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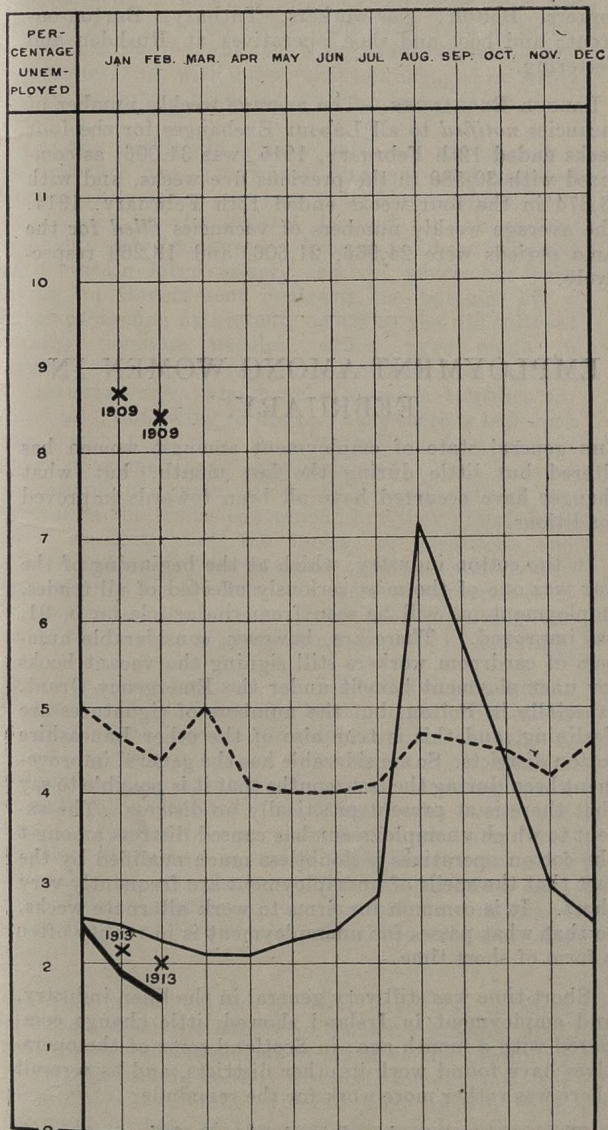
EMPLOYMENT CHART.

SHOWING PERCENTAGE UNEMPLOYED OF MEMBERS OF
TRADE UNIONS MAKING RETURNS.

— Thick Curve = 1915. — Thin Curve = 1914.

----- Dotted Curve = Mean of 1905-14

x The crosses indicate the maximum and minimum percentages of unemployed, in the months named, during the years 1905-14.



NOTE TO CHART.

The above Chart is based solely on Returns furnished direct to the Department of Labour Statistics by various Trade Unions which pay unemployed benefit to their members. Persons on strike or locked-out, sick or superannuated, are excluded from the figures.

THE LABOUR MARKET IN FEBRUARY.

[For detailed reports on the principal industries see pp. 87 to 101.]

EMPLOYMENT in February showed a further marked improvement, and in some industries a shortage of male labour, especially of skilled men, was again reported.

Trades affected by war contracts, such as engineering, shipbuilding, woollen, hosiery, boot, saddlery and men's clothing continued very busy, with much overtime.

The cotton trade again improved, while the lace trade, though still bad, showed a noticeable recovery. There was also an upward movement in the iron and steel, building, furnishing and woodworking, printing and pottery trades. The coal mining, pig iron, tinsplate, linen, jute, silk and glass trades showed little change. The scarcity of agricultural labour is becoming increasingly felt.

During the month there was a marked upward movement in wages.

Compared with the good conditions of March, 1914, all trades engaged on Government work showed a noticeable improvement. There was, on the other hand, a marked decline in the tinsplate, cotton, linen, lace, pottery and brick trades.

TRADE UNION PERCENTAGES OF UNEMPLOYED.

Trades Unions with a net membership of 904,722 reported 14,388 (or 1.6 per cent.) of their members as unemployed at the end of February, 1915, compared with 1.9 per cent. at the end of January, 1915, and 2.3 per cent. at the end of February, 1914.

Trade.	Membership at end of Feb., 1915, exclusive of those serving with H.M. Forces.	Unemployed at end of Feb., 1915.		Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) in percentage unemployed as compared with a	
		Number.	Percentage.	Month ago.	Year ago.
Building* ...	81,597	2,122	2.6	+ 0.4	- 2.6
Coal Mining† ...	138,961	1,212	0.9	...	+ 0.4
Iron and Steel ...	33,421	751	2.2	+ 0.1	- 1.8
Engineering ...	218,761	1,532	0.7	- 0.2†	- 1.7
Shipbuilding ...	67,203	523	0.8	+ 0.1	- 1.4
Miscellaneous Metal	34,931	265	0.8	- 0.3	- 0.8
Textiles:—					
Cotton ...	82,460	1,843	2.2	- 0.8	+ 0.1
Woollen & Worsted	8,401	78	0.9	- 0.8	- 1.6
Other ...	51,712	1,157	2.2	- 1.7	+ 0.5
Printing, Bookbinding and Paper.	62,095	2,579	4.2	- 0.8	+ 1.1
Furnishing ...	18,428	1,206	6.5	- 0.9	+ 3.4
Woodworking ...	29,529	468	1.6	- 0.3	- 0.6
Clothing ...	63,476	462	0.7	...	- 1.5
Leather ...	4,395	58	1.3	- 0.5	- 3.7†
Glass ...	880	18	2.0	+ 0.2	+ 1.5
Pottery ...	6,178	30	0.5	- 0.8	- 0.1
Tobacco ...	2,294	84	3.7	- 1.2	+ 0.8
Total ...	904,722	14,388	1.6	- 0.3	- 0.7

* The Trade Union Returns relate mainly to carpenters and plumbers.

† In the textile and mining industries a contraction in the demand for labour is usually met by short time working.

‡ Revised figure.

NEW SWISS LABOUR LAW.*

THE Swiss Factory Act of 1877, which was amended in certain respects in 1905, has now been repealed, and superseded by a new Act, which includes within its scope measures for averting and settling industrial disputes. The date upon which the new Act will become operative has yet to be determined.

