	5	Work resumed unconditionally.
Clothing Trades.						
Tailors ...	London, W.C.	30 Nov.	For reinstatement of a discharged fellow-workman and for redress of other grievances	14	25	Hands replaced.
Miscellaneous Trades.						
Cabinet-makers ...	London, E.C. ...	17 Oct.	For abolition of piecework ...	90	50	Men's demands granted.
Ditto ...	London, E. and E.C.	Various dates in Nov.	For abolition of piece-working and for improvements in working conditions	206	34	Ditto.
French Polishers ...	London, E.C.	12 Nov.	In support of cabinet-makers who struck in October for abolition of piecework	23	28	Work resumed on termination of cabinet-makers' dispute.

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

The following disputes reported in last month's issue as commencing in November were still unsettled:—Coalminers, Bristol and Merthyr Tydvil; fitters and turners, Colne; engineers, Kilmarnock; spindle and flyer makers, Lancashire; steel smelters and millmen, Brymbo; boot and shoe operatives, Norwich (since settled 6th January); shoemakers, Edinburgh; bakers, Plymouth; fettlers, Nottingham; fitters and turners, Cleckheaton (since settled 4th January); braziers and sheet metal workers, Rochdale; bakers, Cork; cabinetmakers, &c., Shipley and district; cased-tube workers, Birmingham; felt hat makers, Denton.

The following disputes which commenced before November were also still unsettled:—Coalminers, Pemberton and Aberdare; plate and machine moulders, Burnley; cotton-spinners, Slaithwaite; quarrymen, Bethesda; military cork head-dressmakers, London, S.E.; warp-dressers, Colne; engineers, Keighley and Shipley; laceworkers, Kimberley, Notts.; cotton-weavers, Padiham; brassfounders, London, E.C.; brassworkers, Rotherham.

The following dispute commencing in November, of which information has only recently been received is also still unsettled:—

Trade.	Locality.	Date when Dispute began.	Alleged Cause or Object.	No. of Workpeople affected.
Flax-dressers ...	Belfast ...	28th Nov.	Alleged excessive boy labour ...	4

RECENT PROGRESS IN CO-OPERATION.

England and Wales.—During December five new co-operative societies for distribution and four societies for production were registered, and five existing distributive societies report the opening of new branches. Two distributive societies at Almondbury have amalgamated with a society at Huddersfield, one at Nether Heyford has had its registry cancelled, and three at Broompark, Milnrow and Bournemouth respectively, have decided to wind up.

A table published by the English Co-operative Wholesale Society shows that at the end of September last it employed a total of 7,148 persons—4,902 in production and 2,246 in distribution.

During the year 1896, 34 new distributive and 21 new productive societies were registered in England and Wales.

Scotland—No new societies were registered in Scotland in December, but four existing distributive societies report the opening of new branches.

The Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society has published a table showing that at the end of September last it employed a total of 3,822 persons—3,100 in production and 722 in distribution.

The chairman of the annual Congress of Co-operative Societies, to be held at Whitsuntide at Perth, will be Mr. W. Maxwell, chairman of the Scottish Wholesale Society.

During the year 1896 three new societies only—all distributive—were registered in Scotland.

Ireland.—One new Agricultural and Dairy Society was registered in Ireland in December. No special dairying societies were registered during 1896. Of the 36 new co-operative societies formed during the year 32 adopted a wider programme, including the wholesale and retail dealing in farm and garden produce, in seeds and artificial manures, and the exporting and importing of live stock, in addition to the manufacture of butter, cheese, and other dairy produce. Of the remaining four, one was an agricultural distributive society, one for the promotion of home industries, and two were pigfeeders' societies.

INFORMATION FOR INTENDING EMIGRANTS.

The free quarterly circulars of the Emigrants' Information Office were issued on 1st January, and contain information useful to intending emigrants as to the demand for labour, rates of wages, and cost of living in the various British Colonies. Particulars are also given as to the cost of reaching the various colonies, and the arrangements at each for receiving immigrants, and as to various other matters of interest to emigrants. The circulars can be obtained free on application to the Chief Clerk, Emigrants' Information Office, 31 Broadway, Westminster.

PAUPERISM IN DECEMBER.

