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FEBRUARY, 1909.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

Mr. A. WILSON FOX, C.B.

At the Council Chamber, Whitehall,
this
2nd day of February, 1909.
Present,

The Right Hon. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, M.P.

The Board of Trade have learned with sorrow of the death on Thursday, January 21st, of Mr. ARTHUR WILSON FOX, C.B., Comptroller General of the Commercial Labour and Statistical Departments.

Mr. Wilson Fox's career in the Board of Trade began in 1894; he was appointed Assistant Labour Commissioner in 1897; he became Deputy Comptroller General of the Commercial Labour and Statistical Departments in 1903, and Comptroller General early in 1907.

Besides his services in connection with the Board of Trade Mr. Wilson Fox performed valuable public work as Assistant Commissioner to the Royal Commission on Labour 1892, and to the Royal Commission on Agriculture 1893-4, and as Secretary to the Royal Commission on Local Taxation 1896.

The Board of Trade desire to record their appreciation of the energy, judgment and generous sympathy with which he discharged his various duties. His knowledge of economic subjects, and his address in dealing with men were of high service to the State; and the Board are unable to measure the loss they have sustained by his early death.

The Board desire that a copy of this Minute be communicated to his widow with an intimation of their respectful sympathy in her affliction.

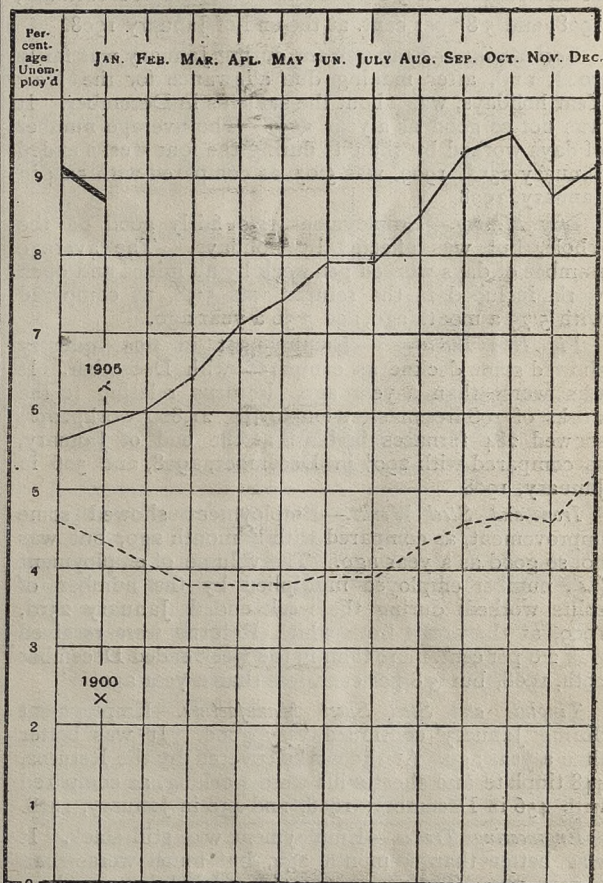
(Sd.) WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.

EMPLOYMENT CHART

SHOWING PERCENTAGE UNEMPLOYED OF MEMBERS OF
TRADE UNIONS MAKING RETURNS.

——— *Thick Curve*—1909. ——— *Thin Curve*—1908.
----- *Dotted Curve*—Mean of 1899-1908.

× The crosses indicate the maximum and minimum percentages of unemployed during the years 1899-1908 with 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 January, 1909, the general and branch Returns of Unions related to 688,588 members in the following trades:—

Building... ..	63,196	Paper, Printing & Book-binding	59,086
Coal Mining	139,772	Woodworking and Furnishing	36,232
Engineering	163,319	Miscellaneous	16,838
Shipbuilding	56,392		
Other Metal Trades	40,861		
Textiles	112,692	Total	688,588

Duration of Relief.

Over 30 per cent. of the number were relieved for a period not exceeding four weeks, and nearly 47 per cent. for a period not exceeding 13 weeks. Permanent paupers (i.e. those relieved continuously for a year) formed about 32 per cent. of the total (669,000 out of 2,076,000) and the remainder, or 21 per cent., were relieved for periods varying from 13 weeks to a year. It must, however, be borne in mind that the permanent paupers are chiefly the aged and infirm poor who have few dependants, and that those relieved for shorter periods are more often heads of families. Any outdoor relief granted to heads of families was for the purpose of the statistics held to be also relief to dependants. Allowance for this must be made when the proportion of permanent to temporary pauperism is considered.

Table with 5 columns: Aggregate Length of Relief, England, Scotland, Ireland, Total. Rows include categories like 'Not exceeding 1 week', 'Over 1 week and not exceeding 4 weeks', etc.

DISTRESS COMMITTEES IN JANUARY, 1909.

NOTE.—Labour Bureaux which are identical with Distress Committees are included in this Table. For particulars of other Labour Bureaux see page 70.

DURING January the Local Government Board issued an Order establishing a Distress Committee in Dundalk.

The Table given below summarises the information received from the various Distress Committees as to their operations in January, 1909. As regards the number of applicants the Committees were requested, in making up their returns, to exclude all who were known to have found work or to have left the neighbourhood since registration, and those who, on investigation, were found to be ineligible or disqualified. Those engaged on relief-works are, however, included.

The particulars as to relief relate to employment provided by the London Central Body, and by the various Distress Committees, or towards the provision of which the Distress Committees are expected to contribute. Works provided and entirely paid for by the Local Authorities, without any contribution from the Distress Committees are, as far as possible, excluded:—

Table with 5 columns: Distress Committees, Net No. of Applicants on Registers at end of Jan., 1909, No. given Employment-relief, Aggregate duration of Employment-relief, Total Amount of Wages paid. Rows include London (Central Body), Outer London, Provincial Towns in England and Wales, Lancashire and Cheshire.