HOURS OF LABOUR.

One of the most important changes brought about by the new law is the reduction in the length of the working day in factories and workshops from 11 hours to 10. The limit of 9 hours on Saturdays and on days before holidays has been retained. (The above restriction applies to all workpeople, irrespective of age or sex.)

It is forbidden to evade the provisions of the law as to working hours by giving out work to be done at home; and workpeople may not work in the factories, even voluntarily, after the prescribed hours.

Exceptionally, permission may be granted for extending the normal day by a stated number of hours and in respect of a specified number of workpeople. Such extension, however, may not as a rule exceed 2 hours, or be granted for more than 80 days in any year. When permission is given to extend the normal working day, or to work temporarily at night or on Sundays, the employer must pay time and a quarter in respect of the extra time.

NIGHT AND SUNDAY WORK.

As was the case in the previous law, work at night and on Sundays is prohibited in principle, and is permitted only exceptionally and under stricter control than formerly. Occasional work at night or on Sundays is permitted only in urgent cases, and in no circumstances may the workpeople so employed be engaged more than 10 hours in 24. In regard to establishments where work at night or on Sundays is permanently or periodically necessary, authorisation is to be obtained from the Federal Council. For certain industries the Council may declare that permanent night and Sunday work is an absolute necessity, and may issue special regulations in respect of these. Men engaged at establishments where night and Sunday work is permitted either temporarily or permanently may not be employed more than eight hours (formerly eleven hours) out of each twenty-four, to be extended exceptionally to ten hours; and the length of a shift must in no case exceed twelve hours. Workmen employed at factories where night work is permitted, either temporarily or permanently, must be allowed to rest every Sunday for twenty-four hours, such period to include the interval from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The former law required such workmen to rest only on alternate Sundays. In factories where work is performed on Sundays, or both at night and on Sundays, each workman must be allowed to rest every alternate Sunday, and also to have a free day during the week preceding or following the Sunday on which he works. Shifts must alternate every fourteen days at least, so that the workmen may be employed in equal measure on day and on night work.

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.

As in the former law, women are forbidden to work at night or on Sundays. A new provision states that the Federal Council is to prescribe the branches of work or particular occupations in which women may not be employed under any circumstances. Women must now have a night's rest of at least eleven consecutive hours, including the period from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.; but by special permission this may be reduced to ten hours for 60 days in the year, or, when perishable materials are being worked upon, for 140 days.

The former law provided that, for a period in all of eight weeks before and after confinement, women should be exempted from work in factories; the present law provides for their exclusion from work in factories for six weeks following confinement, which period, at their request, may be extended to eight weeks.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS.

The present law retains the limit of fourteen years as the minimum age at which children may be allowed to work in factories, as also the provision forbidding the employment of young persons under eighteen at night work and on Sundays. A new provision states that children under sixteen may not be employed upon work where the normal hours are exceeded, and the Federal Council is to prescribe certain branches of industry or certain occupations at which young persons under sixteen must not be employed at all.

PERMANENT CONCILIATION COMMITTEES.

With a view to the amicable settlement of disputes which are calculated to lead to a strike or a lock-out, the new law provides for the appointment of permanent Cantonal Conciliation Committees, which may intervene either on their own initiative or at the request of the authorities or of the parties directly concerned. Persons summoned before these bodies are obliged, under penalty, to appear. Authority is given to the Cantonal Governments to enlarge still further the powers granted to the Conciliation Committees by the present law. A certain number of the employers and workpeople in any industry may mutually agree to constitute a Conciliation Board, in which case such Board shall take the place of the Cantonal Conciliation Committee, so far as these employers and workpeople are concerned.

Provision is also made for the appointment by the Federal Council of a permanent committee, to be entitled the "Government Workshops Committee," to inquire into and advise as to claims concerning conditions of labour which are put forward by workpeople in Government employ, and as to which the department concerned cannot itself come to an arrangement with the workpeople in question. The functions of this Committee are to be purely advisory, the Federal Council alone having power to decide the points at issue. The Government Workshops Committee is to consist of a chairman, two permanent members, and four appointed for each inquiry. One of the permanent members is to represent the workpeople, and two of the four temporary members are to be chosen from among the workpeople of the establishments involved in the particular case. The federal railway workshops are expressly excluded from the operation of the provisions as to the Cantonal Conciliation Committees and the Government Workshops Committee.

APPOINTMENT OF FACTORY COMMITTEE.

The law further provides for the appointment of a Factory Committee, consisting of scientific men and of representatives, in equal numbers, of employers and workpeople. The duty of this committee will be generally to advise the Federal Council on matters as to which it will have to issue regulations and decrees.

UNEMPLOYMENT FUNDS IN DENMARK IN 1913-14.

The following particulars relating to State-aided unemployment funds in Denmark, approved under the law of 9th April, 1907,* during the year ended 31st March, 1914, are taken from a report† to the Danish Ministry of the Interior by the Inspector of Unemployment appointed to supervise these funds.

At the beginning of the financial year the number of funds in existence was 55, with an aggregate membership of 120,289. On 31st March, 1914, the number of funds remained the same; but the membership had increased to 131,113. Some 45 per cent. of the members were resident in Copenhagen, while 38 per cent. belonged to provincial towns and 16 per cent. to rural districts; for the remaining 1 per cent. of the members these particulars were not ascertained.

The total income of the funds during the year amounted to £165,183, made up by the following items:

* For account of the main provisions of this law, see BOARD OF TRADE LABOUR GAZETTE for 1907, p. 197.
† Arbejdsløshedensinspektørens Indberetning til Indenrigsministeriet for Regnskabsaaret, 1913-1914. Copenhagen, 1914.

* Based on the text published in *Recueil des Lois Fédérales*, No. 52, 1914.

—Members' contributions, £85,884, State subventions (in respect of the year 1912-1913), £49,508; municipal subventions (also for 1912-1913), £22,974; interest on investments, £5,809; other contributions, £332; fines, &c., £543; donations, £133. Members' contributions thus formed 52 per cent. of the total receipts, while State subventions came to 30 per cent. and municipal subventions to 14 per cent.; the total of the remaining items therefore comprised only 4 per cent. of the aggregate receipts.