Data supplied by the Local Government Boards in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

THE number of persons relieved in 35 selected urban districts of the United Kingdom on one day in the second week of December was 335,094. This corresponds to a rate of 216 per 10,000 of the estimated population of these districts in 1896.

Compared with November last there is an increase, mainly due to seasonal causes, of 4,986 in the number relieved, and of 3 in the rate per 10,000. The rate increased in nearly all the districts, the largest increases per 10,000 being Coatbridge and Airdrie (11), and Central London (10). In East London, West Ham and Sheffield the rate was unchanged, and in two districts (Stockton and Tees and Glasgow) it decreased slightly.

Compared with December 1895 the number relieved is less by 5,223 and the rate per 10,000 by 6. The decrease was principally in outdoor pauperism. In ten districts the rate has increased, viz., in Dublin (17), Leicester (11), Coatbridge and Airdrie (9), Paisley and Greenock (7), Bristol (6), Cork, Waterford and Limerick (5), Bradford (4), Edinburgh and Leith (3), West London (2) and Manchester (1). In the North Staffordshire and Galway districts the rate remained the same. The greatest decreases took place in Stockton and Tees (33), Barnsley (24), West Ham and Hull (19 each), Nottingham and Wolverhampton (16 each), and Sheffield (15).

Selected Urban Districts.	Paupers on one day in second week of December 1896.				Paupers on corresponding date in previous year.	
	In-door.	Out-door.	TOTAL.	Rate per 10,000 of estimated Population.	Total Number.	Rate per 10,000 of estimated Population.
ENGLAND & WALES.*						
Metropolis.						
West District ...	11,047	2,679	13,726	178	13,431	174
North District ...	14,232	8,517	22,749	219	22,422	227
Central District ...	7,444	3,414	10,858	465	11,194	473
East District ...	13,155	3,978	17,133	239	17,715	248
South District ...	20,707	19,438	40,145	244	40,964	253
Total Metropolis ...	66,585	38,026	104,611	237	106,716	244
West Ham ...	1,842	6,759	8,601	203	9,762	222
Other Districts.						
Newcastle District ...	1,513	4,422	5,935	164	6,177	173
Stockton & Tees District ...	1,070	4,177	5,247	287	5,791	290
Bolton, Oldham, &c. ...	3,238	8,128	11,366	187	11,495	167
Wigan District ...	1,845	7,514	9,359	247	9,281	248
Manchester District ...	8,579	6,935	15,514	183	15,246	182
Liverpool District ...	9,932	8,094	18,026	201	18,673	210
Bradford District ...	1,124	3,447	4,571	129	4,398	125
Halifax & Huddersfield ...	1,082	3,973	5,055	138	5,325	146
Leeds District ...	1,812	6,040	7,852	188	7,849	191
Barnsley District ...	711	3,014	3,725	186	4,147	210
Sheffield District ...	2,294	3,486	5,780	158	6,236	173
Hull District ...	1,161	5,564	6,725	291	7,060	310
North Staffordshire ...	1,881	6,534	8,415	255	8,329	255
Nottingham District ...	1,619	5,303	6,922	193	7,398	209
Leicester District ...	1,167	3,172	4,339	224	4,045	213
Wolverhampton District ...	3,111	10,080	17,191	315	17,908	331
Birmingham District ...	3,925	2,324	6,249	118	6,404	124
Bristol District ...	2,617	8,999	11,616	338	11,313	332
Cardiff & Swansea ...	1,733	6,179	7,912	239	7,787	242
Total "Other Districts" ...	50,414	111,385	161,799	203	164,939	209
SCOTLAND.*						
Glasgow District ...	3,582	13,856	17,438	211	17,599	216
Paisley & Greenock Dist. ...	693	2,658	3,351	217	3,225	210
Edinburgh & Leith Dist. ...	1,474	5,259	6,733	191	6,526	188
Dundee & Dunfermline ...	1,040	2,529	3,569	199	3,925	204
Aberdeen ...	497	2,551	3,048	231	3,050	235
Coatbridge & Airdrie ...	376	1,264	1,640	193	1,545	184
Total for the above Scot-lish Districts ...	7,612	28,417	36,029	207	35,870	208
IRELAND.†						
Dublin District ...	6,200	3,203	9,403	267	8,803	250
Belfast District ...	3,538	323	3,861	123	4,034	130
Cork, Waterford & Limerick District ...	4,546	5,588	10,134	422	10,128	417
Galway District ...	366	290	656	180	665	180
Total for the above Irish Districts ...	14,650	9,404	24,054	255	23,630	251
Total for above 35 dis-tricts in December ...	141,103	193,991	335,094	216	340,317	222
Total for previous month ...	136,631	191,477	330,108	213	334,068	218

* Exclusive of Vagrants; of Patients in the Fever and Small-pox Hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board; and of Lunatics in Asylums, Registered Hospitals and Licensed Houses.

