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EMPLOYMENT, WAGES, COST OF LIVING, AND TRADE DISPUTES IN AUGUST.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

EMPLOYMENT during August showed a further decline in a number of important industries, but this was offset to a large extent by an improvement in coal mining. The net decline, in industry as a whole, was therefore small.

Among workpeople insured against unemployment in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the percentage unemployed in all industries taken together was 22·7 at 24th August, 1931, as compared with 22·6 at 27th July, 1931, and 17·1 at 25th August, 1930. For males alone the percentage at 24th August, 1931, was 23·7, and for females 20·0. At 27th July, 1931, the corresponding percentages were 23·8 and 19·5.

Insured Persons in Work in Great Britain.—It is estimated that on 24th August, 1931, there were approximately 9,196,000 insured persons aged 16 to 64 in work in Great Britain. This was 22,000 more than a month before, but 501,000 less than a year before.

Numbers Unemployed (excluding Persons normally in Casual Employment).—At 24th August, 1931, there were 1,958,395 persons on the Registers of Employment Exchanges in Great Britain who were out of a situation. This was 80,852 more than a month before, and 624,545 more than a year before. The total on 24th August, 1931, included 1,434,779 men, 61,269 boys, 413,812 women and 48,535 girls. It was made up approximately of 1,310,690 insured persons who had paid at least 30 contributions during the preceding two years, and therefore satisfied the full contributions condition for the receipt of unemployment benefit; 539,390 insured persons who had paid less than 30 contributions during the preceding two years; and 108,320 uninsured persons. The claimants for benefit, numbering 1,774,734, included 257,245 men, 6,191 boys, 56,448 women and 3,200 girls, who had been on the Register for less than one month.

Numbers Temporarily Stopped.—At 24th August, 1931, there were registered as unemployed in Great Britain 440,404 men, 14,376 boys, 194,728 women and 12,321 girls, who were on short time or were otherwise suspended from work on the definite understanding that they were shortly to return to their former employment. The total of 661,829 was 62,861 less than a month before, but 52,520 more than a year before.

Numbers Unemployed normally in Casual Employment.—At 24th August, 1931, there were on the Registers in Great Britain 111,085 men, 263 boys, 2,189 women and 21 girls, who normally seek a livelihood by means of jobs of short duration; these are mainly employed in dock, harbour, river and canal service. The total of 113,558 was 2,441 more than a month before, and 17,015 more than a year before.

Industries in which Principal Variations occurred.—Employment declined in the brick and tile, glass, iron and steel, tinplate, and motor vehicle industries, in

shipbuilding and ship-repairing, in the textile trades (except linen, jute and hosiery), in the clothing and distributive trades, and in building and public works contracting.

There was some improvement, however, in coal mining, in jute manufacture, and in the boot and shoe industry.

WAGES.

In the industries for which statistics are regularly compiled by the Department, the changes in rates of wages reported to have come into operation in August resulted in an estimated decrease of £24,150 in the weekly full-time wages of 284,000 workpeople, and in an increase of £2,050 in those of nearly 22,000.

The principal bodies of workpeople affected by reductions in rates of wages included coal miners in Scotland, Cumberland, and Warwickshire; shale miners, etc., in Scotland; blastfurnace workers in Lincolnshire and Scotland; iron puddlers and iron and steel millmen in the Midlands; steel smelters, etc., in various districts in England and Scotland; steel workers at Sheffield; light castings makers; woollen and worsted operatives employed by certain firms in Yorkshire; retail bespoke tailors in Scotland (under a Trade Board Order); and the employees of various local authorities in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

There were increases, under cost-of-living sliding-scale arrangements, in the wages of electrical cable makers and chain makers, and in those of hosiery workers at Hawick.

COST OF LIVING.

At 1st September, the average level of retail prices of the commodities taken into account in the statistics compiled by the Ministry of Labour (including food, rent, clothing, fuel and light, and miscellaneous items) was the same as a month earlier, viz., 45 per cent. above that of July, 1914; the figure for food alone, 28 per cent. above pre-war, was also unchanged. The corresponding percentages a year ago were 57 and 44 respectively.

These statistics are designed to indicate the average increase in the cost of maintaining unchanged the pre-war standard of living of working-class families. Accordingly, the changes in the prices of the various articles included are combined proportionately to the relative importance of those items in pre-war working-class family expenditure, no allowance being made for any changes in the standard of living.

TRADE DISPUTES.

The number of trade disputes, involving stoppages of work, reported to the Department as beginning in August was 36. In addition, 14 disputes which began before August were still in progress at the beginning of the month. The number of workpeople involved in all disputes in August (including workpeople thrown out of work at the establishments where the disputes occurred, but not themselves parties to the disputes) was about 63,900, and the aggregate duration of all disputes in August was about 349,000 working days.

NUMBERS EMPLOYED AND WAGES IN THE RAILWAY SERVICE.

THE annual Return* prepared by the Ministry of Transport relating to numbers employed and wages in the railway service in Great Britain has recently been published. The Return has been compiled to relate to the week ended 7th March, 1931. The details given in the Return include the total number of persons employed by the railway companies and the numbers employed in each of the principal grades in the specified week, with corresponding figures for the week ended 8th March, 1930. A comparison is also given of the average wages and average payments made to selected grades at the same dates, and the standard rates of wages are given for many grades other than mechanics and artisans.

Table showing numbers employed in various grades from March 1921 to April 1931. Columns include Grade, Year, and Number Employed.

The numbers include all persons in the service of the companies in the specified weeks, except staff not directly employed by the companies (e.g., staff employed by contractors). The figures comprise the number of staff receiving salaries or wages for the full week, combined with the equivalent number of full-time workers in cases where employees were paid for less than the complete week.