The expenditure of the funds during the financial year 1913-1914 amounted to £123,252, *viz.*, daily monetary allowances during unemployment, £101,267; travelling benefit, £3,716; special grants, £1,696; removal allowances, £1,329; relief in kind, £319; cost of administration, £14,925. The last item formed 12 per cent. of the total expenditure, while the grants directly for unemployment comprised 82 per cent., the total of the other items forming, therefore, only 6 per cent. of the aggregate expenditure. The excess of receipts over expenditure was £41,931, which, added to the funds previously in hand, brought the total assets of the funds up to £174,287, or an average of 26s. 7d. per member.

During the year to which the report relates, benefits were granted in respect of 1,372,945 days of unemployment, an average of about 11 days per member, as compared with about 10 per member during 1912-13.

Including periods of unemployment for which no benefit was paid, the total number of working days lost by the members of 53 funds (particulars are not available in the other two cases) was 2,560,003, or 20 per member, this being the same figure as that recorded for the previous year.

GOVERNMENT WORK.

COMMITTEE ON PRODUCTION IN ENGINEERING AND SHIPBUILDING ESTABLISHMENTS.

On 4th February, 1915, His Majesty's Government appointed Sir George Askwith, Sir Francis Hopwood and Sir George Gibb "to inquire and report forthwith, after consultation with the representatives of employers and workmen, as to the best steps to be taken to ensure that the productive power of the employees in engineering and shipbuilding establishments working for Government purposes shall be made fully available so as to meet the needs of the nation in the present emergency."

In accordance with the terms of Reference, the Committee have from time to time issued the following Reports:—

(1) FIRST INTERIM REPORT, ISSUED ON FEBRUARY 16TH.

Irregular Time-keeping.

It was represented to us that irregular time-keeping in shipyards is an important contributory cause of failure to attain the maximum degree of output. We have accordingly given this question careful consideration, and deem it advisable to issue as an Interim Report an immediate recommendation under this head.

We are informed that a considerable proportion of the time lost by riveting squads in shipyards is due to habits of irregularity which the method of working appears to encourage. We understand that the members of the respective squads present themselves for work, but if one of the members is absent the squad is a "broken" squad, and the other members are unable to begin work.

The method of dealing with such broken squads differs in different yards; the statements made to us as to the extent to which lost time exists indicate that the methods hitherto adopted fall far short of what is necessary, and we are satisfied that a considerable improvement can be, and ought to be, effected.

Attempts to deal with the matter have been made by the employers and the representatives of the men in the past. After having discussed the matter with representatives of both sides, we believe that some arrangement can be arrived at, and we are of opinion that further efforts in this direction should at once be made. In view of the nature of the matter, involving as it does an acquaintance with the varying conditions in different yards, we consider that the parties directly concerned should be charged in the first instance with the duty of making

such efforts. We are advised, however, that their endeavours may not meet the urgency of the situation with the necessary promptitude; we recommend, therefore, that our Report be communicated at once to the parties concerned, with an intimation on behalf of His Majesty's Government that it is essential that the employers and workpeople should agree upon and establish within ten days an arrangement for dealing effectively with the question of broken squads. Failing agreement within that time, we recommend that any outstanding differences should be referred forthwith to this Committee for immediate and final settlement.

We are satisfied that an effective arrangement for dealing with broken squads will assist considerably in removing the evil of lost time. There may still be instances of bad time-keeping by individuals, but their effects will be minimised.

In order that we may be able to ascertain whether instances of bad time-keeping by individuals occur so as materially to hamper the progress of work, we think the employers should report, for the information of this Committee, the results of the proposed new arrangements in the various yards. On receipt of such reports we will consider whether further steps should be taken to deal with the matter.

(2) SECOND INTERIM REPORT, ISSUED ON FEBRUARY 20TH.

A.—Production of Shells and Fuses.

It has been represented to us very strongly by both the Admiralty and the War Office that there is a present and continuously increasing need for shells and fuses for use by both the naval and military services, and that it is necessary for the existing production to be increased rapidly in order to meet the demand. We need not enlarge upon the vital importance of such a matter and its effects upon the successful prosecution of the war. Under these circumstances there is no reason to doubt that all sections of the community, and not least the workpeople, will desire that everything possible shall be done to maintain and accelerate adequate supplies of ammunition to the fleet and the troops. Restrictive rules or customs calculated to affect the production of munitions of war or to hamper or impede any reasonable steps to achieve a maximum output are under present circumstances seriously hurtful to the welfare of the country, and we think they should be suspended during the period of the war, with proper safeguards and adjustments to protect the interests of the workpeople and their trade unions.

Dealing in this part of the present report with the pressing question of shells and fuses, there appear to be two methods whereby the present rate of production of these munitions of war can be increased.

(1) We are of opinion that the production of shells and fuses would be considerably accelerated if there were a relaxation of the present practice of the workmen confining their earnings, on the basis of the existing piece rates, to "time-and-half," or whatever the local standard may be. We understand this practice is due to some extent to a desire to protect the piece rates; we agree that the present circumstances should not be utilised as a means of lowering rates of wages, and we think the rates in question should be protected. This can be adequately done, however, by other means than restriction of earnings and output. As the only consumers of shells are the Government, we recommend that firms engaged in the production of shells and fuses should give an undertaking to this Committee on behalf of the Government to the effect that in fixing piece-work prices the earnings of men during the period of the war should not be considered as a factor in the matter, and that no reduction in piece rates will be made, unless warranted by a change in the method of manufacture—*e.g.*, by the introduction of a new type of machine. The protection afforded by this guarantee should remove apprehensions on the part of the men that their piece rates might be endangered, and we think, therefore, that the Government would be fully justified in calling upon each man to increase his production to the fullest possible extent, irrespective of his former limits of earnings or shop customs.

Any difference which may arise on this matter which cannot be settled by the parties directly concerned or by their representatives should be referred as suggested in our recommendation respecting "Avoidance of Stoppage of Work."

(2) We are satisfied that, in the production of shells and fuses, there are numerous operations of a nature that can be, and are already in some shops, suitably performed by female labour. We therefore recommend that, in order to increase the output, there should be an extension of the practice of employing female labour on this work, under suitable and proper conditions.

