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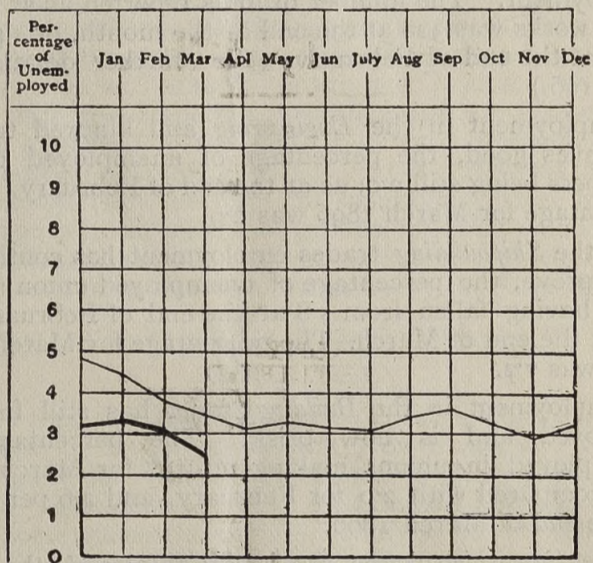
STATE OF EMPLOYMENT IN MARCH.*

THERE was a marked improvement in the general state of employment during March, and at the end of the month the percentage of unemployed in trade unions making returns was less than at any time since the autumn of 1890. As is usual at this period of the year, a large number of strikes were recorded during the month, mostly, however, of little importance. A large number of persons had their wages raised during the month, chiefly in the mining and metal industries, in almost all cases without a strike.

In the 114 trade unions making returns, with an aggregate membership of 453,963, 11,169 (or 2.5 per cent.) are reported as unemployed at the end of March compared with 3.0 per cent. in February, and with 3.5 per cent. in the 108 unions, with a membership of 415,731, from which returns were received for March, 1896.

The following chart enables a comparison to be made with last year:—

Chart showing the percentage of unemployed members of the trade unions making returns at the close of each month of 1896 and of each completed month of 1897.



The following table classifies the total membership of the 114 unions making returns according to the percentage proportion of their members that each union had unemployed at the end of the undermentioned periods:—

| Percentage of members unemployed. | At end of March 1897. | | Corresponding Percentages for | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| | Number of Unions making Returns. | Total Membership of such Unions. | A Month ago. | A Year ago. |
| | | Number. | Percentage. | |
| Under 1 per cent. ... | 32 | 93,083 | 20.5 | 10.1 |
| 1 and under 2 per cent. ... | 22 | 183,048 | 40.3 | 31.9 |
| 2 " 3 " ... | 21 | 37,693 | 8.3 | 22.7 |
| 3 " 5 " ... | 24 | 102,117 | 22.5 | 13.6 |
| 5 " 7 " ... | 8 | 31,160 | 6.9 | 19.2 |
| 7 " 10 " ... | 2 | 1,600 | 0.3 | 0.9 |
| 10 per cent. and upwards | 5 | 5,262 | 1.2 | 1.6 |
| Total | 114 | 453,963 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

* The reports on the State of Employment refer strictly to the month of March, and do not cover any changes which may have occurred between March 31st and April 15th. This remark also applies to the reports on pp. 105-116.

Employment in Various Industries.—Coal Mining.—Employment during March was better in nearly every district than a year ago, but in most districts not so good as during February. The average number of days worked per week at pits employing 412,462 persons was 5.14, compared with 5.34 in February and 4.81 in March 1896. Unemployed miners in trade unions in Northumberland and Durham amounted at the end of March to 0.9 per cent. of the membership, as against 1.6 per cent. at the end of February, and 2.0 per cent. at the end of March 1896. (For further details see page 105.)

Iron Mining.—Employment continued good during March, the average number of days worked per week by 16,655 workpeople covered by the returns being 5.82, as compared with 5.86 in February and 5.78 in March 1896. The number employed was greater by 4.3 per cent. than a year ago. (For further details see page 105.)

In the **Pig Iron Industry** employment was rather better than a year ago. At the end of March the ironmasters making returns had 351 furnaces in blast, compared with 347 in March 1896. The number of workpeople employed was 22,283, compared with 21,988 a year ago. Compared with the end of February, employment is practically stationary, the number of furnaces in blast having decreased by 1, while the number of workpeople employed has increased by 43. (For further details see page 106.)