Table with 5 columns: Distress Committees, Net No. of Applicants on Registers at end of Jan., 1909, No. given Employment-relief, Aggregate duration of Employment-relief, Total Amount of Wages paid. Rows include Yorkshire, Midlands, Rest of England and Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and United Kingdom.

It will be seen that the net total number of applicants remaining on the registers (after deduction of persons disqualified, those who had found work, &c.) was 145,151, of whom 54,710 were in London and "Outer London"; 71,986 in the provincial towns of England and Wales; 12,179 in Scotland; and 6,276 in Ireland. As usual the great majority of applicants to the Distress Committees were general labourers, or labourers in the building trades. Building trade artisans were also numerous, especially in some of the London and "Outer London" boroughs, and in Brighton, Bristol, Hastings, Leeds, Norwich, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. Artisans in other trades accounted for a considerable proportion of the applicants in centres of the metal, engineering, and shipbuilding industries.

The total number who received employment-relief was 39,743, of whom 11,106 were in London and "Outer London"; 21,146 in the provincial towns of England and Wales; 6,008 in Scotland; and 1,583 in Ireland. The average number of days' employment-relief provided was 10.4 per man employed; and the wages paid amounted to about 33s. 6d. per man, or 3s. 3d. per day.

The following table affords a comparison between the work done by Distress Committees in January, 1909, and December, 1908, and January, 1908. No satisfactory comparison can be given of the number of applicants remaining on the registers at the end of each of these months.

* Applicants on registers of 29 Metropolitan Boroughs.
† No employment-relief was provided by the Distress Committee, but the Municipality found work for some of the men.
‡ Includes cost of food and of lodging to men employed at Farm Colony.

Table with 6 columns: No. of Distress Committees in operation, No. of applicants given Employment-relief, Aggregate duration of Employment-relief, Total Amount of Wages Paid. Rows include London, United Kingdom, and a comparison of January 1909, December 1908, and January 1908.

AFFORESTATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

THE Royal Commission on Coast Erosion and Afforestation have issued their second Report*, dealing with afforestation. The original terms of reference were extended on March 31st, 1908, in order that the Commission might inquire into the question whether it was desirable to make an experiment in afforestation as a means of increasing employment during periods of depression in the labour market, and if so, by what authority and under what conditions such experiment should be conducted.

As a result of their inquiries the Commission find that the natural conditions of soil and climate in the United Kingdom are favourable to the production of high-class commercial timber, and that the afforestation of suitable lands if undertaken on an adequate scale and in accordance with scientific principles, should prove a sound and remunerative investment.

The amount of land suitable for afforestation, but not now under timber in the United Kingdom, is estimated roughly at a maximum of 9,000,000 acres. A forest of this extent may be expected to yield 9,000,000 loads annually in perpetuity, an annual supply approximately equal to the importation of foreign timber from temperate climes in 1907 (8,500,000 loads). To ensure the maintenance of a steady and continuous supply of marketable timber the area should be divided for planting by the average number of years which the crop needs to mature, and the best rotation in order to secure such a supply is estimated to be one in which 150,000 acres would be afforested annually.

On the question of the relation of labour to forestry, the Commission find that the operations involved in afforestation vary in the degree of requisite skill from little or none in rough road-making and surface draining, to a considerable amount in the planting, and that there are in the United Kingdom at any time, and especially in winter, thousands of men out of work for longer or shorter periods who are quite ready and able to perform the less skilled work without previous training, and with satisfactory results. There is a still larger class of unemployed who are capable of being trained to perform this or the higher class of labour. The labour employed in the national forests should not fall below the ordinary standards, and should be remunerated at the ordinary rate of the district for similar labour. Subject to the requisite standard of efficiency being attained, preference should be given to those temporarily or permanently unemployed in the district, especially where evidence of such efficiency can be furnished by public or private agencies for the reclamation and training of the unemployed class. That part of sylvicultural work which requires most labour, viz., the establishment of the forest, is of a sufficiently flexible character to be capable of being pushed on when

*Cd 4460. Price 6d. Wyman & Sons, Ltd.

labour is abundant, and suspended when labour is scarce, and is therefore peculiarly suited to meet exceptional pressure of unemployment. The Commission consider that while there is no need to accept inefficient labour, the agency of sylviculture may well be invoked for building up the moral and physical fibre of even the most depressed of the unemployed classes, provided that any additional expense incurred by the employment of less efficient labour be defrayed from a separate account.

The Commission estimate that, taking varying circumstances into account, on an average it will take twelve men to afforest 100 acres in the planting season of four to five months, and that every 100 acres afforested will provide permanent employment for at least one man. If 150,000 acres be annually taken in hand, the labour of 18,000 men will be needed, and permanent employment will in due course be afforded to 1,500 men, rising by an additional 1,500 every year until the end of the rotation. The number permanently employed would then approach 100,000. The labour absorbed by felling and converting timber and in subsidiary industries which spring up around a timber supply, has been considered too remote to warrant detailed estimation, but there is undoubtedly a large field of employment in this connection.

The Commission find that, assuming that a large scheme of national afforestation is embarked upon by the State, a certain disturbance of the existing population would be inevitable, but they consider that the fear that local labour might be displaced by the introduction of a large amount of outside labour is groundless. The acquisition of grazing areas might necessitate a modification of the existing agricultural system on certain farms, but it is not reasonable to suppose that the remaining lowland areas on such farms could not, in many cases, either be adapted to other forms of agriculture, or be profitably utilised for small holdings. It is pointed out that it is during the winter period, when the small holder has most leisure, and is glad to find supplementary work, that sylviculture is most insistent on a supply of labour. Moreover, the conversion of comparatively unprofitable lands into forests enhances the productiveness of adjacent areas, and should assist materially the small holdings movement. The Commission draw attention to the fact that forestry offers a new source of employment, and that the market for its produce is so great that no difficulty of competition between the State and individuals need be apprehended.