If the conditions of employment cannot be mutually arranged by the parties directly concerned, or by their representatives, we think the matter should be referred as suggested in our recommendation respecting "Avoidance of Stoppage of Work."

B.—Avoidance of Stoppage of Work.

We have considered the question of disputes between employers and their workpeople which impair, or are likely to impair, the productive power of establishments engaged on Government work, and we are strongly of opinion that during the present crisis employers and workmen should under no circumstances allow their differences to result in a stoppage of work.

SILK TRADE.

EMPLOYMENT was slightly better than in January, but was still considerably worse than a year ago. In several districts great delay in railway and shipping delivery was reported.

Returns from firms employing 7,095 workpeople in the week ended 20th February showed a decrease of 2.0 per cent. in the number employed and an increase of 2.2 per cent. in the amount of wages paid compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago, there was a decrease of 9.4 per cent. in the number employed and of 13.3 per cent. in the amount of wages paid:—

Table for Silk Trade showing Workpeople and Earnings by Branches and Districts. Includes columns for Week ended 20th Feb., 1915, and Year ago, with sub-columns for Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago and Year ago, and Per cent. columns.

At Macclesfield employment with throwsters, spinners and outside hand-loom weavers was fair, but some short time was reported in the first two branches; with power-loom weavers employment was good, but with factory hand-loom weavers it was bad, and worse than a year ago. Some firms in this district have been busy during the month on black silk squares for the Navy.

At Leek and Congleton employment was reported as good with trimming weavers and pickers and fair in the remaining branches. In the Lancashire and West Riding district employment showed a slight improvement compared with a month ago; about 35 per cent. of the operatives covered by the returns were on short time during the month, as compared with 38 per cent. a month ago. In the Eastern Counties employment was fair and slightly better than a month ago, but not so good as a year ago. At Coventry employment was moderate with artificial silk workers and fair with ribbon makers.

HOSIERY TRADE.

EMPLOYMENT was very good in the coarse branch and showed some improvement in the fine branch of the trade; it was much better than a year ago, owing to Government contracts. The shortage in the supply of needles and yarn still affected production in some departments.

Returns from firms employing 20,116 workpeople in the week ended February 20th showed an increase of 0.8 per cent. in the number employed and of 3.3 per cent. in the amount of wages paid compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago, there was an increase of 4.4 per cent. in the number employed and of 9.9 per cent. in the amount of wages paid:—

Table for Hosiery Trade showing Workpeople and Earnings by District. Includes columns for Week ended 20th Feb., 1915, and Year ago, with sub-columns for Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago and Year ago, and Per cent. columns.

At Leicester employment continued very brisk on Army and Navy contracts, but was quiet in the finer branches of the trade. At Hinckley employment on Army and seamless hose continued good, in the cotton hose branch it was fair; at Loughborough the operatives were fairly busy. In Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire employment was good with power-frame workers in the coarse branch; in the fine yarn section there was an improvement, and less short time was reported: about a quarter of the operatives were losing 1 to 3 days a week during February, whereas about half were thus affected during January. With hand-frame workers in the country districts of Nottinghamshire employment continued very slack.

In Scotland employment was good and better than a month ago and a year ago; about a third of the operatives covered by the returns were working overtime during the month.

LACE TRADE.

ALL branches of the lace trade showed a considerable improvement compared with a month ago. The trade generally is still much below the level of a year ago.

Returns from firms employing 6,687 workpeople in the week ended 20th February showed an increase of 2.9 per cent. in the number employed and of 13.6 per cent. in the amount of wages paid compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago there was a decrease of 17.4 per cent. in the number employed and of 30.3 per cent. in the amount of wages paid:—

Table for Lace Trade showing Workpeople and Earnings by Branches and Districts. Includes columns for Week ended 20th Feb., 1915, and Year ago, with sub-columns for Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago and Year ago, and Per cent. columns.

At Nottingham there was much short and irregular time in all sections, but employment in the levers and curtain sections showed some improvement as compared with a month ago; compared with a year ago there was a general decline. Recruiting has somewhat reduced the number of unemployed in this district. At Long Eaton employment showed a further improvement, but was still bad; about 50 per cent. of the operatives, chiefly in the levers branch, were on short time during the month as compared with 64 per cent. during January. In other parts of England employment was better than a month ago, but much worse than a year ago; about 44 per cent. of the operatives covered by the returns were working reduced hours during February as compared with 75 per cent. in the previous month.

The exports of cotton lace fell from £336,497 in February, 1914, to £181,022 in February, 1915; the imports of cotton lace also fell by nearly £103,000. The imports of silk lace, which were £40,013 in February, 1914, fell to practically nil.

CARPET TRADE.

EMPLOYMENT showed a further improvement as compared with a month ago; it was, however, still worse than a year ago. A number of firms were fully employed on Government orders for goods other than carpets, and there was also a slight improvement in the regular carpet trade.

Returns from firms employing 7,207 workpeople, and paying £6,173 in wages in the week ended 20th Feb-

ruary, showed an increase of 2.0 per cent. in the number employed and of 4.3 per cent. in the amount of wages paid compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago there was a decrease of 16.7 per cent. in the number employed and of 19.5 per cent. in the amount of wages paid.

About 20 per cent. of the workpeople covered by the returns were reported to be working short time, as compared with 24 per cent. a month ago.

In the Kidderminster district some of the largest firms resumed full time during the month; the production of military blankets was continued at full pressure, and although employment was still very slack in the ordinary trade, more carpet machinery was running than at any period since the outbreak of war. Spinners were well employed on yarns for military clothing.

In the West Riding there was little change; wherever possible carpet looms were still employed on khaki and Army blanket work.

In Scotland employment was fairly good and better than a month ago.

The imports of carpets and carpet rugs in February were 30,265 square yards, considerably more than in January, but less than a fifth of the imports in February, 1914.

The exports were 451,500 square yards, or 59 per cent. of those in February, 1914.

BLEACHING, PRINTING, DYEING AND FINISHING.

EMPLOYMENT in these trades showed a slight improvement compared with a month ago, but was worse than a year ago. In certain of the dyeing and finishing branches operatives were still well employed on Government contracts, but employment generally was still slack, and much short time was worked. Unemployment, however, was considerably relieved by enlistment, and a shortage of labour was even reported in a few cases.