At **Steelworks** employment was much better than a year ago, but not quite so good as last month. At 128 works 36,959 were employed at the end of March, or 2,436 more than a year ago, but 298 less than at the end of February. (For further details see page 106.)

At **Puddling Furnaces and Rolling Mills** employment has improved. At 93 works the number employed was 18,839, or 711 more than a year ago, and 396 more than at the end of February. (For further details see page 106.)

In the **Tinplate** trade there has been a falling off in employment. The number of mills reported as at work at 88 works was 320 at the end of the month, or 14 less than at the end of February. (For further details see page 106.)

Employment in the **Engineering** and kindred trades continues good, the percentage of unemployed union members being still 2.0, as at the end of February. The percentage for March 1896 was 2.9.

In the **Shipbuilding** trades employment has continued to improve, the percentage of unemployed union members having fallen from 5.8 at the end of February, to 5.0 at the end of March. The percentage for March last year was 7.2.

Employment in the **Building** trades has still further improved and is now brisk. The percentage of unemployed in unions making returns for March was 1.2, compared with 2.0 for February, and 2.6 per cent. at the end of March 1896.

The **Furnishing** trades are busily employed, the percentage of unemployed union members at the end of March being only 0.7, compared with 3.0 per cent. in February, and 1.0 per cent. at the end of March last year.

Employment in the **Printing and Bookbinding** trades, especially the former, has improved. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of March was 3.5, compared with 3.9 in February, and 4.6 per cent. in March 1896.

Employment in the **Paper** trade remains fairly good. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of March was 3.0, compared with 2.9 in February, and 4.7 per cent. in March of last year.

In the **Glass** trade employment is still slack. The percentage of unemployed union members at the end of March was 12.6, compared with 12.5 in February, and 14.0 per cent. in March 1896.

Employment in the **Leather** trades continues good. The percentage of unemployed union members at the

end of March was 2.1, compared with 2.0 per cent. in February. The percentage for March 1896 was 5.9.

Employment in the ready-made **Boot and Shoe** trade has improved, and is good in the chief centres other than the heavy-trade districts. In the bespoke branch employment has improved.

Employment is good in the ready-made **Tailoring** trade, and has improved in the bespoke branch.

In the **Cotton** trade, employment is still moderate, but shows some improvement.

Employment in the **Woollen** trade is dull on the whole, although there has been a slight improvement in some centres. In the **Worsted** trade it continues slack. In the **Hosiery** trade it remains moderate.

As regards the employment of **women in the Textile** trades, information respecting 457 mills employing about 77,000 women and girls, shows that 76 per cent. were in mills giving full employment during the month, compared with 67 per cent. among those for whom returns were received for February, and 86 per cent. for March 1896. (For further details, see p. 109.)

Dock and Riverside Labour.—In London, employment was not quite so good as in February, but considerably better than a year ago. The average number of labourers employed daily in the docks and principal wharves was 14,596, as compared with 14,762 in February, and 13,343 in March 1896. (For further details, see page 108.)

Agricultural Labour.—The state of agricultural employment was generally satisfactory in the month of March throughout the country. In a few districts there was some slight irregularity of work at the earlier part of the month, owing to wet weather. (For further details see page 107.)

Trade Disputes.—Ninety-six fresh disputes occurred in March 1897, involving 29,582 workpeople, as compared with 77* involving 24,231* workpeople in February, and 95 involving about 22,000 workpeople in March 1896. Thirty-seven disputes took place in the metal, engineering and shipbuilding trades, 13 in the building trades, 14 in the mining and quarrying industries, 11 in the textile trades, 9 in the clothing trades, 2 in connection with dock labour, and 10 in other industries. Of the 96 new and old disputes involving 18,375 workpeople, of which the terms of settlement are reported, 32 involving 4,036 persons were successful from the point of view of the workpeople; 36 involving 6,631 persons unsuccessful, and 28 involving 7,708 persons resulted in a compromise. (For further details see page 124.)

Changes in Rates of Wages.—Changes in rates of wages affecting about 172,000 workpeople were reported during March, of which number about 169,500 received increases, and 2,500 sustained decreases. The net result of the changes is an advance estimated at 8d. per head in the weekly wages of those affected. The increases include 10,600 building trade operatives, 114,700 coal miners, 14,900 iron and steel workers, and about 28,000 workpeople employed in the engineering and shipbuilding trades. A small decrease took place in the wages of Cumberland blastfurnacemen. Changes affecting 115,000 workpeople took place under sliding scales, conciliation boards, &c., and changes affecting about 2,000 workpeople were preceded by strikes. The remainder, involving about 55,000 workpeople, were settled by negotiation or otherwise. (For further details see page 118.)