Of the total number of persons employed in March, 1931, there were 560,110 adult males, 32,793 junior males, 21,589 adult females, and 1,100 junior females. (The classification of adults and juniors is based on the numbers receiving adult and junior rates of pay respectively.)

The numbers of males employed in each of the principal departments in March, 1931, were as follows:—

Table showing numbers of males employed in various departments in March 1931, categorized by Adults and Juniors.

The total numbers employed by the four principal railways were: London, Midland and Scottish, 231,617; London and North Eastern, 180,163; Great Western, 107,970; and Southern, 68,436.

Wages.—The average payments made to certain sections of the male adult staff are shown by the Return to have been as follows: in the case of salaried workers the average weekly payments are calculated on the basis of 6/313ths of the annual amount:—

Table showing average weekly payments for staff entered at salaried rates and staff entered at wage rates, categorized by Department and Week ended.

The total salaries and wages paid by the railway companies in respect of the year 1930 amounted to £114,536,000, compared with £115,284,000 in 1929.

The average weekly wage, and the average weekly payments made to adult males, in certain of the principal grades at March, 1931 and 1930, are summarised in the following Table. The average wage, in the case of staff embraced by conciliation agreements, is computed from the basic rate, plus bonus additions, if any, under sliding scale; and in the case of other staff (e.g., mechanics and artisans) from the basic rate, plus the war wage. The average payments represent salaries or wages, residual bonus (if any), war wage, piece-work payments, tonnage bonus, payments for overtime, Sunday duty and night duty, commuted allowances, and any other payments for work performed; but exclude compensation allowance, travelling and out-of-pocket expenses, meal and lodging allowances.

At March, 1930, but not at March, 1931, agreements were in operation whereby 2½ per cent. was deducted from gross salaries and wages. This deduction is reflected in the average weekly payments, but not in the average weekly salary or wage, for that date.

* Railway Companies Staff. H.M. Stationery Office; price 1s. net. (1s. 1d. post free). † Excluding railway employees of the Manchester Ship Canal Co., who numbered 1,327 in March, 1931. ‡ Including grades covered by the Conciliation scheme in operation before the war, i.e., mainly the traffic and goods staffs.

Table comparing average weekly salary or wage for various classes in the week ended 7th March 1931 and 8th March 1930. Columns include Class, and Average weekly salary or wage in s. d. for both periods.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES IN 1930.

The Ministry of Transport have issued a Report† upon the accidents which occurred on the railways of Great Britain during the year 1930. It should be noted that, while all accidents to persons other than railway servants are included, only those accidents to railway servants which cause the servant injured to be absent from his ordinary work for at least one whole day are required to be reported.

The figures in the following summary relate to railway and contractors' servants only. Only four fatal and 88 non-fatal accidents to contractors' servants were reported during the year.

The returns distinguish train accidents (collisions, derailments, etc.); other accidents caused by the movement of trains or of railway vehicles (shunting accidents, men killed or injured while working or standing on the line, etc.); and accidents not connected with the movement of railway vehicles. The numbers of railway and contractors' servants killed in these three classes of accidents in 1930 were 4, 204, and 33, respectively; the numbers injured were 103, 2,874 and 15,108, respectively.

The following Table shows the classes of railway servants among whom the largest number of accidents occurred in 1930:—

Table showing railway accidents and casualties in 1930 by Class of Service, categorized by Train and Movement Accidents, Other Accidents, and Total (Killed and Injured).

* See paragraph immediately before the Table. † Cmd. 3939. H.M. Stationery Office; price 9d. net (10d., post free).

MINES AND QUARRIES IN 1930. EMPLOYMENT, WAGES, OUTPUT, ACCIDENTS, ETC.

THE Tenth Annual Report of the Secretary for Mines, for the year 1930, together with the Annual Report of H.M. Chief Inspector of Mines for the same year, has been published.*

COAL MINING. State of Trade.—In a survey of the coal mining industry it is stated that the activity which marked the coal trade during the greater part of 1929 was maintained in the early months of 1930, after which output declined to the level of 1928. The number of men employed continued to increase up to March, after which the number fell to a lower level than has previously been reached in the post-war period. In addition, employment was irregular. In other coal-producing countries also there was a decline; in some of the principal countries, indeed, the position was worse than in Great Britain.

OUTPUT AND NUMBERS EMPLOYED. The total output of coal in Great Britain in 1930 was nearly 244 million tons, valued at £165½ millions; as compared with 253 million tons, valued at £173¼ millions, in 1929, and with 237½ million tons, valued at £152¼ millions, in 1928. The decline was relatively greatest in the principal exporting districts: Northumberland (decline of 9·7 per cent.), Durham (8·0 per cent.), Scotland (7·4 per cent.), and South Wales and Monmouthshire (6·3 per cent.). In the principal districts which are more closely associated with home trade, the decline was 3 or 4 per cent. In the remaining small districts collectively there was a small increase, principally owing to an increase of 143,000 tons, or 12·4 per cent., in Kent.

During the spell of activity which marked the first quarter the number of wage-earners on colliery books rose from 949,400 to 959,700 early in March, but it fell rapidly during the summer months. From August to December the number never exceeded 890,000 and, upon occasion, was less than 884,000. The previous lowest post-war record was about 894,000 in August, 1928. Employment was much less regular than in 1929, and on the average coal was wound on nearly thirteen fewer days, chiefly owing to want of trade or transport difficulties. As in 1929, short time on this account was most prevalent in Lancashire and Cheshire, and in Yorkshire and the Midland Counties, where it amounted to nearly 1½ days per week. Elsewhere, less than half a day per week was lost through want of trade or transport difficulties.

WAGES AND HOURS, CASH EARNINGS, AND ALLOWANCES IN KIND.