Returns from firms employing 24,557 workpeople in the week ended February 20th showed a decrease of 0.5 per cent. in the number employed and an increase of 2.1 per cent. in the amount of wages paid compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago there was a decrease of 13.5 per cent. in the number employed and of 13.0 per cent. in the amount of wages paid.

Table for Bleaching, Printing, Dyeing and Finishing showing Workpeople and Earnings by Trades and Districts. Includes columns for Week ended 20th Feb., 1915, and Year ago, with sub-columns for Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago and Year ago, and Per cent. columns.

Bleaching.—Employment with cotton bleachers in Lancashire was better than a month ago owing to the revival in the cotton trade, but worse than a year ago. At Basford employment in the hosiery section continued fair; with lace workers it was bad. At Dundee operatives were fairly well employed.

Printing.—Employment with machine calico printers and engravers in England and Scotland continued bad, with much short time.

Dyeing.—Employment with woollen and worsted dyers was quiet, but workpeople engaged on Government contracts were busy. About 54 per cent. of the

Trade Union dyers were on short time, and about 27 per cent. were on overtime during the month. With cotton dyers in Lancashire and Yorkshire employment was not so good as a year ago, but a number of men were working overtime on Government and foreign contracts. With lace dyers it had improved and was fair at Nottingham and good at Basford.

Trimming, Finishing, &c.—At Leicester employment continued fairly good in the dressed department, but otherwise was slack. At Hinckley it was good, and better than a year ago. At Loughborough operatives engaged on Army work were well employed, but in other branches there was some slackness. At Basford employment was fair. With calenderers at Dundee employment continued fairly good.

BOOT AND SHOE TRADE.

In consequence of the continued pressure of Government orders employment in February remained very good; it was about the same as in January, and much better than a year ago, especially in the Bristol and Kingswood districts.

Returns from firms employing 65,385 workpeople in the week ended 20th February showed practically no change in the number employed or in the amount of wages paid as compared with January, but an increase of 9.8 per cent. in the amount of wages paid as compared with a year ago, in spite of a slight reduction (1.0 per cent.) in the number employed:—

Table for Boot and Shoe Trade showing Workpeople and Earnings by District. Includes columns for Week ended 20th Feb., 1915, and Year ago, with sub-columns for Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a Month ago and Year ago, and Per cent. columns.

Employment in London continued good generally, owing to Army work, but was bad in the hand-sewn trade. At Leicester employment showed an improvement on January and was very good, overtime being general. At Northampton and Kettering, and in the country districts of Northamptonshire, employment continued to be very good, with much overtime. Employment was good at Stafford, where Army boots are now being made to some extent, and overtime was worked. Some Army work is now being done at Norwich also, and employment thereon was good; but in the general trade there was not much change at this centre as compared with a month ago and a year ago.

Employment at Bristol and Kingswood was very good, better than in January and very much better than last year; much overtime was worked on Government work, which is now being extensively done in these districts. Employment was good generally at the other English centres, with overtime on Army work.

Employment was quiet at Edinburgh, and showed a decline. Elsewhere in Scotland employment remained good on the whole, with much overtime on Government work.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IN FEBRUARY.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN INSURED TRADES.

RETURNS received from the Department of Labour Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance show a steady improvement in the state of employment in the insured trades during February.

The following Table shows by industries the proportion of unemployment books lodged* to the total current on each Friday during February, 1915:—

Table showing unemployment books lodged by industry for February 1915. Columns include industry names and percentages for 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th Feb.

Table showing unemployment books lodged by district for February 1915. Columns include district names and percentages for 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th Feb.

INSURANCE CLAIMS AND PAYMENTS.

The total number of claims to unemployment benefit made at Labour Exchanges and other local offices of the Unemployment Fund during the four weeks ended February 26th, 1915, was 43,113, as compared with 73,395 during the five weeks ended January 29th, 1915, and with 86,465 during the four weeks ended February 27th, 1914.

The average weekly amount of unemployment benefit paid during the four weeks ended February 26th, 1915, was £5,478, as compared with £8,250 per week in the five preceding weeks, and with £15,509 per week in February, 1914; 61 per cent. of the amount was paid direct and 39 per cent. through associations.

Table showing average weekly amount of unemployment benefit paid by district for February 1915, compared with January 1915 and February 1914.

* In accordance with the Regulations, every holder of an unemployment book has, when unemployed, to lodge it at a Labour Exchange or other local office of the Unemployment Fund.

BOARD OF TRADE LABOUR EXCHANGES.

FOUR WEEKS ENDED FEBRUARY 12TH, 1915.

THE total number of workpeople remaining on the Registers* of the Board of Trade Labour Exchanges (400 in number) on February 12th was 100,616, as compared with 112,889 on January 15th, 1915, and 145,297 on February 13th, 1914.

The number of registrations of workpeople during the four weeks ended February 12th was 229,924, a daily average of 9,580, as compared with a daily average of 9,203 in the previous five weeks and of 10,267 in the four weeks ended February 13th, 1914.

Excluding re-registrations of persons placed in vacancies through the Exchanges, there were on the Register at some time or other during the period 325,715 workpeople (men 189,883, women 88,452, boys 19,260, and girls 28,120), as compared with 341,818 in the five weeks ended January 15th, 1915, and 380,118 in the four weeks ended February 13th, 1914.

The number of vacancies notified to the Exchanges during the period was 136,022, a daily average of 5,668, as compared with 5,098 in the five weeks ended January 15th, 1915, and with 3,979 in the four weeks ended February 13th, 1914: the number of vacancies filled was 99,863, a daily average of 4,161, as compared with 3,601 in the previous five weeks, and with 3,045 in the four weeks ended February 13th, 1914.

The following Table summarises the work of the Exchanges during the period:—

Summary table of Board of Trade Labour Exchanges work for February 1915, showing registrations, vacancies notified, and vacancies filled by gender.

Of the 21,844 cases in which persons were placed in Exchange districts other than those in which they were registered, 2,893 represent transferances from one division to another. Of the total vacancies filled, 16,874, or 16.9 per cent., were filled by applicants residing more than five miles from the place in which the work was to be performed.