† Excluding Casuals, but including persons maintained in Institutions for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb, &c., who are classified as not able-bodied.

WORK OF LABOUR BUREAUX IN DECEMBER.

DURING December 1,750 fresh applications for work were registered by the 13 bureaux making returns. Private employers engaged 623 persons, and local authorities 452. Of these 1,075 persons engaged, 593 are stated to have obtained work of a temporary character only. Of the 2,882 workpeople remaining on the registers at the end of the month, 1,904 were men, 919 women and girls, and 59 lads and boys.

Comparing the figures of the 10 bureaux which also furnished returns for December 1895, the number of fresh applicants for work decreased by 47 per cent.

(I.) Work Done in December.

Name and Address of Labour Bureau.	No. of Fresh Applications by Workpeople during		No. of Situations offered by Employers during		No. of Workpeople found Work by Bureaux.	
	Dec. 1896.	Dec. 1895.	Dec. 1896.	Dec. 1895.	Engaged by Private Employers.	Engaged by Local Authorities.
London.						
St. Pancras ... (College St.)	120	152	97	107	80	107
Battersea ... (Lavender Hill)	145	276	52	74	34	34
Islington ... (Barnsbury St.)	260	292	318	116	46	59
St. Martin ... (Town Hall)	77	59	47	37	31	24
Hackney ... (Old Town Hall)	98	294	17	9	11	26
Salvation Army* ... (Whitechapel Rd.)	179	899	15	†	temp. perm. 140 33	temp. perm. 1,020 23
Y.W.C.A. (George St., Hanover Sq.)	54	†	32	30	36	20
Provincial.						
Salford ... (Town Hall)	30	24	9	11	9	11
Ipswich ... (Tower St.)	41	53	28	29	21	21
Plymouth ... (East St.)	119	126	153	—	59	32
Liverpool ... (Municipal Bgs.)	158	147	10	6	1	5
Glasgow ... (158 George St.)	238	—	107	—	31 perm. 36	—
Total ...	1,750	—	1,253	—	623	452

(II.) Workpeople on Registers at end of Dec. classified by Occupations.

Name of Labour Bureau.	Men.							Total Men.
	Build-ing, En-gineer-ing and Metal Trades.	Carmen Stable-men, Horse-men, &c.	Clerks and Ware-house-men.	Porters and Messen-gers.	General Labour-ers.	Other Occu-pations.	Total.	
London.								
St. Pancras ...	44	59	6	25	89	45	268	
Battersea ...	5	7	3	9	101	—	125	
Islington ...	109	45	12	78	288	8	540	
St. Martin-in-the-Fields and Strand	7	5	2	23	5	4	46	
Hackney ...	88	16	4	23	98	46	275	
Salvation Army ...	—	—	—	3	5	7	15	
Provincial.								
Salford ...	28	13	11	6	46	15	119	
Ipswich ...	4	28	2	20	26	36	116	
Plymouth ...	46	37	16	16	55	27	197	
Liverpool ...	5	9	8	2	36	8	68	
Glasgow ...	18	9	23	15	27	43	138	
Total Number ...	384	228	87	220	776	239	1,904	

Name of Labour Bureau.	Women and Girls.					Grand Total.
	Lads and Boys.	Char-women, Daily Work, &c.	Serv-ants.	Dress-makers and Semp-stresses.	Others.	
London.						
St. Pancras ...	9	42	—	1	4	57
Battersea ...	1	1	—	—	—	2
Islington ...	10	37	7	1	—	55
St. Martin-in-the-Fields and Strand	14	22	12	2	3	53
Hackney ...	—	†	†	†	†	4
Salvation Army ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Y.W.C.A. ...	—	—	—	68	96	164
Provincial.						
Salford ...	—	—	—	—	9	9
Ipswich ...	7	9	6	—	—	22
Plymouth ...	2	†	†	†	†	199
Liverpool ...	8	2	—	—	1	11
Glasgow ...	8	89	34	4	20	147
Total Number ...	59	232	343	76	268	919

* Not furnished. † Women and Girls are not registered.