Throughout 1930, as in 1929, wages remained, with few exceptions, at the minima provided for in the respective district agreements. The exceptions were Northumberland, where the percentages payable in March and April were 41·38 and 41·83, respectively, against a minimum percentage of 40; and Warwick, where the percentage ranged from 46 to 49, against a minimum of 43. In Shropshire and Kent there were no district agreements, individual arrangements being made at each colliery. In Northumberland, the payment of wages above the minimum was the result of an agreement whereby only half of any surplus was applied to the recoupment of deficiencies. In Warwick, the percentage was lower in the case of certain pits. In certain other districts the percentages shown by the ascertained figures were above the minimum for a month or two during the year; but in none of these cases was the level of wages actually paid affected, as the surpluses were applied to the reduction of accumulated deficiencies. In Nottinghamshire, under the agreement, the existing deficiency was cancelled with the ascertainment governing June wages, and in Yorkshire the deficiency was cancelled with the ascertainment governing April wages; but in each case a new deficiency began to accumulate immediately. The provisions of the Coal Mines Act, 1930,† reducing the maximum daily hours of work, in general, to 7½, came into force on 1st December; and temporary fresh agreements were made, in most districts, regulating the rates of wages to be paid after that date. The average cash earnings per shift in 1930, for all districts taken together, were 9s. 3½d., as compared with 9s. 2½d. in 1929, and with 9s. 3½d. in 1928. Owing to the decline in employment, however, the average cash earnings for the whole year, for all districts taken together, were only £113 18s. 2d., as compared with £118 6s. 4d. in 1929. The average cash earnings for the year, however, varied very considerably from one district to another; as in 1929 they were highest in Scotland (£130 18s. 4d.) and lowest in Northumberland (£95 16s. 10d.). The value of allowances in kind, for all districts taken together, was 4½d. per shift in 1930, or £1 4s. 4d. per quarter; but the value of these allowances varied from district to district even more than the cash earnings, being only ½d. per shift in Scotland, and in Lancashire, Cheshire and North Staffordshire; as against 1s. 1½d. per shift in Northumberland and Durham.

OTHER MINING AND QUARRYING.‡ The following Table shows the total net selling value at the mine or quarry of other minerals* produced in Great Britain during 1930, and the approximate total numbers of persons employed at the mines or quarries producing these minerals:—

Table showing Total Net Selling Value of Output and Approximate Number of Persons Employed for various minerals in 1930.

The corresponding totals in 1929 were £23,267,000 and 112,800 persons.

ALL MINES AND QUARRIES.* PERSONS EMPLOYED.

The following Table shows the number of wage-earners employed at all mines and quarries over 20 feet deep* in Great Britain (including brine salt wells and certain other mineral workings to which the Regulation Acts do not apply) in 1930. The figures relate to 13th December:—

Table showing persons employed in various wage-earning categories (Coal, Iron Ore or Iron-stone, Other Minerals, Total) for below ground and above ground locations.

The figures in the Table relate, as stated, to 13th December. The average numbers of wage-earners employed in 1930 were:— coal mines, 914,328; iron ore or ironstone, 11,070; other minerals, 90,155: total, 1,015,553. The corresponding figures for 1929 were:— coal, 939,367; iron ore or ironstone, 12,568; other minerals, 96,352: total, 1,048,287.

The average number of clerks and salaried persons employed in 1930 was 21,197, of whom 17,048 were employed at coal mines; as compared with 21,215 and 17,307, respectively, in 1929.

ACCIDENTS AT MINES AND QUARRIES.

The following Table shows the number of persons killed and injured by accidents in 1929 and 1930. The 1930 accidents at mines are classified according to the place or cause of the accidents:—

Table showing persons killed and injured by accidents at mines and quarries, categorized by Place or Cause of Accident and No. of Persons.

* See note † in previous column. † Including nine females employed inside quarries. ‡ Including shale and fireclay mines. § Only those are included whose disablement was for more than three days.

The following Table shows the increases and decreases as compared with 27th July, 1931:—

Table with columns: Department, Wholly Unemployed (Men, Women, Total), Temporarily Stopped (Men, Women, Total), Total.

The imports (less re-exports) of raw cotton (including cotton linters) were 59,975,800 lbs. in August, 1931, compared with 49,342,700 lbs. in July, 1931, and with 42,871,600 lbs. in August, 1930.

The exports of cotton yarn were 11,195,900 lbs. in August, 1931, compared with 11,273,400 lbs. in July, 1931, and with 10,181,800 lbs. in August, 1930.

The exports of cotton piece goods in August, 1931, were 143,805,900 square yards, compared with 177,319,300 square yards in the previous month, and 167,982,500 square yards in August, 1930.

WOOL TEXTILE INDUSTRY.

THE depression continued in this industry; many firms extended the holiday stoppages, and the number of short-time workers increased. There was little sign of the increased activity which is normally expected in some centres at this season of the year; on the contrary, there was a further marked decline in the worsted section, and little change in the woollen section. In the carpet section employment continued very slack.

The percentage of insured workpeople unemployed in the woollen and worsted industries, including those temporarily stopped, was 36.6 at 24th August, 1931, as compared with 36.0 at 27th July, 1931, and with 26.4 at 25th August, 1930.

Worsted Section.—Employment continued bad, and showed a further decline in all the principal departments and districts.

At Bradford and at Huddersfield employment continued depressed, and showed a further decline; much short time and unemployment were reported. At Sowerby Bridge there was some improvement with worsted workers. At Keighley all the mills were reported to be working short time, and there was a further decline during August. At Halifax and at Leeds short time was also prevalent, and employment was worse than in July, especially in the Leeds district. In the worsted section as a whole, returns from employers for the week ended 22nd August showed that over 50 per cent. of the operatives worked short time, losing about 15 hours each on the average.