In the following Table are shown, for men and women, the proportions of vacancies filled to vacancies notified and of vacancies filled to registrations (including those on the registers at the beginning of the period) in the principal groups of trades:—

Table showing proportions of vacancies filled to vacancies notified and to registrations for various trades, broken down by gender.

The average daily numbers of registrations and vacancies filled, for the periods stated, are shown in the following Table:—

* Excluding workmen in certain occupations of a more or less casual nature (i.e., dock labourers, cloth porters and cotton porters); these are dealt with in the last paragraph but one.

Average Daily Numbers of Registrations and Vacancies Filled.

Table showing average daily numbers of registrations and vacancies filled by district for February 1915, compared with January 1915 and February 1914.

Table showing average daily numbers of registrations and vacancies filled by gender for February 1915, compared with January 1915 and February 1914.

The average daily number of vacancies notified in the insured trades during the four weeks ended 12th February was 2,112, as compared with 1,979 in the previous five weeks and with 1,482 in the four weeks ended 13th February, 1914. The corresponding daily averages in the uninsured trades were 3,555, 3,119 and 2,497 respectively.

INSURED TRADES.*

Registrations.—The number of registrations effected during the period was 81,265 (men 79,267, women 646, boys 1,280, and girls 72). The total number of workpeople on the Register at some time or other during the period was 131,486 (men 128,325, women 1,307, boys 1,669, and girls 185). These figures exclude 8,826 cases in which persons who obtained employment during the period were re-registered on again becoming unemployed, and represent separate individuals.

The number of workpeople remaining on the Register on 12th February was 39,202, as compared with 50,221 on 15th January and 90,586 on 13th February, 1914.

Vacancies Notified and Filled.—The number of vacancies notified to the Exchanges during the period was 50,689, a daily average of 2,112, as compared with 1,979 in the previous five weeks and 1,482 in the four weeks ended 13th February, 1914. The number of vacancies filled was 41,940, a daily average of 1,747, as compared with 1,437 in the previous five weeks and 1,202 in the four weeks ended 13th February, 1914.

The following Table shows, for men, the proportion of registrations, vacancies notified and vacancies filled, respectively in each group of occupations:—

Table showing proportion of registrations, vacancies notified, and vacancies filled for various groups of occupations for men.

* Including re-registrations of persons placed in vacancies through the Exchanges during the period. † The figures for these trades relate to workpeople who are insured against unemployment under the provisions of Part II of the National Insurance Act.

UNINSURED TRADES.

Registrations.—The number of registrations effected during the period was 131,561 (men 43,401, women 56,942, boys 13,091, and girls 18,127). The total number of workpeople on the Register at some time or other during the period was 194,229 (men 61,558, women 87,145, boys 17,591, and girls 27,935). These figures exclude 8,272 cases in which persons already placed in vacancies during the period were re-registered on again becoming unemployed, and represent separate individuals.

The number of workpeople remaining on the Register at 12th February was 61,414 (men 17,512, women 31,090, boys 3,853, and girls 8,959), as compared with 62,668 on 15th January, and 54,711 on 13th February, 1914.

The numbers of men and women in the uninsured trades remaining on the Register at each Friday night during the period are shown below:—

Table showing numbers of men and women in uninsured trades remaining on the Register at various dates during February 1915.

Vacancies Notified and Filled.—The number of vacancies notified during the period was 85,333, a daily average of 3,555, as compared with 3,119 in the preceding five weeks and 2,497 in the four weeks ended 13th February, 1914. The number of vacancies filled was 57,923, a daily average of 2,413, as compared with 2,164 in the preceding five weeks, and 1,843 in the four weeks ended 13th February, 1914.

Of the vacancies filled during the period 7,110 (men 4,147, women 2,636, boys 155, and girls 172) were known to be for less than a week's employment: of these 2,285 were for men in conveyance of men, goods and messages, 892 were for general labourers, and 2,097 were for women in domestic offices or services.

Of the 14,885 vacancies filled by boys and girls, 3,868 (boys 1,825 and girls 2,043), or 26.0 per cent., were filled by applicants who obtained their first situations since leaving school.

The following Table shows the proportion of registrations, vacancies notified, and vacancies filled in certain groups of trades to the total for the uninsured trades:—

Table showing proportion of registrations, vacancies notified, and vacancies filled in certain groups of trades for uninsured trades.

CASUAL EMPLOYMENT.

The number of men given casual employment through the Exchanges was 1,025, and the number of casual jobs given was 6,305, a daily average of 263, compared with 231 in the preceding five weeks and 503 in the four weeks ended 13th February, 1914. Of the jobs given during the period 4,752 were for dock labourers, 1,441 for cloth porters at Manchester, and 112 for cotton porters at Liverpool. During the period there were also 3,260 cases in which men were given employment through the Clearing House System for Dock Labourers at Liverpool.

UNSATISFIED DEMAND FOR LABOUR.

During the period covered by the returns there was a large deficiency in the supply of colliery, shipbuilding and engineering workers at most centres. In the building trades and construction of works and in a number of other industries there was also some shortage of labour. As regards women, the largest unsatisfied demand was in the tailoring trade, especially at Leeds.

BOARD OF TRADE LABOUR EXCHANGES—FOUR WEEKS ENDED FEBRUARY 12th, 1915.

A.—INSURED TRADES.

Registrations, and Vacancies Filled in the Four Weeks ended February 12th, 1915.

Table with columns for Occupation Groups, Registrations, and Vacancies Filled. Sub-headers include ADULTS and JUVENILES, with further sub-headers for Registrations and Vacancies. Rows include various trades like Building, Construction of Works, and Mechanical Engineering.

* Including cases in which persons who obtained employment during the period were re-registered on again becoming unemployed. † Occupations are grouped according to the industry with which they are mainly connected.

B.—UNINSURED TRADES.

Registrations and Vacancies Filled in the Four Weeks ended February 12th, 1915.

Large table for Uninsured Trades. Columns: Trades, On Register at Beginning of Period, Registrations during Period, On Register at End of Period, Vacancies Filled during Period. Rows include Mining and Quarrying, Textiles, Dress, Paper, Prints, Books and Stationery, etc.