In conclusion the Commission recommend that a special Board of Commissioners should be appointed to carry out a national scheme of afforestation, and that in default of purchase by agreement land should be acquired under compulsory powers.

THE "WORKPEOPLE'S WELFARE" EXHIBITION AT CHARLOTTENBURG.*

As far back as twenty years ago the idea of establishing a museum of contrivances for the prevention of accidents was discussed in Germany, and the Imperial Insurance Department procured for its own purposes a collection of approved devices of this kind, which was shown at many exhibitions both at home and abroad. Prominent social reformers had repeatedly expressed the opinion that the establishment of a comprehensive collection of practical contrivances for the protection of workpeople, would tend to promote the prevention of accidents in industrial undertakings. It was not until 1900, however, that this desire was realised, and in that year the Reichstag granted the means for establishing a permanent "workpeople's welfare" exhibition.

The museum was built as an Imperial institution during the years 1901-3 at Charlottenburg, and placed under the administration of the Imperial Ministry of the Interior.

The floor of the large hall is chiefly taken up with machines supplied with contrivances for the prevention of accidents. In order that these machines may be

* Based on "Monatsblätter für Arbeiterversicherung, No. 1, 1909.

The average number of days worked per week by the mines included in the Returns in the four weeks ended January 23rd was 5.38, as compared with 5.81 a month ago, and 5.36 a year ago.

Tin and Copper Mining.—Employment in Cornwall continued fair in the Camborne district, but was bad in the Calstock district.

Lead Mining.—Employment was moderate in Wear-dale, and good in North Wales.

Quarrying.

Slate.—Employment was slack in North Wales, and showed a further decline. At Ballachulish (Argyllshire), the quarries were closed, the customary holidays being extended until February 1st.

Granite.—Employment continued good in Leicestershire, and dull, with much short time, in Aberdeenshire. It was bad on Dartmoor, where it was affected by severe weather, but showed some improvement compared with the previous month in the Penryn district.

Limestone.—Employment was fair, and better than a month ago in Cumberland. In Weardale it was moderate, and worse than in the previous month. An improvement was reported in North Wales. In the Somerset blue lias quarries employment was slack. It was dull in the Plymouth district.

Other Stone.—Employment continued good in the Cleve Hill road material quarries. It was bad in the Bath stone quarries, moderate in the Gloucestershire pennant stone, and the Forest of Dean sandstone quarries. In sandstone quarries in North Wales employment was interrupted by bad weather. The weather also caused irregularity of employment in the Gateshead freestone quarries. Employment was generally moderate in the Sheffield district, and in the grindstone trade at Barnsley and Wickersly. It remained bad in Forfarshire. With chert quarrymen at Bakewell it was dull.

Settling.—Employment continued good in Leicestershire. It was fair in the Aberdeen district and at Glasgow, moderate at Airdrie. In the Cleve Hill district it was quiet.

China Clay.—Employment continued good in the St. Austell and Lee Moor districts.

PIG IRON INDUSTRY.

(Based on 116 Returns—109 from Employers and an Employers' Association, 3 from Trade Unions, and 4 from Local Correspondents.) EMPLOYMENT in this industry showed some decline as compared with December. It was worse than a year ago.

Table showing employment in the pig iron industry by districts from January 1909 to January 1908, including monthly and yearly changes.

The total number of furnaces in blast at the end of January, 1909, was 284, as compared with 290* in December, 1908, and 306 in January, 1908.

* Revised figure.

1 in Lincolnshire), and 9 were either damped down or blown out (3 in the Cleveland district, 2 in Staffordshire, and 1 each in Lancashire, Lincolnshire, Northants and Wiltshire). The number of workpeople employed at the works respecting which returns were received was 21,800 in January, 1909; a decrease of 2.7 per cent. as compared with a year ago.

The Imports of iron ore in January, 1909, amounted to 441,399 tons, or 94,473 tons less than in December, 1908, and 31,260 tons less than in January, 1908.

The Exports of pig iron from the United Kingdom in January, 1909, amounted to 63,485 tons, or 22,830 tons less than in December, 1908, and 26,666 tons less than in January, 1908.

TINPLATE AND STEEL SHEET WORKS.

(Based on 59 Returns—55 from Employers, 3 from a Trade Union, and 1 from a Local Correspondent.)

EMPLOYMENT in this industry continued very good. It was better than a year ago.

At the works covered by the Returns, 399 tinplate mills were working at the end of January, 1909, as compared with 406 a month ago, and 383 a year ago. The numbers of sheet mills working at the same dates were 49, 50 and 47. The supply of and demand for labour continued about equal. The works to which these figures relate are principally in South Wales and Monmouthshire, and employ about 22,000 workpeople.

Table showing the number of works open and mills in operation for tinplate and steel sheet works from January 1909 to January 1908.

Exports.—The Table below shows the quantity of tinplates and tinned sheets, and of black plates for tinning, exported in the months stated:—

Table showing exports of tinplates and tinned sheets to various countries from January 1909 to January 1908.

IRON AND STEEL WORKS.

(Based on 215 Returns—196 from Employers, received partly direct and partly through the Trade Correspondent; 7 from Trade Unions, and 12 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT at iron and steel works showed some improvement, as compared with a month ago, but was not so good as a year ago.

The aggregate number of shifts worked during the week ended January 23rd, 1909 (i.e., number employed multiplied by the number of shifts worked), was about 468,000, an increase of 11,700 shifts (or 2.6 per cent.) as compared with December, 1908, but a decrease of 29,000 shifts (or 5.8 per cent.), as compared with January, 1908.

* It will be understood that in addition to the works returned as open, i.e., giving full or partial employment, a certain number of works were wholly idle at each of the dates to which the Returns relate; but the figures quoted are believed to give approximately the total number of works and mills actually in operation.