With wool sorters employment continued bad; 25 per cent. of the trade union workpeople were reported to be on short time. In the combing department the activity of the machinery in all sections was less than during July, and all sections were working short time. About 52 per cent. of the operatives covered by the employers' returns in the sorting, combing, and preparing departments lost, on an average, about 13 hours in short time in the week ended 22nd August.

In the worsted spinning department there was a marked decline. About 55 per cent. of the operatives covered by the employers' returns worked short time in the week ended 22nd August, losing about 15 hours each on the average. In the worsted weaving department there was also a marked decline. About 43 per cent. of the operatives covered by the employers' returns worked short time in the week ended 22nd August, losing 14 hours each on an average.*

Woollen Section.—Employment continued bad, and showed little general change as compared with the previous month. Employers' returns for the week ended 22nd August showed that 48 per cent. of the workers in the spinning department, and nearly 50 per cent. of those in the weaving department, were on short time, losing 12 or 13 hours each on the average in each department. In the woollen section as a whole, 48 per cent. of the operatives lost, on an average, about 13 hours each in short time* in the week ended 22nd August; there was very little overtime except in the spinning department, in which 6 per cent. of the operatives worked overtime to the extent of about 10 hours each on the average.

In the Huddersfield and Colne Valley district there was only a very small amount of night work and overtime, and employment generally was bad. In the Heavy Woollen District (Dewsbury, Batley, etc.) employment showed no general improvement, and was poor generally, though some manufacturers of blankets, and of velours and tweeds and face-cloths were fairly well employed. In the rag and shoddy trade there was no improvement, and employment remained bad. In the blanket trade some full time working was reported at Hebden Bridge, but employment generally was slack or moderate. In the Stockport and Rochdale areas employment showed no improvement. At Saddleworth employment was bad;

* The figures given in this article as to short time do not take into account other forms of under-employment, such as "playing for warps," and tending one instead of two looms.

about 85 per cent. of the trade union operatives were on short time at the end of August. Under-employment was reported at Shaw; the improvement reported last month was not maintained. There was however, a slight improvement at Littleborough and at Mossley.

In the West of England short time working was still general. In Wales employment on the whole continued slack.

In Scotland employment declined, and the depression was acute. At least 90 per cent. of the trade union operatives were reported to be on short time, either losing some hours in the day or some days in the week, or being suspended for a week or more at a time. At Galashiels a further decline was reported; the August holidays were extended by many firms, and the operatives placed on short time when the mills re-opened. At Alloa there was some improvement, a number of women spinners having resumed full time working.

Carpet Section.—Employment on the whole continued very slack. At Kidderminster all firms closed for a week in August, and most of them had not resumed their normal activity at the end of the month. In Yorkshire a slight improvement was reported with some firms. In Scotland employment at the principal centres continued slack except with some firms in the Axminster section, in which employment was reported as fairly steady.

In the carpet industry as a whole, 46 per cent. of the workpeople covered by the employers' returns were on short time in the week ended 22nd August, losing 11 hours each on an average; little or no overtime was recorded.

The following Table summarises the returns received from employers:—

Table with columns: Departments, Number of Workpeople (Week ended 22nd August, 1931, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a month before, Index figure, Jan. 1926 = 100), Total Wages paid to all Workpeople (£, Per Cent., Week ended 22nd August, 1931, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a month before, Index figure, Jan. 1926 = 100).

* Comparison of earnings is affected by reductions in rates of wages which have been made by certain firms at various dates since February, 1929. † Most of the districts are indicated by the names of their principal towns, but neighbouring towns and areas are included in each case.

The following Tables show, by districts and by departments, the percentage increases and decreases in the numbers employed in the week ended 22nd August, 1931, by those firms who supplied returns for the purpose of the foregoing Table (excluding the carpet section), as compared with the week ended 25th July, 1931:—

Table with columns: Worsteds Section (Bradford, Huddersfield, Halifax, Leeds, Keighley, Heavy Woollen (Dewsbury, Batley, etc.), Total, West Riding, West of England and Midlands, Lancashire, Scotland), Percentage Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) in numbers employed as compared with previous month.

Table with columns: Woollen Section (Huddersfield (Dewsbury, Batley, etc.), Leeds, Halifax and Calder Vale, Bradford, Total, West Riding, Lancashire, West of England and Midlands, Scotland, Wales), Percentage Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) in numbers employed as compared with previous month.

The following Table shows the number of men and of women (other than casuals) on the registers of Employment Exchanges in the principal wool textile trade centres at 24th August, 1931:—

Table with columns: Department, Numbers (excluding Casuals) on the Registers at 24th August, 1931, Wholly Unemployed (Men, Women, Total), Temporarily Stopped (Men, Women, Total), Total.

The following Table shows the increases and decreases as compared with 27th July, 1931:—

Table with columns: Department, Wholly Unemployed (Men, Women, Total), Temporarily Stopped (Men, Women, Total), Total.

The imports (less re-exports) of raw wool (sheep's or lambs') were 5,528,400 lbs. in August, 1931, compared with 20,687,500 lbs. in the previous month and 19,730,500 lbs. in August, 1930.

The exports of woollen and worsted yarns were 3,097,700 lbs. compared with 3,516,300 lbs. in July, 1931, and with 3,115,200 lbs. in August, 1930.

The exports of woollen and worsted tissues in August, 1931, were 7,910,600 square yards, compared with 8,719,800 square yards in the previous month, and with 10,999,100 square yards in August, 1930.

The exports of blankets were 27,162 pairs, 43,761 pairs, and 61,206 pairs in August, 1931, July, 1931, and August, 1930, respectively.

BOOT AND SHOE INDUSTRY.