* Including re-registrations of persons placed in vacancies through the Exchanges during the period.

DISEASES OF OCCUPATIONS

IN FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

[Cases include all attacks, fatal or otherwise, reported to the Home Office during the month and not previously reported, so far as is known, during the preceding 12 months. Deaths include all fatal cases reported during the month whether included (as cases) in previous returns or not.]

The total number of cases of poisoning and of anthrax reported to the Home Office under the Factory and Workshop Act during February, 1915, was 26, of which 21 were due to lead poisoning and 5 to anthrax; one death due to lead poisoning was also reported. In addition 12 cases of lead poisoning (6 of which were fatal) were reported among house painters and plumbers.

During the two months ended February, 1915, the total number of cases of poisoning and of anthrax reported under the Factory and Workshop Act was 54, compared with 108 during the corresponding period of 1914. The number of deaths in 1915 was 2, compared with 11 in 1914. In addition there were 24 cases of lead poisoning (including 12 deaths) among house painters and plumbers during the first two months of 1915, compared with 41 cases (including 8 deaths) during the corresponding period of 1914.

ANALYSIS BY INDUSTRIES.

Table showing analysis of diseases by industry. Columns: Industry, Cases (Month of Feb., Two Months ended Feb., 1915, 1914), Deaths (Month of Feb., Two Months ended Feb., 1915, 1914). Rows include Lead Poisoning, Other Forms of Poisoning, and Anthrax.

Return of Deaths of Seamen.—A Return of Deaths of Seamen reported to the Board of Trade is issued by the Registrar-General of Seamen each month, and copies may be seen at all Free Libraries, Mercantile Marine Offices, and Sailors' Homes throughout the country.

FATAL INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS.

CASES REPORTED IN FEBRUARY.

[Based on Home Office and Board of Trade Returns.]

EXCLUSIVE of seamen, the number of workpeople reported as killed in the course of their employment during February, 1915, was 270, a decrease of 10 on a month ago, but an increase of 17 on a year ago. The mean number for February during the five years 1910-1914 was 243, the maximum being 270 and the minimum 211.

Fatal accidents in the railway service during February, 1915, numbered 39, an increase of 9 on a month ago and of 6 on a year ago. The total number of fatal accidents at mines was 121, an increase of 11 on January, 1915, and of 17 on February, 1914. Fatal accidents at quarries numbered 4, compared with 6 both a month ago and a year ago. The total number of fatal accidents reported under the Factory and Workshop Act in February, 1915, was 105, a decrease of 27 on January, 1915, and of 3 on February, 1914.

The total number of fatal accidents to seamen reported during February, 1915, was 167, compared with 158 a month ago and 169 a year ago.

Table of Fatal Industrial Accidents. Columns: Trade, Number of Workpeople killed during (Feb., 1915, Jan., 1915, Feb., 1914), Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) in Feb., 1915, on a Month ago, Year ago. Rows include Railway Service, Mines, Quarries, Factories and Workshops, Accidents reported under Factory Act, Seamen.

Report upon the Working of the Boiler Explosions Act, 1882 and 1890, during the year ending 30th June, 1914, with Appendices. Board of Trade. [Cd. 7797 : price 2½d.]

Forty-third Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1913-14. Part I. Administration of the Poor Law, the Unemployed Workmen Act, and the Old Age Pensions Act. [Cd. 7444 : price 1s. 1d.]

Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies for the Year ending 31st December, 1913. Part D. Building Societies. [H.C. 121 iv. : price 1s. 3d.]

Trustee Savings Banks. Twenty-third Annual Report of the Proceedings of the Inspection Committee for the Year ended 20th November, 1914. [H.C. 121 : pp. 18 : price 2½d.]

Housing by Local Authorities. Return. Local Government Board. [H.C. 114 : price 2½d.]

Government Belgian Refugees Committee. Departmental Committee of the Local Government Board to consider and report on Questions arising in connection with the Reception and Employment of the Belgian Refugees in this country. Minutes of Evidence. [Cd. 7779 : price 1s. 10d.]

Report on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland, 1913. Number of vessels, men and boys employed, loans to fishermen, &c. Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland. [Cd. 7751 : price 8½d.]

Public Works, Ireland. 82nd Annual Report of the Commissioners. Year ending 31st March, 1914. Labour Exchanges, labour troubles (Dublin), housing of the working classes, &c. [Cd. 7563 : price 11d.]

BRITISH DOMINIONS.

CANADA.—*The Labour Gazette, January, 1915.* Proceedings under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act during December; prices in Canada in 1914; review of United States labour legislation in 1914; wholesale and retail prices, trade disputes and industrial accidents during December.—*Report of the Department of Labour for the Fiscal Year ending 31st March, 1914.* Appendix. Seventh Report of the Registrar of Boards of Conciliation and Investigation, of Proceedings under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, 1907.—*Census and Statistics Monthly, December, 1914.* Cost of grain production in Canada, 1913, crop reports, &c. [Ottawa : J. de L. Taché, King's Printer.]

—*Saskatchewan. The Public Service Monthly, January, 1915.* [Regina : J. W. Reid, Government Printer.]

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.—*Labour and Industrial Branch. Report No. 5, December, 1914.* Prices, cost of living, wages, trade unions, unemployment and general industrial conditions, 1913-14.—*Labour Bulletin. No. 7, July-September, December, 1914.* Prices, rents, cost of living, industrial disputes, wages, industrial accidents, &c. [Melbourne : McCarron, Bird & Co., Printers.]

NEW SOUTH WALES.—*The Industrial Gazette, December, 1914.* The Statute Law of industrial import (miners), dislocations in industries, industrial arbitration and the War, employment and unemployment, &c.—*The Industrial Arbitration Reports, 1914, Vol. XIII. Part 4.* [Sydney : W. A. Gullick, Government Printer.]

VICTORIA.—*Wages Board Determinations. Opticians' Board.* Dated 3rd December, 1914. *Appeal, Commercial Clerks' Board.* Determination to come into force 14th December, 1914.

QUEENSLAND.—*Report of the Director of Labour and Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops for the Year ended 30th June, 1914.* State of employment, accidents, industrial awards, employees under awards, &c. Department of Labour. [Brisbane : A. J. Cumming, Government Printer.]