Pauperism.—In 35 selected urban districts 335,708 persons were relieved on one day in the second week of March. These figures correspond to a rate of 214 per 10,000 of the population of those districts, or 7 less per 10,000 than in March 1896. (For further details, see page 123.)

Emigration.—The number of British and Irish passengers who left the United Kingdom for places out of Europe during March was 9,682, as compared with 10,885 in March 1896. (For further details, see page 128.)

* Corrected figures.

DISPUTES IN THE ENGINEERING TRADE.

THE following account of recent developments of the disputes in the engineering and shipbuilding trades is given in continuation of the report published in the March number of the GAZETTE, page 67, in which the account of the various stages of the disputes was carried up to March 15th. At that date the disputes among the shipwrights and the unskilled labourers in the shipyards on the North-east Coast had already been definitely settled, and terms of settlement of the ship-smiths' dispute had been arranged on March 13th. As regards the last-mentioned dispute, however, work was not generally resumed until March 25th, the members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers refusing at first to return to work unless certain men who had gone to work during the dispute were discharged. The employers, however, refused to comply with this demand, and eventually work was resumed without the discharge of the men objected to, work being found for all those engaged in the dispute.

At the time of the publication of the last GAZETTE the question of the advance of wages to engineers on the North-east coast was still unsettled. It will be remembered that the original demand of the men was for an advance of half a crown per week on time wages, and 10 per cent. on piece rates. Various attempts at a compromise were made (see page 68) and a final conference took place on March 15th. Two days later the members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, by a ballot vote, accepted the terms offered by the employers at that conference, which were substantially those reported in the last number of the LABOUR GAZETTE, with a proviso that two months' notice should be given by either side of an intention to change the rate of wages.

As regards the general questions at issue between the Employers' Federation and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, it was reported in last month's GAZETTE that the proposed Conference between representatives of the parties, had not yet been arranged, the employers having required that the engineers on strike at Sunderland Forge should return to work as a preliminary to the meeting; while the executive of the Union declined to order this unless the employers agreed to suspend work on the machine in dispute, pending the negotiations. Accordingly, on March 12th, it was decided by the Employers' Federation to issue lock-out notices to the members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. Such notices were posted on March 20th in many engineering establishments, intimating that 25 per cent. of the members of the Amalgamated Society would be locked out on March 27th, the same proportions to be dispensed with on each of the three succeeding Saturdays. On March 22nd the executive of the society responded by instructing all their members in shops in which lock-out notices should be posted to give notice to leave work on the date when the lock-out notices first took effect, all overtime to be stopped in the meantime.

The obstacle to the conference, however, was shortly removed. The Federation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Trades, which embraces all the principal trade unions in these branches of industry except the Amalgamated Society of Engineers offered to withdraw the machineman (who belongs to a Union affiliated to the Federation), from the machine for the time being without prejudice, if this would remove the block to the conference. This suggestion was accepted by the parties, it being also agreed that all the machines of the class in dispute at the works should remain idle during the negotiations. Notices were suspended on both sides, and the prohibition of overtime removed pending the negotiations. On March 29th the men on strike at Sunderland Forge resumed work. The conference met on Thursday and Friday, April 1st and 2nd, in London, the employers being represented by two delegates from the Tyne, two from the Clyde, two from Belfast, and one from Barrow, in addition to the secretaries of the Federation; while the men were represented by the chairman of the council, three district delegates from

the centres affected, three members of the council representing those districts and the general secretary. It will be remembered that, as reported in last month's GAZETTE, the principal subjects for discussion at the conference were the conditions on which machines should be worked, the question of overtime, and trial trip wages and allowances. The conference adjourned until Tuesday, April 13th, each party undertaking to formulate proposals in the meantime.

The adjourned Conference met in London on April 13th. The men's proposals related to the machine question, and suggested the formation of local joint committees in each district in the Federated area, with an independent referee, to settle the rate of wages to be paid for the working of machines in dispute, no changes likely to lead to dispute to be made without an understanding with this Committee. The employers' proposals related to trial-trips and allowances on war-ships. The Conference adjourned until the 14th, when an arrangement was arrived at, which the men's representatives undertook to recommend to their members with regard to trial-trip allowances for war-ships. The employers declined the men's proposals regarding machines, and no agreement was arrived at with reference thereto. The question of overtime was reserved for consideration on the 15th.