Main table showing the number of workpeople employed by firms making returns and the average number of shifts worked per man, categorized by departments and districts.

Table showing the number of workpeople employed in the pig iron industry by districts from January 1909 to January 1908.

As compared with a month ago, there were increases in the number of workpeople employed in the Northumberland and Durham, Sheffield and Rotherham, Staffordshire, Wales and Monmouth districts, and in Scotland; in the other districts there was not much change.

The average number of shifts worked per man per week was 5.39, as compared with 5.38 in December, 1908, and 5.50 in January, 1908. Compared with a month ago, there was not much change in the number of shifts worked, except in the Leeds, Bradford, &c., district, where there was an increase of 0.22 of a shift; the iron forging and Bessemer converting departments showed increases in the number of shifts worked; while there was a decrease of 0.41 of a shift at crucible furnaces.

The Imports of iron and steel and manufactures thereof during January, 1909, amounted to 95,791 tons, or 6,032 tons less than in December, 1908, but 28,947 tons more than in January, 1908.

The Exports of iron and steel and manufactures thereof (excluding pig and puddled iron, and tinned plates and black plates for tinning) during January, 1909, amounted to 183,141 tons, or 5,392 tons less than in December, 1908, and 12,691 tons less than in January, 1908.

ENGINEERING TRADES.

(Based on 980 Returns—6 from Employers and Employers Associations, 936 from Trade Unions and their branches, and 38 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT, though still slack, showed an improvement as compared with a month ago, but was much worse than a year ago. A considerable amount of short time was reported.

Returns from Trade Unions having a membership of 163,319 show that at the end of January the percentage unemployed was 13.1, as compared with 14.0 a month ago, and 5.8 at the end of January, 1908. The improvement in employment as compared with a month ago was common to most districts, and was especially marked in the West Riding District and at Belfast and Dublin. Compared with a year ago every district showed a decline, the most noticeable being in the West Riding, and Oldham, Bolton and Blackburn districts, and in Scotland.

Table showing the percentage of unemployed workers in various districts from January 1909 to January 1908.

On the North-East Coast employment continued slack, but was better than a month ago, except with pattern makers; there was still a high percentage of Trade Union members unemployed. At Newcastle employment continued good at ordnance works, and night shifts were worked, as also at Jarrow on turbines. On the Wear employment continued very bad.

In Lancashire employment continued slack, short time again being reported. An improvement was reported at Liverpool and Preston. With makers of textile machinery employment continued moderate.

In the West Riding of Yorkshire employment, though still slack, showed a considerable improvement upon the previous month. Short time was reported generally. An improvement was reported on the Humber, except with ironfounders; at Lincoln and Doncaster it continued moderate.

In the Midland Counties employment continued slack generally. At Derby makers of refrigerating machinery and men in railway shops, except ironfounders, were well employed, as also were lace and hosiery machine builders and brass tinning and carriage makers at Nottingham. A further improvement was reported in the cycle and motor industry in the Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Coventry districts. At Leicester employment

* Exclusive of Superannuated members.

employment was bad, and showed a further decline. At Hawick employment continued slack ; at Selkirk and Galashiels it continued fair, and was slightly better than a year ago.

Worsted Trade.

Employment was moderate, but showed a slight decline compared with a month ago ; it was worse than a year ago.

Returns from firms employing 46,853 workpeople in the week ended January 23rd showed a decrease of 0.1 per cent. in the number employed, and of 1.1 per cent. in the amount of wages paid, compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago there was a decrease of 1.6 per cent. in the number employed, and of 3.1 per cent. in the amount of wages paid.

In the Bradford, Keighley and Halifax districts employment was moderate, and worse than a year ago ; some short time was reported. In the Huddersfield district employment was fair, but showed a decline compared with a month ago and a year ago.

Table with columns: Departments, Workpeople covered by returns (No. employed, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with a month ago, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with a year ago), Earnings (Aggregate amount of Wages paid, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with a month ago, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with a year ago).

Prices of Raw Material.

The prices of wool and tops in Bradford are shown below for the three months specified :-

Table with columns: Average Prices (Lincoln Hogs, 40's Crossbred tops, 60's Super Botany tops), Course of Prices during the month (Lincoln Hogs, 40's Crossbred tops, 60's Super Botany tops).

Imports and Exports.

Table with columns: Jan., 1909, Dec., 1908, Jan., 1908, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a month ago, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a year ago.

LINEN TRADE.

(Based on 115 Returns—104 from Employers and Employers' Associations, 6 from Trade Unions, and 5 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT was moderate, and better than a month ago and a year ago.

Returns from firms employing 46,958 workpeople in the week ended January 23rd showed an increase of 0.7 per cent. in the number employed, and of 1.0 per cent. in the amount of wages paid, compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago there was an increase of 1.9 per cent. in the number employed, and of 5.8 per cent. in the amount of wages paid.

In Belfast employment showed an improvement during January, and was better than a year ago ; several mills began to work 40 or 44 hours a week instead of 32. In the other parts of Ireland there was little change compared with a month ago, but employment was better than a year ago. In Fifehire employment was fairly good, and much better than a year ago. In the other parts of Scotland employment showed little change.

Table with columns: Departments, Districts, Workpeople covered by returns, Earnings.

Imports and Exports.—The Table below shows the quantities of imported flax, and of British and Irish exports of linen yarn and piece goods, for the months stated :-

Table with columns: Description, Jan., 1909, Dec., 1908, Jan., 1908, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a month ago, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a year ago.

JUTE TRADE.

(Based on 34 Returns—31 from Employers and Employers' Associations, and 3 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT was fair, and better than a month ago ; it was not so good as a year ago.