INDUSTRIAL PROSECUTIONS IN DECEMBER.

I.—Under Factory and Workshop Acts.*

Nature of Offence.	Infor-mations laid.	Con-ventions.	Amount of Penalties.		Amount of Costs.
			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
By Owners, Managers, &c.:-					
Neglecting to Limewash ...	5	—	10	13	0
Neglecting to Fence Machinery ...	8	—	15	18	0
Allowing children to clean machinery in motion.	1	—	2	0	0
Employing Young Persons without necessary Certificates	53†	59	37	16	2
Employing children under the legal age ...	2	2	0	15	0
Illegal Hours or Times of Employment—					
Before or after the legal hour ...	75	75	29	15	6
During meal times, or without proper intervals for meals	28	27	5	5	0
Beyond legal hour on Saturday or day substituted	10	10	3	11	0
On Sundays or holidays, or children on successive Saturdays	16	16	17	0	0
At night ...	22	22	26	2	6
Other ...	18	17	18	15	10
Registers, Abstracts, Notices, &c.—					
Not affixing or properly filling up Notices and Abstracts	17	15	7	1	0
Other offences respecting Notices, &c. ...	2†	2	6	0	0
Obstructing an inspector ...	6	4	3	12	6
By Workmen:-					
Employment before or after the legal hour ...	4	4	1	0	0
Other illegal hours or times of employment	4	4	3	11	0
By Parents:-					
Allowing children to be illegally employed ...	1	1	0	2	6
Total for Dec. 1896 ...	292†	293	204	9	114
Total for Dec. 1895 ...	273†	287	232	12	109

II.—Under the Mines and Quarries Acts.*

Nature of Offence.	Prosecu-tions.	Con-ventions.	Cases with-drawn.	Cases dis-mitted.	Amount of Fines and Costs.
UNDER THE MINES ACTS.					
By Owners, Managers, &c. ...					
Safety Lamps ...	5	4	—	1	4 12 0
Timbering ...	3	3	—	—	3 15 0
Lucifer Matches, &c. ...	12	11	—	1	12 7 6
Other ...	13	13	—	—	16 15 6
Total for Dec. 1896 ...	34	32	—	2	38 2 0
Total for Dec. 1895 ...	71	65	1	5	114 14 10
UNDER THE QUARRIES ACT.					
By Owners, Managers, &c.:-					
Abstract, Registers, Notices ...	8	8	—	—	£ s. d. 20 2 0
Total for Dec. 1895 ...	Nil.	—	—	—	—

IV.—Under Merchant Shipping Acts.

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

Nature of Offence.	Infor-mations laid.	Con-ventions.	Penalties.	Total Costs.
By Owners or Masters of Ships:-				
Submerging disc ...	1	1	10	0
Carrying excessive deck cargoes	1	1	10	0
Engaging seamen without Con-sular sanction	4	4	4	0
Not providing lights or look-out or life-saving appliances	2	2	15	0
Leaving seamen behind without Consular sanction	5	5	5	0
Failure to render assistance after collision	1	1	25	0
By Seamen:-				
Frauds in connection with dis-charge note	2	2	2	5
Other Offences ...	2	2	4	10
By Boarding-house Keepers:-				
Illegal supply ...	1	1	12	0
Receiving money for procuring a seaman employment	1	1	3	0
Total for Dec. 1896 ...	20	20	90	15
Total for Dec. 1895 ...	34 </			

MISCELLANEOUS TRADE NOTES.

