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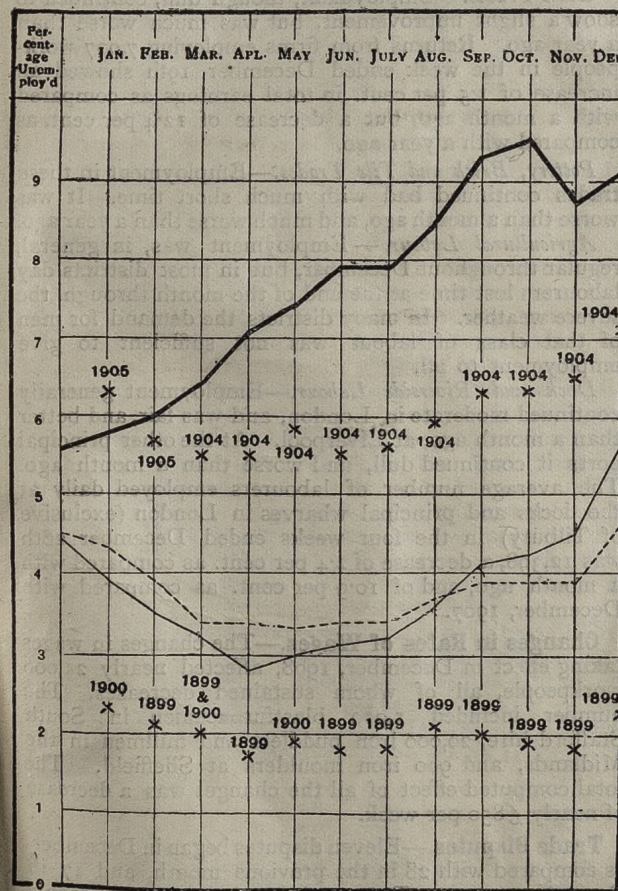
## EMPLOYMENT CHART

SHOWING PERCENTAGE UNEMPLOYED OF MEMBERS OF TRADE UNIONS MAKING RETURNS.

Thick Curve—1908. Thin Curve—1907.

Dotted Curve—Mean of 1898-1907.

× The crosses indicate the maximum and minimum percentages of unemployed during the years 1898-1907 by the dates thereof.



### NOTE TO CHART.

The above Chart is based solely on Returns furnished direct to the Labour Department 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. For December, 1908, the general and branch Returns of Unions related to 679,060 members in the following trades:—

Building...	62,365	Paper, Printing & Book-binding	58,179
Coal Mining	133,314	Woodworking and Furnishing	36,909
Engineering	162,891	Miscellaneous	16,921
Shipbuilding	55,063		
Other Metal Trades	41,471		
Textiles	111,947	Total	679,060

## STATE OF THE LABOUR MARKET IN DECEMBER.

[In addition to the 2,655 Employment Returns from Trade Unions used for the Chart, 3,755 were received from employers relating to 1,096,827 workpeople employed in coal and iron mining, the cotton, woollen, worsted and other textile trades, the building trades, the boot and shoe and other clothing trades, and the paper and glass trades. Besides these 6,410 statistical returns, a large number of returns of a non-statistical character were received from Employers' Associations, Trade Unions, Local Correspondents, and other sources.]

EMPLOYMENT in December was, on the whole, much about the same as in November. There was some improvement in the cotton, worsted, linen and lace trades. There was the usual seasonal decline in the building trades, and the engineering and other industries were adversely affected by the usual holiday suspensions at the end of the year.

As compared with a year ago employment in all the principal industries showed a decline.

In the 416\* Unions, with a net membership of 679,060\* making Returns, 61,619 (or 9.1 per cent.) were reported as unemployed at the end of December, 1908, as compared with 8.7 per cent. at the end of November, 1908, and 5.6 per cent. at the end of December, 1907.

**Coal Mining.**—Employment during December was fairly good, and showed some improvement as compared with November. It was not so good as a year ago. The average number of days worked by the pits during the four weeks ended December 19th, 1908, was 5.29, as compared with 5.19 in November, 1908, and 5.63 in December, 1907.

**Iron Mining.**—Employment was good, and about the same as a month ago and a year ago.

**Pig Iron Industry.**—Employment in this industry during December continued moderate. It was worse than a year ago. Returns relating to the works of 108 ironmasters employing 22,100 workpeople showed 286 furnaces in blast at the end of December, as compared with 289 in November, 1908, and 305 in December, 1907.

**Iron and Steel Works.**—Employment continued about the same as in the previous month. It was worse than a year ago. The volume of employment (i.e., number employed multiplied by the number of shifts worked) during the week ended December 19th, 1908, at the works from which Returns were received was 0.2 per cent. more than in the week ended November 21st, 1908, but 11.4 per cent. less than a year ago.

**Tinplate and Steel Sheet Manufacture.**—Employment during December continued very good. It was better than a month ago and a year ago. At the works covered by the Returns 456 tinplate and sheet mills were working, as compared with 444 in November, 1908, and 436 in December, 1907.

**Engineering Trades.**—Employment continued slack, with a considerable amount of short time, and was worse than a month ago and a year ago. The percentage

\* The figures for earlier months differ slightly from those previously published owing to fuller and more accurate information being available as regards certain Trade Unions.