Returns from firms employing 17,006 workpeople in the week ended January 23rd showed an increase of 0.5 per cent. in the number employed, and of 1.4 per cent. in the amount of wages paid, compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago there was a decrease of 1.8 per cent. in the number employed, and of 2.7 per cent. in the amount of wages paid. Of the 17,006 workpeople covered by the Returns, 14,475 (or 85 per cent.) were employed in the Dundee district.

Imports and Exports.—The following Table shows the value of woollen and cotton hosiery imported and exported for the months stated :-

Table with columns: Imports (less Re-Exports), Hosiery, Woollen, Cotton, Jan., 1909, Dec., 1908, Jan., 1908, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a month ago, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a year ago.

SILK TRADE.

(Based on 57 Returns—53 from Employers, 2 from Trade Unions, and 2 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT continued moderate, and was worse than a year ago. Returns received from firms employing 8,159 workpeople, and paying £5,162 in wages in the week ended January 23rd, 1909, showed that, as compared with December, there was a decrease of 0.9 per cent. in the number of workpeople employed, and an increase of 0.9 per cent. in the amount of wages paid. Compared with a year ago there was a decrease of 3.8 per cent. in the number of workpeople employed, and of 5.5 per cent. in the amount of wages paid.

The Returns are summarised in the following Table :-

Table with columns: Branches, Districts, Workpeople covered by Returns, Earnings.

At Macclesfield employment continued bad with "outside" handloom weavers ; with handloom weavers working in factories it was fairly good. With trimming weavers it was bad at Leek and Congleton. In the Bradford district there was a slight improvement. In the Eastern Counties employment showed some decline, as compared with both a month ago and a year ago.

Imports and Exports.—The Table below shows the quantities of raw and manufactured silk imported and exported for the months stated.

Table with columns: Imports, Exports, Description, Jan., 1909, Dec., 1908, Jan., 1908, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a month ago, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a year ago.

Table with columns: Departments, Workpeople covered by Returns, Earnings.

Compared with a month ago the number employed and the amount of wages paid showed an increase in every department. Compared with a year ago, the preparing, spinning and weaving departments showed a decrease both in the number employed and in the amount of wages paid.

Imports and Exports.—The Table below shows the quantities of imported jute and of British and Irish exports of jute yarn and piece goods for the months stated.

Table with columns: Description, Jan., 1909, Dec., 1908, Jan., 1908, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a month ago, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a year ago.

HOSIERY TRADE.

(Based on 109 Returns—100 from Employers and Employers' Associations, 4 from Trade Unions, and 5 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT was slightly better than a month ago, and showed little change compared with a year ago ; it was moderate in England, fairly good in Scotland.

Returns from firms employing 18,405 workpeople in the week ended January 23rd showed an increase of 0.3 per cent. in the number employed, and of 1.2 per cent. in the amount of wages paid, compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago, there was a decrease of 0.8 per cent. in the number employed, and an increase of 0.1 per cent. in the amount of wages paid.

At Leicester employment continued quiet, and was worse than a year ago ; at Hincley it was moderate and worse than a year ago ; at Loughborough it continued fair. With power-frame workers at Nottingham and in Derbyshire employment was moderate ; with hand-frame workers in the country districts it was bad, with much short time. In Scotland it was fairly good, but not so good as a month ago ; it was about the same as a year ago.

Table with columns: District, Workpeople covered by Returns, Earnings.

LACE TRADE.

(Based on 91 Returns—82 from Employers, 5 from Trade Unions, and 4 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT on the whole was moderate, and slightly worse than a month ago; it showed little change as compared with a year ago.

Returns from firms employing 8,833 workpeople in the week ended January 23rd, and paying £8,123 in wages, showed a decrease of 0.7 per cent. in the number employed, and of 2.0 per cent. in the amount of wages paid, compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago there was a decrease of 2.2 per cent. in the number employed, and an increase of 0.2 per cent. in the amount of wages paid.

At Nottingham employment was reported as bad in the levers branch, fair in the curtain branch, and good in the plain net branch; several firms reported short time. In the Long Eaton district employment showed a decline, and much short time was reported. In the West of England employment in the plain net branch continued slack. In Scotland employment in the curtain branch continued fairly good, and was better than a year ago.

Table with columns: Branches, Workpeople covered by Returns (No. paid wages, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with a), Earnings (Aggregate Amount of Wages paid, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with a).

Imports and Exports.—The Table below shows the values of lace imported and exported for the months stated:—

Table with columns: Description, Jan., 1909, Dec., 1908, Jan., 1908, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a (Month ago, Year ago).

OTHER TEXTILE TRADES.

(Based on 59 Returns—22 from Employers and Employers' Associations, 27 from Trade Unions, and 10 from Local Correspondents).

Carpet Trade.

Employment during January continued bad, and was worse than a year ago. Some short time was reported. Returns received from firms employing 5,547 workpeople and paying £4,472 in wages in the week ended January 23rd showed an increase of 0.3 per cent. in the number employed, and a decrease of 1.9 per cent. in the amount of wages paid, as compared with a month ago. As compared with a year ago, there was a decrease of 5.0 per cent. in the number employed, and of 8.6 per cent. in the amount of wages paid.

Printing, Dyeing, Bleaching, and Finishing.

Woolen and Worsted Dyers.—Employment in the West Riding, though still slack, showed some improvement as compared with a month ago.

Cotton Dyers.—Employment was moderate, and better than a month ago; it was worse than a year ago.

Silk Dyers.—Employment was reported as fair at Macclesfield, and bad at Leek.

Calico Printers, &c.—Employment generally was slack, but showed a slight improvement compared with a month ago; it was worse than a year ago. With calico printers' engravers in Derbyshire employment showed an improvement, and was moderate. In Glasgow it was bad with calico printers, engravers and block printers.

Hosiery and Lace Dyers, Trimmers, &c.—At Leicester employment showed a slight improvement; at Hinckley it continued bad; at Loughborough it showed a decline. With dyers at Nottingham employment continued good, with bleachers at Basford it continued fairly good, with hosiery trimmers at Basford and Bulwell it was fair; on the whole, employment in Nottinghamshire was better than a month ago and a year ago.