—*Industrial Peace Act Awards. Meat Industry Board for South-Eastern Division,* dated 1st December, 1914, cancelling that of 11th March, 1913. *Tobacco Workers' Board,* dated 4th December, 1914.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.—*Chief Inspector of Factories' Report, 1913.* Average weekly wages paid to employees by trades and callings, epitome of Wages Board Determinations in force.

NEW ZEALAND.—*Journal of the Department of Labour, December, 1914.* Condition of trade and employment as at 30th November, persons assisted to employment, accidents, current retail prices, &c. [Wellington : John Mackay, Government Printer.]

FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

INTERNATIONAL.—*Bulletin des Internationalen Arbeitsamtes.* Nos. 10-12, 1914. [Jena : Gustav Fischer.]

—*Monthly Bulletin of Economic and Social Intelligence, November, 1914. Ditto, December, 1914.* Co-operative legislation in Canada, recent progress of co-operative societies in Denmark, mutual credit societies in Russia. International Institute of Agriculture. [Rome.]

UNITED STATES.—*Census Bulletin, 128.* Supply and Distribution of Cotton for the year ending 31st August, 1914. [Washington : Government Printing Office.]

—*Minnesota. Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Labour and Industry, 1913-1914.* Labour organisations, employment agencies, accidents, women and child labour, &c. [Minneapolis : Syndicate Printing Co.]

GERMANY.—*Reichs-Arbeitsblatt, January, 1915.* Employment in December and summary for year, trade union unemployment in fourth quarter of 1914. Department of Labour Statistics of

the Imperial Statistical Office. [Berlin : Carl Heymann : price 1d.]

ITALY.—*Bollettino dell' Ufficio del Lavoro. January 16th, 1915.* (Fortnightly series.) Labour disputes in second half of December. *Ditto, February 1st, 1915.* Labour disputes and retail food prices in December. Labour Department of Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce, and Industry.—*Bollettino dell' Ispettorato dell' Industria e del Lavoro. November-December, 1914.* Labour Department of Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce and Industry. [Rome : Fratelli Treves : price 3d.]

—*Bollettino dell' Emigrazione. January 15th, 1915.* Italian Emigration Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. [Rome : Fratelli Bocca : price 3d.]

HOLLAND.—*Verslag over het Jaar 1913 door den Raad van Toezicht op de Spoorwegdiensten aan den Minister van Waterstaat.* Report on railways in Holland in 1913, by Railway Administration. Ministry of Waterways, &c. [The Hague : Gebroeders van Cleef.]

—*Jaarcijfers voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden. Rijk in Europa, 1913.* Statistical Year Book of Holland, 1913. Factory inspection, work of conciliation boards, hours of labour in factories, Trade Unions, collective labour agreements, strikes and lockouts, cost of living, &c. Central Bureau of Statistics. [Price 2s. 6d.]—*Overzicht van de Verslagen der Kamers van Arbeid over 1913.* Chambers of labour (conciliation boards) in Holland, report for 1913. Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce.—*Maandschrift van het Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, January 30th, 1915.* Employment in January (also summary for 1914), labour disputes in January, final report of Royal Commission on Unemployment, Trade Unions on January 1st, 1914. [The Hague : Gebroeders Belinfante : price 5d.]

DENMARK.—*Statistiske Efterretninger, January 26th, 1914.* Retail prices in January, unemployment in November. *Ditto, February 5th, 1915.* Unemployment on January 23rd, 1915. *Ditto, February 18th, 1915.* Retail prices in February. Statistical Department. [Copenhagen : Gyldenalske Boghandel Nordisk Forlag : price 1½d. each part.]

—*Social Forsorg. February, 1915.* Unemployment in November and on 23rd January, 1915. Danish Workmen's Insurance Office and the Unemployment Inspector's Department. [Hellerup : V. L. Faber.]

NORWAY.—*Haandverskstællingen i Norge, 1910. Fjerde Hefte: Arbeidslønninger.* Census of handicrafts in Norway, 1910. Part IV., Wages. Central Statistical Bureau, 1914. [Price 7d.]—*Sociale Meddelelser. No. 6, 1914.* Employment October-December, retail prices in 1914. Department of Social Affairs, Commerce, Industry, and Fisheries. [Christiania : Aschehoug & Co.]

SWEDEN.—*Arbetartillgång, Arbetstid och Arbetlön inom Sveriges Jordbruk år 1913.* Supply of labour, hours of labour and wages in agriculture in 1913. Department for Social Affairs. [Price 7d.]—*Sociale Meddelanden, No. 12, 1914.* Work of special committees on unemployment and food supply, collective labour agreements in 1913, price of household necessities in November (also summary, 1904-1914). *Ditto, No. 1., 1915.* Unemployment among tobacco workers in the period September 9th-November 30th, 1914, Workmen's Insurance in 1913, prices of necessities in December. Department for Social Affairs.—*Den Offentliga Arbetsförmedlingen i Sverige, 1902-1912.* Public labour exchanges in Sweden, 1902-1912. Department for Social Affairs.—*Allmän Sparbanksstatistik år 1913.* Statistics of savings banks in Sweden for 1913. Central Statistical Bureau, 1915. [Stockholm : P. A. Norstedt & Söner.]

SPAIN.—*Boletín del Instituto de Reformas Sociales. January, 1915.* Labour disputes in third quarter of 1914. Spanish Labour Department. [Madrid : D. V. Suárez : price 2½d.]

PORTUGAL.—*Boletín do Trabalho Industrial. No. 96. Relatório dos Serviços da 3ª Circunscrição dos Serviços Técnicos da Indústria no Ano de 1913.* Report of factory, &c., inspection in No. 3 District in 1913. *Do. No. 94 Indústria das Rendas.* Report on the lace-making industry. Department of Commerce and Industry. [Lisbon.]

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Consular Reports. Annual Series. No. 5411. Barcelona, 1913. Industries, public works, banking and insurance, &c. [Cd. 7620-21 : price 3d.]—*No. 5424. Foreign Trade of China, 1913.* Mining industries, output of coal, mining regulations, &c. [Cd. 7620-34 : price 3d.]

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