GERMAN INSURANCE IN 1896.

Preliminary figures for Old Age, Accident and Invalidity Insurance.

PRELIMINARY figures relating to accident, old age and Invalidity Insurance in 1896 are contained in the Report of the Imperial Insurance Department for that year, issued on the 1st March.* From these it appears that there were 350,428 fresh accidents reported in 1896, as compared with 310,139 in 1895 (an increase of 13 per cent.). The number of accidents entailing compensation was 86,520, compared with 75,527 (an increase of 14.6 per cent.). The total sum expended in compensation for new and old accidents was £2,867,384 compared with £2,506,289 in 1890. With the object of minimising the risk of accidents, model rules for trades in which the nature of the risk is similar have been drawn up by the Federation of Industrial Insurance Groups in conjunction with the Imperial Insurance Office. These rules were approved at the tenth regular conference of the Federation on June 26th 1896. It is stated that, owing to the efforts of the Imperial Insurance Office, some of the agricultural insurance groups have now embodied in their statutes rules for the prevention of accidents based on a code of model rules drawn up by the Department.

DISPUTE ON THE NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY.

SOME time since demands were made on behalf of several classes of employees of the North-Eastern Railway Company for various alterations in the conditions of work. The demands were considered by the Company, and some concessions made. In the case of the checkers the Company offered certain advances in wages and other advantages, on condition of the discontinuance of overtime pay. Some of the checkers accepted the proposal but others objected to the condition, and on February 17th the rullymen and warehousemen threatened to cease working overtime unless the proposals were withdrawn. On February 20th seven rullymen at Newcastle failed to turn in to work until 7 a.m., though ordered to do so at 5 o'clock. They were suspended, and later in the day the horsemen, benchmen, porters and rullymen at Newcastle ceased work, their example being followed at Gateshead, North Shields, and Sunderland. On February 22nd a meeting of passengermen at Newcastle passed a resolution in favour of a strike, and the strike commenced on the following midnight without due notice being given. On February 24th a general strike all over the system was decided on. The number of men on strike increased rapidly 5,165 being ultimately involved, but on the 26th an arrangement was arrived at

* Amtliche Nachrichten des Reichs-Versicherungsamts, No. 3 von 1. März, 1897. Geschäftsbericht des Reichs-Versicherungsamts für das Jahr 1896.

between the Company and a deputation of the men, accompanied by the General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, by which the men (including the suspended checkers) were to resume work on February 27th, and the prosecutions instituted against certain men for leaving work without notice to be withdrawn, the questions at issue to be considered at a conference between the parties on March 12th. Work was accordingly resumed on February 27th. Altogether 5,165 employees of all grades ceased work owing to the strike.

The conference thus agreed to was held at York, between the directors of the Company and a deputation accompanied by the General Secretary of the Union. Proposals drawn up by the men were laid before the directors, who promised to consider them and to give a reply at a further meeting to be held on March 30th. On this date the directors again received the deputation, and the Chairman of the Company made a statement of the reasons for which the Board were unable to make any further concessions beyond those already made. They estimated the cost of acceding to the whole of the men's demands at £380,000 a year. The directors, however, offered to refer the matters in dispute to arbitration, subject to certain conditions, of which the following is the substance:—(1) That the questions for arbitration shall be limited to those of wages and hours. (2) That the proposals of the locomotive staff that eight hours should constitute a day's work, with overtime payment at the rate of time and a quarter, shall be excluded from arbitration. (3) That the grades of men whose wages and hours may be submitted for determination shall be a matter for preliminary arrangement. (4) That the arbitrator shall be agreed upon, or, in the case of failure to agree, shall be appointed by some judicial authority.

This offer of the Company was laid before district meetings of the men, and on April 5th their representatives intimated to the general manager that it had been accepted.

RECENT CONCILIATION & ARBITRATION CASES AND COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS.

(a) CASES UNDER THE CONCILIATION ACT.

Settlement of the Spinners' Strike at Slaithwaite.

The protracted strike of spinners employed by the Slaithwaite Spinning Company, which commenced in June 1896, terminated in March last. The strike, which involved 75 spinners and threw out of work a number of card-room hands and piecers, was due to a refusal on the part of the directors of the company to make payments for certain "extras," namely, for breaking out of rovings, for turning strings and for tubing. The directors declined to deal with the men's Union, and notices were posted in the mills confining employment to non-unionists. On December 7th an application was made on behalf of the men to the Board of Trade to take action under the Conciliation Act. Accordingly, a representative of the Department paid several visits to Slaithwaite, and after interviews with both parties, was present, by their invitation, at a meeting between the directors of the company and the representatives of the men.