Calenderers, &c.—At Glasgow employment continued fair.

TAILORING TRADE.

(Based on 124 Returns—94 from Employers, 5 from Trade Unions, and 25 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT in the bespoke branch in London showed the usual seasonal decline, and was worse than a year ago. In the provinces it was slack. In the ready-made branch it was slack, but slightly better than a month ago; it was worse than a year ago.

Bespoke Branch.

London.—Employment during January showed the usual seasonal decline, and was worse than a year ago.

Firms paying £8,078 to their workpeople during the four weeks ended January 23rd showed a decrease of 23.9 per cent. in the amount of wages paid compared with a month ago, and of 9.2 per cent. compared with a year ago.

Other Centres.—Employment was reported as bad at Liverpool and Glasgow, slack at Edinburgh, fair at Dublin, and quiet at Belfast.

Ready-made Branch.

London.—Employment was moderate, slightly better than a month ago, and rather worse than a year ago.

Leeds.—Employment was slack, but showed a slight improvement compared with a month ago, less short time being worked; it was worse than a year ago. Firms employing 7,236 workpeople in their factories (in addition to persons employed on work for them in workshops), in the week ended January 23rd, showed a decrease of 0.1 per cent. in the number employed compared with a month ago, and of 2.2 per cent. compared with a year ago.

Other Centres.—Employment at Manchester continued slack; at Bristol it was slack, but slightly better than a month ago; at Glasgow and Norwich it continued moderate; it was generally worse than a year ago.

The Imports of apparel, not waterproofed, in January, 1909, were valued at £204,532, as compared with £209,238 in December, 1908, and £185,231 in January, 1908; and the Exports for the same months at £432,046, £387,504, and £479,358 respectively.

HAT TRADE.

(Based on 12 Returns—1 from an Employers' Association, and 11 from Trade Unions.)

EMPLOYMENT during January in the Silk hat trade was bad, but slightly better than a month ago; it was worse than a year ago. The percentage of Trade Union members unemployed at the end of January was 16.2, compared with 19.0 a month ago, and 17.5 a year ago.

In the Felt hat trade employment was quiet, but better than a month ago; it was worse than a year ago. The percentage of Trade Union members unemployed at the end of January was 3.5, compared with 4.6 a

month ago, and 3.2 a year ago. Employment was quiet at Denton and Stockport; there were signs of improvement at Denton, but a considerable amount of short time was worked at both centres. In Warwickshire employment was fair, but not so good as a month ago.

Imports and Exports.—The Table below shows the number of hats and bonnets, trimmed and untrimmed, imported and exported for the months stated:—

Table with columns: Description, Jan., 1909, Dec., 1908, Jan., 1908, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a (Month ago, Year ago).

BOOT AND SHOE TRADE.

(Based on 507 Returns—489 received from Employers, partly direct and partly through the Trade Correspondent, 6 from Trade Unions, and 12 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT was fair, and better than a month ago and a year ago, except in the heavy boot districts, where it was worse than a year ago.

Returns from firms employing 64,158 workpeople in the week ended January 23rd showed an increase of 0.9 per cent. in the number employed, and of 3.4 per cent. in the amount of wages paid, compared with a month ago. Compared with a year ago, there was an increase of 1.8 per cent. in the number employed, and of 0.5 per cent. in the amount of wages paid.

At Leicester employment showed a decided improvement, and was fairly good, though some short time was still worked. At Northampton and Kettering there was an improvement, but the Trade Union lasters and finishers reported employment as slack. With army bootmakers in Northamptonshire employment was bad. At Bristol it was bad, and much worse than a year ago. In the heavy boot trade at Kingswood and Leeds it was bad, and worse than a year ago. In Scotland employment was quiet, and worse than a month ago and a year ago.

Table with columns: District, Workpeople covered by the Returns (No. paid wages, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with a), Earnings (Aggregate Amount of Wages paid, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) as compared with a).

Imports and Exports.—The following Table shows the quantities and values of the boots and shoes imported and exported for the months stated:—

Table with columns: Description, Jan., 1909, Dec., 1908, Jan., 1908, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a (Month ago, Year ago).

NOTE.—For imports of hides and of leather see under "Other Leather Trades" below.

OTHER LEATHER TRADES.

(Based on 41 Returns—1 from an Employers' Association, 24 from Trade Unions and 16 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT was bad, but showed a slight improvement compared with a month ago. Trade Unions with a membership of 3,300 had 79 per cent. of their members unemployed at the end of January as compared with 8.6 per cent. in December, and 6.9 per cent. a year ago.

Skinner, Tanners, Curriers, Dressers.—Employment with skinner was fair at Leeds and moderate in London; at Birmingham short time was general. With curriers it was bad at London and Edinburgh; quiet, but improving at Birmingham; fair at Glasgow and Leeds. With dressers it was bad. With leather workers generally, employment was fair at Bolton, Bury, Wigan and Manchester; quiet at Leeds.

Saddle and Harness Makers.—In London employment was fair with saddle makers, quiet with harness makers. At Walsall employment was bad with saddlers and harness makers, and short time was worked. With saddlers it was moderate at Glasgow, dull at Dublin.

Miscellaneous Leather Trades.—With fancy leather workers employment continued bad generally, and short time was worked. With portmanteau and trunk makers employment was bad at Manchester and London, and short time was general.

Imports and Exports.

The Table below shows the imports of hides and undressed skins and of leather, and the exports of saddlery and harness, for the months stated:—

Table with columns: Description, Jan., 1909, Dec., 1908, Jan., 1908, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Jan., 1909, as compared with a (Month ago, Year ago).

OTHER CLOTHING TRADES.