THE customary holiday at the beginning of August was extended by many firms. After the resumption of work employment was generally slack or quiet; by the end of the month, however, there was some improvement, and employment was moderate at most establishments, showing a slight general improvement on the previous month.

The percentage of insured workpeople unemployed, including those temporarily stopped, was 20.3 at 24th August, 1931, as compared with 23.5 at 27th July, 1931, and with 16.9 at 25th August, 1930.

The following Table summarises the information received from those employers who furnished returns for the three periods:—

Table with columns: England and Wales, Scotland, Great Britain, Number of Workpeople (Week ended 22nd August, 1931, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a month before, Year before), Total Wages paid to all Workpeople (£, Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) on a month before, Year before).

Returns received from firms employing about 58,600 workpeople in the week ended 22nd August indicated that about 43 per cent. of those operatives were on short time in that week, losing about 9½ hours each on the average; very little overtime was worked.

Employment in London continued slack or moderate at most establishments. At Leicester employment remained slack generally, though a few firms were busy; many firms extended the holiday stoppage, some to a full fortnight. At the end of the month there was some improvement; though a little more than half of the operatives covered by the employers' returns for the week ended 22nd August were losing 11 hours each on the average, these figures compared with nearly two-thirds, and 12 hours, in the previous month. In the Leicester country district there was little change, and employment remained slack. At Northampton many firms extended the holiday stoppage; in the latter half of the month employment was slack on the whole. In the week ended 22nd August, a little over two-thirds of the operatives covered by the employers' returns were on short time, losing about 8½ hours each on the average. In the Higham and Rushden district there was a slight improvement, and employment was moderate; several firms worked full time, and an appreciable amount of overtime was reported. At Kettering employment continued moderate to fair; less short time was worked at this centre than at most of the other centres. There was a slight improvement at Wellingborough towards the end of the month, and employment was moderate with most firms; there is a considerable surplus of labour in the lasting and finishing departments at this centre. An improvement was reported at Wollaston, less at Raunds and at Finedon; it was bad generally at Irthlingborough, at Stafford employment was well employed. At Stafford employment remained slack; more than two-thirds of the workpeople were on short time in the week ended 22nd August, though this was not quite so high a proportion as in July. At Norwich employment remained slack with most firms; many operatives were unemployed, and there was much short time working.

In the Bristol and Kingswood district employment showed a further slight improvement, chiefly in the light goods trade, in which it was moderate to fair; it remained quiet with most firms in the heavy trade. At Leeds employment continued bad; at the

NUMBERS INSURED AND PERCENTAGES UNEMPLOYED.

Table with columns: INDUSTRY, ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INSURED PERSONS AT JULY, 1930, PERCENTAGE UNEMPLOYED AT 24TH AUGUST, 1931, INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) IN TOTAL PERCENTAGES AS COMPARED WITH 27TH JULY, 1931, 25TH AUG., 1930, 26TH AUG., 1929, GREAT BRITAIN ONLY TOTAL PERCENTAGES AT 24TH AUGUST, 1931.

* For 26th August, 1929, separate figures for each of the two sections are not available.

Table with columns: INDUSTRY, ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INSURED PERSONS AT JULY, 1930, PERCENTAGE UNEMPLOYED AT 24TH AUGUST, 1931, INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) IN TOTAL PERCENTAGES AS COMPARED WITH 27TH JULY, 1931, 25TH AUG., 1930, 26TH AUG., 1929, GREAT BRITAIN ONLY TOTAL PERCENTAGES AT 24TH AUGUST, 1931.

NUMBERS OF INSURED WORKPEOPLE UNEMPLOYED.

PROPORTIONS IN VARIOUS INDUSTRY GROUPS.

In the following Table the numbers of insured workpeople recorded as unemployed in Great Britain and Northern Ireland at 24th August, 1931, are analysed so as to show the proportion of the total unemployed classified as belonging to various industry groups:—

Table with columns: Industry Group, Males, Females, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Numbers recorded as Unemployed at 24th August, 1931, as compared with 27th July, 1931.

PRINCIPAL VARIATIONS IN NUMBERS UNEMPLOYED.

The following Table indicates for Great Britain and Northern Ireland the industries in which the numbers of insured persons recorded as unemployed at 24th August, 1931, differed from the figures for 27th July, 1931, to the extent of 1,000 or more:—

Table with columns: Industry, Males, Females, Total, Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Numbers recorded as Unemployed at 24th August, 1931, as compared with 27th July, 1931.

COMPOSITION OF UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS: GREAT BRITAIN.

On page 350 an explanation is given of the unemployment statistics published weekly in the Press, and monthly in this GAZETTE. The following Table gives an analysis relating to the 24th August, 1931, of the composition of these statistics. Lines 1 to 3 make up the number of persons on the register; while, by omitting the uninsured persons (line 3) and including lines 4 and 5, the number of books lodged, or, in other words, the number of insured persons recorded as unemployed, is obtained:—

Table showing composition of unemployment statistics: Great Britain. Columns: Men, Boys, Women, Girls, Total. Rows: 1. Claims admitted or under consideration, 2. Insured non-claimants and claimants disqualified, but maintaining registration, 3. Uninsured persons on Register, 4. Two months' file, 5. Unemployed—Special Schemes, Persons on Register (lines 1-3), Books Lodged (lines 1, 2, 4 and 5).

NUMBERS ON THE REGISTERS OF EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES.*

Table showing numbers on registers of employment exchanges: Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Columns: Men, Boys, Women, Girls, Total. Rows: 27th July 1931, 3rd Aug., 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st, Average (4 weeks).

Analysis of figures for 31st August, 1931.