Cotton Statistics.—The imports of raw cotton during December were 49 per cent. more than in December 1895, a result entirely due to American cotton, the quantities of that class imported in the two periods being 591,330 bales and 336,847 bales respectively. As compared with December 1894 the total imports show an increase of not quite 5 per cent., spread over all classes of cotton. The quantity of cotton forwarded from ports to inland towns was more than in the corresponding month of 1895 or 1894. For the twelve months the imports slightly exceed those of 1895, but are less than in 1894. The figures for the different periods are as follows:—

	Imports. Bales.	Forwarded from Ports to Inland Towns. Bales.	Exports. Bales.
December 1896	679,375	308,325	43,281
„ 1895	455,692	300,102	34,491
„ 1894	649,008	259,802	45,309
Twelve months ending			
December 1896	3,613,680	3,111,481	388,298
„ 1895	3,607,743	3,234,085	432,622
„ 1894	3,762,551	3,262,836	505,806

Traffic Receipts.—The total receipts of 21 of the principal railways of the United Kingdom during the four weeks ended 26th December amounted to £5,757,801, being £270,166 (or 4.9 per cent.) more than for the corresponding period of 1895. The receipts from passenger traffic were £2,324,678, an increase of £61,477 (or 2.7 per cent.), and from goods and mineral traffic £3,433,123, an increase of £208,689 (or 6.5 per cent.).

Bankruptcies.—The bankruptcies gazetted during December numbered 359, being 27 less than in December 1895, 30 more than in December 1894, and 53 less than in December 1893. The total number for the year was 4,155 in 1896, 4,440 in 1895, 4,778 in 1894, and 4,911 in 1893.

Fishery Statistics.—The total value of the fish (including shell-fish) landed on the coasts of the United Kingdom during December was £513,466, a decrease of £6,171 as compared with December 1895. In England and Wales the decrease amounted to £11,931, and in Ireland to £221; while in Scotland there was an increase of £5,981.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

Total Emigration.—The number of passengers who left the United Kingdom for places out of Europe during December was 9,355, as compared with 9,460 in December, 1895. During the year 1896* the number of passengers amounted to 241,912, being 29,860 (or 11 per cent.) less than in 1895.

British and Irish.—Of the 9,355 passengers in December, 6,205 were of British or Irish origin, compared with 6,012 in December of the previous year. For the twelve months* the passengers of British or Irish origin show a decrease of 23,242 (or 12.6 per cent.), the figures being 161,939 for 1896, and 185,181 for 1895.

The following table groups the destination of the passengers:—

Destination.	December 1896.	December 1895.	Year 1896.	Year 1895.
United States	2,868	2,923	98,964	126,502
British North America... ..	307	213	15,310	16,622
Australasia	629	622	10,286	10,567
South Africa	1,323	1,381	24,558	20,234
Other places	1,075	873	12,821	11,256
Total	6,205	6,012	161,939	185,181

Foreign.—The remainder of the 9,355 passengers in December, viz., 3,150, were foreigners and others whose nationality was not distinguished, being 298 less than for December 1895.

Alien Immigration.—The number of aliens that arrived in the United Kingdom from the Continent during December was 3,342. Of these, 761 were stated to be *en route* to America, compared with 1,442 so stated in December 1895. Those not stated to be on their way to America numbered 2,581 (including 716 sailors), as against 2,584 (including 633 sailors) in the same month of 1895. For the year 1896* the number of aliens *en route* to America was 39,104, and the number not so stated 45,875, compared with 44,365 and 40,422 respectively in 1895.

EXAMINATIONS FOR MINING MANAGERS' CERTIFICATES.

South Wales Mining District.—An examination for Second-class Certificates of Competency as Under Manager of a Mine will be held on 27th and 28th April, and an examination for First-class Certificates of Competency as Manager of a Mine will be held on 29th and 30th April. Intending candidates should communicate on or before 6th April with the Secretary of the Examination Board, Mr. Robert T. Rees, Glandare, Aberdare.

* The figures for the year 1896 are subject to correction in the annual returns.

INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS

REGISTERED OR DISSOLVED IN DECEMBER.

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

The summary given below of the changes in the Register of Industrial Organisations during December shows that 7 Trade Unions, 1 Employers' Association, 5 Co-operative Associations for Distribution, 5 Co-operative Associations for Production, and 3 Miscellaneous Associations, 32 new Friendly Societies, and 37 new branches of existing Friendly Societies have been added to the Register for the United Kingdom during the month. Three Trade Unions, 12 Industrial and Provident Societies, and 23 Building Societies are returned as having sent notice of commencement of dissolution or as having ceased to exist, two of the Industrial and Provident Societies having amalgamated with another Society.

NEW ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED.