(Based on 174 Returns—164 from Employers, 5 from Trade Unions, and 5 from Local Correspondents.)

EMPLOYMENT in London in the dressmaking trade was fair with retail firms, and better than a year ago; with court dressmakers it was bad, and worse than a year ago. In the wholesale mantle, costume, blouse, &c., trades it was fair, and slightly better than a year ago. In the shirt and collar trade generally it was moderate; in the corset trade it was fair.

Dressmaking, Millinery, and Mantle Trades.—Returns from retail firms in London, chiefly in the West-End, employing 1,379 dressmakers in the week ended

* Includes hides tanned, tawed, curried, or in any way dressed, and goat and sheep skins tanned or dressed as leather.

Other Ports.—Employment with dock labourers on the Tyne and Wear was bad, and continued to decline; it was moderate with trimmers and teamers. Employment was bad generally at Hartlepool and Middlesbrough, and worse than a month ago. It was bad with dock labourers at Hull, Grimsby, and Goole, and moderate with coal porters; there was a general decline in these ports as compared with last month. It was generally bad at Yarmouth, Lowestoft, and King's Lynn. At Plymouth it was dull. It was also dull at Bristol, and worse than a month ago. At the South Wales ports employment was generally fair. It was slack and worse than a month ago at Leith and Glasgow. At Greenock employment was moderate, and better than a month ago. It was fair at Dundee, and bad at Aberdeen. Employment was dull at Belfast and Dublin.

SEAMEN SHIPPED IN JANUARY.

(Based on 27 Returns received through the Marine Department of the Board of Trade.)

RETURNS received from certain selected ports (at which about 83 per cent. of the total tonnage in the foreign trade is entered and cleared), show that during January 35,947* seamen, of whom 4,171 (or 11.6 per cent.) were foreigners, were shipped on foreign-going vessels. The greatest increases as compared with a year ago occurred at Sunderland and Newport, Mon., and the most marked decreases at Liverpool, the Tyne Ports, Glasgow, and Southampton, the net results of all the increases and decreases being a decrease of 3,991.

Lascars are not included in these figures.

Table showing the number of seamen shipped in January 1909 and January 1908, categorized by Principal Ports, Bristol Channel, Other Ports, Scotland, and Ireland.

AGRICULTURAL HIRINGS IN SCOTLAND.

INFORMATION respecting rates of wages agreed upon at the principal hiring fairs held in Scotland in the last six months of 1908 has been received from a correspondent who made special inquiries on behalf of the Department.

The correspondent remarks that there has been comparatively little variation in the rates of wages throughout Scotland in the last few years, although in certain districts there has been a slight downward tendency. No reductions, however, have taken place in the case of cattlemen, while there has been an upward movement in the wages of women workers.

With regard to the hirings at the end of 1908, the correspondent reports that, in spite of the unusually

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

forward state of farm work, there were but few reductions in wages in the southern counties. A slight downward tendency, however, is reported in the counties of Fife, Kinross, Stirling, Dumbarton, Perth, and Forfar, in which counties there was some surplus of labour, and a number of men changing places had to submit to reductions of from 10s. to 20s. for the half year. There was generally no change in the wages of those men who remained in their situations. Little or no change in wages was reported in the counties in the extreme North.

The wages of women servants continued to show an upward tendency, but in some districts women were said to be more easily obtained than in 1907.

PRICES OF BREAD, WHEAT, AND FLOUR.

I.—BREAD.

RETURNS showing the predominant price of 4 lbs. of bread on February 1st, 1909, have been received from 140 of the principal Master Bakers' Associations in the United Kingdom, and 30 from other sources. The Returns are summarised in the following Table, in which the highest predominant rates and the lowest predominant rates are shown, together with the mean of all the predominant rates in each district:—

Table showing predominant prices of bread per 4 lbs. for various districts (London, East Coast, Bristol Channel, Other Ports, Scotland, Ireland) on Feb. 1st, 1909, compared with 1st Jan. 1909 and 1st Feb. 1908.

Compared with a month ago, the mean of the prices remains unaltered. As compared with a year ago, a slight decrease is shown.

In the next Table the predominant price is shown for 28 of the principal towns.

Table showing predominant prices of bread per 4 lbs. for 28 principal towns, including London, Birmingham, Bolton, Bristol, Cardiff, Derby, Huddersfield, Hull, Ipswich, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Norwich, Nottingham, Oldham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Potteries, Wolverhampton, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast, and Dublin.

The above Table shows that, compared with a month ago, the price of the 4lb. loaf has fallen 1/4d. in Ipswich. As compared with a year ago, 16 of the towns (including London) show no change, ten show a decrease of 1/4d., one (Cardiff) a decrease of 3/4d., and one, (Middlesbrough) a decrease of 1d. per 4 lbs.

II.—WHEAT AND FLOUR.

The imports of wheat during September, 1908-January, 1909, amounted to 36,208,695 cwts., or 1,229,405 cwts. less than in the corresponding period of 1907-8. The imports of wheat-meal and flour during September, 1908-January, 1909, amounted to 5,799,563 cwts., or 944,787 cwts. less than in September, 1907-January, 1908.

The following Table gives the mean London Gazette price of British wheat, the average declared value of wheat and flour imports, and the market price of London flour (Town Households) for the periods stated.

Table showing mean London Gazette price of British wheat, average declared value of wheat and flour imports, and market price of London flour (Town Households) for January 1908, December 1908, and January 1909.

PRICES AND WAGES IN THE COAL AND IRON TRADES.

The results of the latest ascertainments of the selling prices of coal and iron, being the prices upon which wages are regulated, are given in the Table below. The movements in wages which resulted from these ascertainments are shown in the paragraphs following the Table:—

Table showing prices according to last audit and increase/decrease of last audit for Coal and Pig Iron across various districts and periods.