As a result of these negotiations, a notice was posted up in all the mills, stating that the following payments would forthwith be made for extras, viz.:—2s. 6d. per pair mules for band turning, and 5s. per pair mules for changing rovings. In addition, 1s. 6d. a week for spinners would be added to the price list towards their piecers' wages. The notice with regard to employment of non-unionists was removed from the mill which was empty through the dispute. As however, there were only vacancies for 24 of the strikers, the remaining places having been filled, the men for some time declined to accept these terms. At the end of March, however, they agreed to resume work, so far as vacancies permitted, substantially under the conditions indicated above.

Carpenters and Joiners in the Potteries.

The carpenters and joiners in the Potteries and Newcastle district having given notice of a claim for an advance of wages from 8d. to 9d. an hour, and the employers having given notice for a reduction from 8d. to 7d., both sides on April 6th made a joint application to the Board of Trade under the Conciliation Act to appoint an umpire to determine the question of wages, together with certain other matters relating to apprentices which have given rise to differences. In pursuance of this application, the Board of Trade have appointed Sir William Markby, K.C.I.E., to act as umpire.

The Dispute between Engineers and Brass Finishers at Hull.

The terms of settlement of the dispute at Earle's Shipbuilding and Engineering Company, Hull, which was arranged in December last, at a Conference held at the Board of Trade under the Conciliation Act (see GAZETTE for December, 1896, p. 368), provided that the question of brass-cased cocks and valves in engineering shops at Hull, which has been in dispute between the engineers and brassfinishers, should be determined by Sir Courtenay Boyle, with the assistance of two assessors appointed by him. In accordance with this arrangement arbitration proceedings took place in the Town Hall at Hull, on March 17th and 18th, the two assessors appointed by Sir Courtenay Boyle being Mr. P. Samson and Mr. J. Wile. Evidence was taken from engineers and brassfinishers employed in engineering shops, and from employers, and at the conclusion the engineers and brassfinishers undertook to submit further statements of their case in writing.

Lightermen's Apprentices on the Thames—(Exemptions from the Agreement of January 11th).

The agreement arrived at at a Board of Trade Conference on January 11th between the Association of Master Lightermen and Bargeowners and the Amalgamated Society of Watermen and Lightermen, with regard to the hours worked by boys apprenticed to lightermen on the Thames, (see LABOUR GAZETTE for January, page 6) provided (Section 2) for the exemption (among others) of "any boy who is already apprenticed and ordinarily employed on or about a 'dumb' barge before the date of this agreement, and who expresses his desire in writing to the Board of Trade within three months from this date, to be exempt from these restrictions."

The three months' interval has now elapsed. Claims for exemptions have been received under this section from 44 apprentices, of whom, however, two being over 18 years of age do not fall within the scope of the agreement. Of the 34 of the remaining boys who stated their ages, 15 stated that they were over 17; 15 between 16 and 17; and 4 between 15 and 16. The proportion of existing apprentices under 18 years of age working on the Thames, who have availed themselves of the opportunity of claiming exemption from the restrictions is thus about 10 per cent. In future the only boys who can claim exemption, will be those who hold a two years' certificate.

(b) OTHER CASES.

North East Coast Marine Engineers' Conciliation Board.

At a meeting of this Board held on March 19th to consider the question of marine engineers' wages, the following resolution was agreed upon:—

"Engineers of all grades in all foreign-going steamers to receive an increase of 10s. per month, with a proportionate increase on the weekly and daily rates. All engineers in coasting steamers of 600 tons nett register and upwards, including all coasting steamers having triple expansion engines, irrespective of tonnage, to be increased 5s. per week. All engineers in coasting steamers below 600 tons nett register to be increased 2s. 6d. per week. The increase to come into effect in each case from the beginning of the first voyage commencing on or after the 2nd day of April 1897, the foregoing rates to remain in force for twelve months."

Board of Conciliation for the Pattern Making Industry of the North East Coast.

At a meeting of this Board on March 15th an advance of wages was decided upon of 6d. per week, to come into operation at once.

LABOUR CASES IN MARCH.