Table showing analysis of figures for 31st August, 1931. Columns: Persons normally in Regular Employment, Wholly Unemployed, Temporarily Stopped, Persons normally in Casual Employment, Total. Rows: Great Britain, Men, Boys, Women, Girls, Total.

Table showing analysis of figures for 31st August, 1931. Columns: Men, Boys, Women, Girls, Total. Rows: Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Men, Boys, Women, Girls, Total.

VACANCIES NOTIFIED AND FILLED. (Great Britain and Northern Ireland.)

Table showing vacancies notified and filled: Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Columns: Vacancies filled† 30th December, 1930, to 31st August, 1931. Rows: Men, Boys, Women, Girls, Total.

Of the 178,868 vacancies filled during the five weeks ended 31st August, 109,276 were for men, 41,005 for women, and 28,587 for juveniles.

* The term "Employment Exchange," as used in this connection, includes Ministry of Labour Employment Exchanges and Branch Employment Offices, and also Juvenile Employment Bureaux under the control of Local Education Authorities which are exercising powers under Sec. 107 of the Education Act, 1921, and Sec. 6 of the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1923.

† "Vacancies filled" include certain types of cases (described as Class B placements) in which the work of the Exchanges was limited; for instance, obtaining for an employer former employees, or placing the same men in relief work in alternate weeks. During the four weeks ended 3rd August, 1931, the average number of such placements of men and women was 6,073 per week. The average number of placements of casual workers during the five weeks ended 31st August, 1931, was 525 per week.

NUMBERS ON THE REGISTERS IN THE PRINCIPAL TOWNS.

The following Table shows for each of the Employment Exchange administrative areas in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and for the principal towns therein, the number of persons registered at Employment Exchanges on 31st August, 1931. In certain cases (e.g., Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Liverpool, Glasgow, etc.) the figures cover more than one Exchange area.

Table showing numbers on registers in principal towns: London Division, South-Eastern Division, South-Western Division, Midlands Division, North-Eastern Division, North-Western Division, Wales, and Great Britain.

Table showing numbers on registers in principal towns: North-Eastern Division, North-Western Division, and Great Britain.

Table showing numbers on registers in principal towns: North-Western Division, North-Eastern Division, and Great Britain.

Percentage rates of unemployment, for each of 700 towns in Great Britain, are given in the monthly "Local Unemployment Index."

JUVENILE UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS.

NUMBERS OF JUVENILES AGED 14 AND UNDER 18 ON THE REGISTERS OF EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES AND JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT BUREAUX AT 24TH AUGUST, 1931.

Table showing numbers of juveniles aged 14 and under 18 on registers of employment exchanges and juvenile employment bureaux at 24th August, 1931. Columns: Division, Insured 16 and under 18, Uninsured 14 and under 18, Total, Girls (Insured 16 and under 18, Uninsured 14 and under 18, Total).

JUVENILES PLACED IN EMPLOYMENT. FOUR WEEKS ENDED 3RD AUGUST, 1931.

Table showing juveniles placed in employment: four weeks ended 3rd August, 1931. Columns: Division, Number of Vacancies Filled (Boys, Girls, Total), Juveniles placed in first situation since leaving school (Boys, Girls, Total).

PERCENTAGE RATES OF UNEMPLOYMENT* AMONG INSURED JUVENILES AGED 16 AND 17.

Table showing percentage rates of unemployment among insured juveniles aged 16 and 17. Columns: Division, Estimated number insured at July, 1930, Percentage Unemployed at 24th August, 1931 (Boys, Girls, Total).

JUVENILES IN ATTENDANCE AT APPROVED COURSES OF INSTRUCTION DURING WEEK ENDED 26TH AUGUST, 1931.

Table showing juveniles in attendance at approved courses of instruction during week ended 26th August, 1931. Columns: Division, Average Daily Attendances (Junior Instruction Centres and Classes, Existing Educational Institutions†), Total No. of Separate Individuals who have attended since 1st April, 1931 (J.I. Centres and Classes, Existing Educational Institutions).

There were 51 Junior Instruction Centres for boys, 25 for girls, and 21 mixed centres open in Great Britain during the week. In addition, there were 10 Junior Instruction Classes for boys, 4 for girls, and 2 mixed classes. Thirty-seven centres and 11 classes were closed for holidays.

* Based on the numbers of Juvenile Unemployment Books lodged at Local Offices, which exceed the numbers of insured juveniles on the Register. † Closed for holidays.

DETERMINATION OF CLAIMS TO UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT IN GREAT BRITAIN.

14TH JULY TO 10TH AUGUST, 1931.

The following Table gives, for the period from 14th July to 10th August, 1931, inclusive, the number of claims to benefit made at local offices in Great Britain, the average number of claims current during that period, an analysis of the decisions of Courts of Referees and of the Umpire, the number of cases disallowed by Insurance Officers under the trade dispute disqualification, and of the appeals against such disallowances dealt with by Courts of Referees.

A.—Number of Claims.

Table showing number of claims: Fresh and renewal claims made, Average number of claims current. Columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total.

B.—Decisions of Courts of Referees.

Table showing decisions of Courts of Referees: Ground on which referred, Benefit Allowed, Benefit Disallowed, Total. Rows: First Statutory Condition (applies to juveniles only), Less than 8 contributions paid in past 2 years and less than 30 contributions paid at any time (Sec. 14 (2), U.I. Act 1927).

Table showing decisions of Courts of Referees: Employment left voluntarily without just cause. Columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total.

Table showing decisions of Courts of Referees: Employment lost through misconduct. Columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total.

Table showing decisions of Courts of Referees: Failure or refusal to apply for or accept suitable employment, or failure to carry out written directions. Columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total.

Table showing decisions of Courts of Referees: Not unemployed. Columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total.