Coal.—In connection with the ascertained selling price of Northumberland coal, it was decided at a meeting of the Northumberland Conciliation Board on January 2nd, that the wages of underground workers and bankmen should be reduced by 3 1/2 per cent., and those of other surface workers by 3 per cent., leaving their wages 37 1/2 per cent. and 30 per cent. respectively above the standard of 1879. It was arranged at a meeting of the Durham Conciliation Board on February 5th that the wages of Durham miners should be reduced by 2 1/2 per cent.

* In accordance with Section 8 of the Corn Returns Act, 1882, the rate of conversion from quarters to cwts. is made at the rate of 50 imperial pounds = bushel of wheat.

Pig Iron.—As a result of the ascertainments of the selling price of pig iron, the wages of blastfurnacemen were reduced by 2/3 per cent. in the Cleveland district, and by 2 1/2 per cent. in the West of Scotland. In West Cumberland they were advanced by 1/2 per cent.

Manufactured Iron.—In the North of England the wages of puddlers were advanced by 3d. per ton, and those of millmen by 2 1/2 per cent., whilst in the Midlands and the West of Scotland the wages remain unchanged, as the result of the ascertainments of the selling prices of the specified classes of manufactured iron in those districts.

LEGAL CASES AFFECTING LABOUR.

Correction: Moore v. Manchester Liners, Limited.

It is regretted that in last month's number (LABOUR GAZETTE, January, 1909, p. 27) a mistake was made in the report of this case. The Court of Appeal were divided, and only one of the three Lords Justices gave judgment dismissing the appeal. The majority of the Court gave judgment allowing the appeal, which was allowed accordingly. The majority of the Court decided that as the deceased man had gone ashore entirely for his own purposes and not on any business of his employers, and as the accident had happened before he actually got back to the ship, though very close to it, he was outside the protection of the Act, the accident did not happen in the course of his employment, and the widow was not entitled to compensation.

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

1) Workmen's Compensation Act.

WHAT IS AN ACCIDENT? STRAINED HEART.

By the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, compensation is payable to a workman where he suffers personal injury by an "accident" arising out of and in the course of his employment.

A miner was employed in a coal mine in work which involved unusually severe muscular exertion. He had complained that the work was too much for his strength. Finally, after some days he felt a sudden pain in his heart; he had to leave work and was incapacitated for about three months. He claimed compensation, but his employers contended that his incapacity was not due to any specific incident, and therefore not to any "accident" within the meaning of the Act. The Sheriff-Substitute decided on the evidence that the claimant had not been injured by any sudden jerk or other sudden occurrence; but that his heart had been overstrained by continued and repeated exertions beyond his strength. He therefore held that the incapacity was not due to "accident" within the meaning of the Act, and refused to make an award in the claimant's favour. The claimant appealed.

The Court of Session held that the question was mainly one of fact; and that as there was evidence that the injury was not caused by any specific occurrence, but that the heart became overstrained in the course of work beyond the man's strength, the decision of the Sheriff-Substitute could not be disturbed. The appeal was therefore dismissed. Coe v. Fyfe Coal Co., Court of Session, January 23rd, 1909.

INJURY DUE TO NEGLIGENCE OF EMPLOYER: FAILURE OF PROCEEDINGS UNDER ACT: RIGHT OF ACTION: WORKMAN'S OPTION.

Where an injury is caused by the personal negligence or wilful act of the employer, or of some person for whom he is responsible, nothing in the Act affects the civil liability of the employer, but in that case the workman may, at his option, either claim compensation under the Act or take proceedings independently of the Act; but the employer is not liable to pay compensation both independently of and also under the Act. If, however, an action is brought to recover damages independently of the Act, and it is determined in that action that the employer is not liable, but that he would have been liable to pay compensation under the Act, the action must be dismissed; but the Court in which the action is tried must, if the plaintiff so choose, assess such compensation, but may deduct therefrom the costs caused by bringing the action instead of proceeding under the Act.

A collier was injured in an accident and claimed compensation under the Act. His employers resisted the claim on the ground that the accident had been caused by the man's own serious and wilful misconduct. The Sheriff-Substitute decided that the employers' contention was well founded, and refused to award compensation. The injured man then brought an action for damages against the employers; and the defence was raised that the plaintiff was not entitled to bring an action, having failed in his proceedings under the Act. The Sheriff held that as it had already been judicially decided that the accident was due to the plaintiff's own default, the action could not proceed. The plaintiff appealed.

The Court of Session held that it was unnecessary to decide whether the decision of the Sheriff was right upon the grounds on which it was given, or not, for the Act itself prevented the plaintiff from succeeding in his action. The workman having exercised his option in the first instance to take proceedings under the Act, was bound by that option. The only case in which a workman can avail himself of a claim both by action and under the Act is where

approved by the Secretary of State in pursuance of the powers conferred on him by the Factory and Workshop Act, 1907. [H.C. 341: pp. 7: price 1d.]

Seventieth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England and Wales, 1907. [Cd. 4464: pp. cxi. + 499: price 3s. 3d.]

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Illinois. Twenty-Sixth Annual Coal Report of the Illinois Bureau of Labour Statistics, 1907, with the 9th Annual Report of the Illinois Free Employment Offices for the year ended September 30th, 1907. Output of coal, persons employed, average working days. Number of persons seeking employment at the Free Employment Offices, number found situations, &c. [Springfield: Phillips Bros., State Printers: pp. xvii. + 418 + 84.]

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Miscellaneous Series. No. 673. Report on the Agriculture of Southern Italy. [Cd. 4447-1: pp. 31: price 2d.]

No. 674. Report on the Matting Industry in Japan. [Cd. 4447-2: pp. 21: price 1½d.]

No. 672. Reports on the Raw Silk Industry of Japan and on Japanese Manufactured Silk. Wages, factory, conditions, culture of silkworms, looms employed, &c. [Cd. 4447: pp. 55: price 3d.]

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