Trade Unions.—*England and Wales.*—Grantham Builders' Labourers' Protective Accident and Burial Society, Black Horse, Westgate, Grantham; Nuneaton Builders' Labourers' Protective Accident and Burial Society, Half Moon Inn, Abbey St., Nuneaton; South Wales Colliery Winding Enginemen's Association, White Hart Hotel, High St., Pontypridd; Heywood and District Union of Machine and General Labour, 2, Lewes St., Heywood, Manchester; Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels' Engineers and Firemen's Union, 8 Riby St., Grimsby; Fawcett Association, 11 Bartholomew Close, E.C.; Cardiff Cab Proprietors' Protection Association, Cattle Market Tavern, Quay St., Cardiff. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—Londonderry and District Coopers' Trade Union, 72 William St., Londonderry.

Industrial and Provident Societies.—(A) *Associations for Distribution.*—*England and Wales.*—Sheringham Co-op Soc., Ltd., Cremer St., Sheringham; Wholesale Fish Supply Co-op. Soc., Ltd., 121 Hunslet Rd., Hunslet, Leeds; Linthwaite Ind. Co-op. Soc., Ltd., Chapel Hill, Linthwaite, Huddersfield; Weston-super-Mare and District Co-op. Soc., Ltd., Somerset Temperance Hotel, Baker St., Weston-super-Mare; Chepstow Ind. Co-op. Soc., Ltd., 12 and 13 St. Mary St., Chepstow. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—None.

(B) *Associations for Production.*—*England and Wales.*—Keighley and District Pig Keepers' Association, Ltd., 25 Chapel Lane, Keighley; Hessenford Co-op. Dairy Soc., Ltd., Mill House, Hessenford, St. Germans; Leicester Self-help Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Soc., Ltd., Willow St., Leicester; Manchester Alliance Cabinet Manufacturers, Ltd., 12 Park St., Cheetham, Manchester. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—Ballyconnell Co-op. Agricultural and Dairy Soc., Ltd., Ballyconnell.

(C) *Miscellaneous.*—Little Irchester Permanent Allotment Association, Ltd., 3 Melton Rd., Little Irchester, Wellingboro'; Albert W.M. Club and Institute Soc., Ltd., Cudworth, Barnsley; Prudential Land Soc., Ltd., Latimer Street Board Schools, Anstey, Leicester. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—None.

Friendly Societies.—(A) *New Friendly Societies.*—*England and Wales.*—Ordinary Friendly, 12; Working Men's Clubs, 8; Dividing, 7; Medical, 2; Female, 1; Cattle Insurance, 1; Special Authorised, 1. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—None.

(B) *New Branches.*—*England and Wales.*—I.O. Rechabites S.U., 13 (including 3 female and 3 juvenile); B.O.A. Free Gardeners, 3; G.U.O. Oddfellows, 3; I.O. Oddfellows, M.U., 2; various 12. *Scotland.*—Various, 4. *Ireland.*—None.

OLD ORGANISATIONS DISSOLVED.

Trade Unions.—*England and Wales.*—Norden and District Miners' Association, Rochdale; Liverpool Van, Hackney Carriage, Omnibus Drivers, Furniture Porters and General Horsemen's Union; Oldbury and Dist. Chemical and General Workers' Union. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—None.

Industrial and Provident Societies.—*England and Wales.*—By Instrument, Humberstone Rd. Freehold Land Soc., Ltd., Leicester; cancelled by request, City Co-op. Club Soc., Ltd., London, E.C. Nether Heyford Self-Assistance Co-op. Soc. Amalgamated, Almondbury Perseverance Ind. and Prov. Soc., Ltd., and Almondbury Integrity Prov. Co-op. Soc., Ltd., both amalgamated with Huddersfield Ind. Soc., Ltd. Resolutions to wind up from Broompark, Co-op. Soc., Ltd., Durham; Milnrow Equitable Pioneers' Soc., Ltd.; Bournemouth and Dist. Co-op. Soc., Ltd. Liquidators final returns received from Caerphilly Workmen's Ind. Co-op. Soc., Ltd.; Pontnewynydd and Abersychan Ind. Co-op. Soc., Ltd.; Gloucester Fish and Game Supply Soc., Ltd.; Poolsbrook Ind. Co-op. Soc., Ltd. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—None.

Building Societies.—By instrument, 5; notice of commencement of dissolution, 4; notice of termination of dissolution, 14.

NOTICE.

Communications respecting the contents of the GAZETTE should be addressed to:—

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