Table showing decisions of Courts of Referees: Not capable of work, or not available for work. Columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total.

Table showing decisions of Courts of Referees: Other grounds. Columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total.

Table showing decisions of Courts of Referees: Grand Total. Columns: Men, Women, Juveniles, Total.

C.—Trade Dispute* Cases.

Table showing trade dispute cases: Cases dealt with by Insurance Officers, Appeals against disallowances by Insurance Officers dealt with by Courts of Referees. Columns: Benefit Allowed, Benefit Disallowed, Total.

* The decisions of Courts of Referees, and of the Umpire, on trade dispute disallowances refer largely to test cases. The total number of individuals affected by such decisions may be considerably in excess of the figures shown in the Table.

CHANGES IN COST OF LIVING: STATISTICS FOR 1st SEPTEMBER.

Summary: Average Increases since July, 1914.

All Items included ... 45%
Food only ... 28%

FOOD.

At 1st September the average level of the retail prices of the principal articles of food showed practically no change as compared with 1st August, a reduction in the average price of potatoes being largely offset by small advances in the average prices of eggs, bacon and butter.

As a net result of all the changes recorded the average increase over the level of July, 1914, in the retail prices (in Great Britain and Northern Ireland) of the articles of food included in these statistics was 28 per cent. at both 1st September and 1st August, 1931, as compared with 44 per cent. at 1st September, 1930.

In the following Table is given a comparison of retail prices of these articles of food in July, 1914, and at 1st August and 1st September, 1931:—

Table with columns: Article, Average Price (per lb. unless otherwise indicated— to the nearest 1d.), Average Inc. (+) or Dec. (-) at 1st Sept., 1931, as compared with July, 1914, and 1st Aug., 1931.

The following Table gives a percentage comparison of the level of retail prices at the same dates:—

Table with columns: Article, Average Percentage Increase at 1st Sept., 1931, as compared with July, 1914, and Corresponding General Average for 1st Aug., 1931.

* If this kind is seldom dealt with in a locality, the returns quote the price of another kind locally representative.
† The description of cheese specified for quotation is Canadian or American, but where such cheese is seldom sold in a locality the returns quote the price of another kind locally representative.

RENT, CLOTHING, FUEL AND LIGHT.

As regards rents, inquiries which have been made into the changes which have taken effect under the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Acts indicate that the average increase in the controlled rents (including rates) of working-class dwellings between July, 1914, and 1st September, was approximately 49 per cent. When decontrolled rents are also included, the combined average increase in working-class rents since July, 1914, is approximately 54 per cent. This latter figure has been utilised in calculating the final percentage increase for all the items included in these statistics.

As regards clothing, owing to the wide range of quotations, both now and before the war, to changes in qualities and in stocks held by retailers, and to variations in the extent to which different articles and qualities have been affected by price changes, it is impossible to make an exact calculation of the increase in prices; but information as to the movements of prices of men's suits and overcoats, woollen and cotton materials, underclothing and hosiery, and boots, received from retailers in the principal towns, indicates that at 1st September the level of retail prices of articles in this group, taking goods of the kinds purchased by the working classes and so far as possible the same qualities of goods at each date, averaged between 90 and 95 per cent. higher than in July, 1914.

In the fuel and light group the prices of coal were advanced in a number of towns and at 1st September averaged between 80 and 85 per cent. above the level of July, 1914. The average price of gas remained between 45 and 50 per cent. above the pre-war level. For the fuel and light group as a whole (including coal, gas, oil, candles and matches) the average increase at 1st September, as compared with July, 1914, was between 70 and 75 per cent.

ALL ITEMS.

If the average increases in the cost of all the foregoing items are combined in accordance with their relative importance in pre-war working-class family expenditure, allowance being also made for the increase in the prices of soap, soda, domestic ironmongery, brushware and pottery, tobacco, fares and newspapers (averaging about 75 per cent.), the resultant general average increase for 1st September, 1931, is approximately 45 per cent. over the level of July, 1914, as compared with 45 per cent. at 1st August, 1931, and 67 per cent. at 1st September, 1930.

The result of this calculation (in which the same quantities and, as far as possible, the same qualities of each item are taken in 1931 as in 1914) is to show the average increase in the cost of maintaining unchanged the pre-war standard of living of working-class families (i.e., the standard actually prevailing in working-class families before the war, irrespective of whether such standard was adequate or not). In view of the variations in the amounts of increase in the prices of different commodities it is probable that economies or readjustments in expenditure have been effected in many families, especially in those cases where incomes have not increased so much as prices. On the other hand, the standard of living may have been raised in many cases in which wages have been increased in greater proportion than prices. No allowance is made in the figures for any such alterations in the standard of living, as to which trustworthy statistics are not available.

SUMMARY TABLE: 1920 to 1931.

The following Table shows the average percentage increase, as compared with July, 1914, for all the items included in the statistics, at the beginning of each month, 1920 to 1931:—

Average Percentage Increase since July, 1914—All Items. (Food, rent, clothing, fuel and light, etc.)

Table with columns: Month (beginning of), 1920-1931, and Average Percentage Increase since July, 1914.

NOTE.

A detailed account of the method of compilation of these statistics "The Cost of Living Index Number: Method of Compilation" has been published, and may be purchased, price 3d. net (3 1/2d. post free), from H.M. Stationery Office, at any of the addresses shown on the cover of this GAZETTE.

* If allowance is made for the changes in taxation since July, 1914, on the commodities included in these statistics, the average increase is about 1 per cent. less.

RETAIL PRICES OVERSEAS.

N.B.—While the percentages given in the following Summary Tables are derived from the most authoritative sources of statistical information, certain differences in the nature and scope of the data used, in the methods of combining such data and in the periods for which the rise is measured, suggest the need for caution in drawing conclusions from a comparison between the figures for any two countries or cities. It is also to be observed that in every case the percentage calculation is based on the assumption that the standard of living is identical at the various periods compared.]

I.—FOOD.

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN RETAIL FOOD PRICES IN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES AS COMPARED WITH JULY, 1914.*

Table with columns: Country, Percentage Increase as compared with July, 1914 (July 1927, July 1928, July 1929, July 1930), Latest figures available (Rise, Date).

II.—ALL ITEMS

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES IN THE COST OF FOOD, TOGETHER WITH (SO FAR AS POSSIBLE) HOUSE-RENT, CLOTHING, FUEL AND LIGHT, AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD REQUIREMENTS, AS COMPARED WITH JULY, 1914.*

Table with columns: Country, Items on which computation is based, Percentage Increase as compared with July, 1914 (July 1927, July 1928, July 1929, July 1930), Latest figures available (Rise, Date).

* Exceptions to this are: Egypt, January 1913 to July 1914; France (other towns), August, 1914; Rome and Milan, January to June, 1914; Switzerland, June, 1914; Spain, South Africa, France (Paris, all items), Poland, 1914; Germany, average, 1913-1914; Amsterdam, 1911-1913; Belgium, April, 1914; Italy (food), United States (all items), Canada, 1913; Australia (all items), November, 1914. The Australian percentages for all items are a weighted average for the six capital cities. The percentages are calculated, in Czechoslovakia and Poland, on prices converted to their gold values, and, in the other countries, on prices in the ordinary currency.

† Fuel and light are also included in these figures.
‡ New series.
§ Figure for June.
|| A = Food; B = House-Rent; C = Clothing; D = Fuel and light; E = Other or Miscellaneous Items.
¶ Figure for 3rd Quarter.
** Figure for August.

FATAL INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS.

THE number of workpeople, other than seamen, in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, reported during August, 1931, as killed in the course of their employment was 122, as compared with 158 in the previous month and with 174* in August, 1930. Fatal accidents to seamen reported in August, 1931, numbered 29, as compared with 21 in the previous month and 39 in August, 1930.

Table with columns: RAILWAY SERVICE, FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS, MINES, QUARRIES over 20 feet deep, FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS, SEAMEN, TOTAL, RAILWAY SERVICE, TOTAL, MINES, TOTAL, QUARRIES over 20 feet deep, TOTAL, FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS, TOTAL, SEAMEN.

INDUSTRIAL DISEASES.

THE total number of cases† of poisoning, anthrax, and epitheliomatous and chrome ulceration in Great Britain and Northern Ireland reported during August, 1931, under the Factory and Workshop Act, or under the Lead Paint (Protection against Poisoning) Act, was 42; the total number of deaths‡ reported was 2.

In addition, one case of lead poisoning among plumbers not employed in factories came to the knowledge of the Home Office during August, but notification of such cases is not obligatory.

I. Cases.

Table with columns: (a) LEAD POISONING, (b) OTHER POISONING, (c) ANTHRAX, (d) EPITHELIOMATOUS ULCERATION (SKIN CANCER), (e) CHROME ULCERATION, I. Cases (continued), II. Deaths.

* The figure previously published for August, 1930, has been revised.
† Accidents occurring in the use or working of railways are included under "Railway Service."
‡ Cases include all attacks reported 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.
§ In each case the person affected was a woman.

Exchange Area): Siemens Bros. & Co., Ltd., London, S.E. Sub-contractors for Brighton Central: Hart Accumulator Co., Ltd., London, E., for Batteries. Broadwell (Birmingham Area): Siemens Bros. & Co., Ltd., London, S.E. Sub-Contractors for Broadwell: The Chloride Electrical Storage Co., Ltd., Clifton Junction, near Manchester, for Batteries; The Electric Construction Co., Ltd., London, W.C., for Charging Machine; Crompton Parkinson, Ltd., Chelmsford, for Ringing Machines. Hampstead (London, N.W.); Gladstone (London, N.W.); Shepherds Bush (London, W.); Stechford (Birmingham Area); Priory (Birmingham Area); Tipton (Birmingham Area): Ericsson Telephones, Ltd., London, W.C. Sub-contractors for Tipton: Hart Accumulator Co., Ltd., London, E., for Batteries; The Electric Construction Co., Ltd., London, W.C., for Motor Generator Sets and Ringing Machines. Preston, Fulwood, Leyland and Ashton-on-Ribble (Preston Observation Area); Watford; Archway (London, N.); Reliance (London, S.E.); Leytonstone (London, E.); Fairfield (Croydon); Flaxman (London, S.W.); Macaulay (London, S.W.); Edgware; Park, Dundee (Dundee Multi-Exchange Area); Epsom: The General Electric Co., Ltd., Coventry. Sub-Contractors for Park and Epsom: D. P. Battery Co., Ltd., Bakewell, Derbyshire, for Batteries; Crompton Parkinson, Ltd., Chelmsford, for Charging Machine and Ringing Machines.—**Telephonic Repeater Equipment:** Metropolitan Telephone Exchange (London, E.C.): Standard Telephones and Cables, Ltd., London, W.C.

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METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Erection of Married Quarters at Brixton Hill: Dove Bros., Ltd., London, N.—**Turnery Contract, (2 years from 1st Sept., 1931):** Pryke & Palmer, Ltd., London, E.C.; Beechwood, Ltd., Chesham, Bucks; James Preston & Son, Liverpool; Railway & General Stores Contractors, Ltd., London, E.C.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT.

Supply of Macintoshes*: Chas. Macintosh & Co., Ltd., Manchester.
Supply of Uniform Clothing; Wathen Gardiner & Co., Bristol.

* July, 1931 contract.

NOTICE.

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