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

(1) EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT.*

Defective Tools.—A shipwright sued a firm of steamship owners for £350 as damages for the loss of an eye. The plaintiff's case was that while he was on a steamer assisting to cut a rivet, a piece of metal flew from the chisel, which was being hammered, into his eye, and destroyed the sight. On behalf of the defendants it was said that the piece of metal which injured the plaintiff came from the rivet and not from the chisel. Further, it was urged that even if the piece of metal had come from the chisel the defendants had taken every precaution to provide good tools for their workmen, and that they were not responsible for, nor aware of, a flaw in a particular tool. In a considered judgment the judge held that the defendants had been guilty of negligence, and gave plaintiff £300 damages.—*City of London Court, March 4th.*

Negligence—Remoteness—Voluntary risk.—The judges in the Second Division and three judges of the First Division decided a question of the allowance of an issue for jury trial of an action by a miner against a company for £500, or for £54 13s. as damages for injuries to his son, of 13 years of age, who was employed at the pit-head. The facts of the case were that the boy saw a wagon coming down an incline at a rapid speed towards a stationary wagon upon which he was working, together with another man. With the object of preventing an accident the boy jumped off the wagon on which he was working and attempted to sprag the wagon which was running into it, but the sprag struck him in the stomach, threw him down, and a wheel passed over his left arm. The defendants said that the lad did not use a proper sprag, of which there were plenty at hand; that his interference was unnecessary, and that he therefore contributed to his injuries. On account of an equal division of opinion as to the relevancy of the action, the Second Division called in the assistance of three judges from the First Division, and by a majority of four to three an issue was allowed for a trial of the case. The majority held that there was clearly negligence on the part of the defendants, but whether proximate or remote was a question for the jury. The minority were of opinion that the boy's act was entirely voluntary, and that he had plenty of time to get out of the way of the wagon.—*Inner Court, Second Division, reported March 12th.*

(2) TRUCK ACTS.

Payment in kind.—A tailor was fined £10 and £4 4s. costs for employing females, and paying their entire wages otherwise than in current coin of the realm, in contravention of the Truck Acts, 1831, 1887, and 1896.—*Linton Police Court, March 3rd.*

Deductions for Hospital Saturday Fund.—A workman sued his former employers, a firm of india-rubber manufacturers, for 6s., being money deducted at the rate of 1s. a year from his wages for six years by defendants for the Hospital Saturday Fund. On behalf of the plaintiff it was stated that since 1884 defendants had put up a notice at their works to the effect that on Hospital Saturday a deduction would be made from each man's wages for the Hospital Fund, which was for the benefit of the hospitals in Manchester and the district. The notice also fixed a scale of deductions as follows:—Those earning £1 a week or over, 1s.; those earning under £1, and over 10s. a week, 6d.; those earning less than 10s. a week, 3d. Plaintiff asserted that when the notice was first posted he made a protest, but that subsequently he made no further protest for fear of being discharged. It was, however, not admitted by the defendants that any protest had been made by the plaintiff. In giving judgment the judge pointed out that the notice was couched in the strongest terms, and was a command, rather than an invitation by the firm. He thought that plaintiff had made a complaint though the defendants might have forgotten it. Judgment for plaintiff with costs.—*Manchester County Court, March 4th.*

(3) FACTORY ACTS.

Flying Shuttles.—Dangerous Machinery.—A firm of cotton manufacturers was summoned for neglecting to fence the shuttle of a loom which had flown out and caused the loss of a weaver's eye. Defendants stated that since the case was decided at Blackburn (see LABOUR GAZETTE for January 1897, page 7), they had ordered a number of guards which would be supplied as soon as possible. Fined £20 and costs.—*Leyland Police Court, March 8th.*

A firm of cotton spinners and manufacturers was summoned for failing to fence a shuttle which flew out and injured a weaver. On behalf of defendants it was stated that fourteen or fifteen years ago they put shuttle guards on all their looms, but that they took them off again because more operatives were injured with the guards on than previously; and that since May 1893, eight different kinds of guards had been put on, and none had been effective. Fined 10s. and costs.—*Bury Borough Police Court, March 12th.*

A firm of cotton spinners and weavers were summoned for failing to fence a shuttle which had flown out and struck a woman on the eye. On behalf of defendants it was stated that so far they had not found guards which would ensure the safety of the weavers, and that they were experimenting with several different kinds at that time. Fined £1 and costs.—*Rochdale County Police Court, March 17th.*

Jews opening Workshop for "traffic" on Sunday.—This was an appeal by special case from the decision of a metropolitan police magistrate who had convicted the appellant, a buttonhole machinist, for an offence under Section 51 of the Factory and

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

Workshops Act, 1878. [See LABOUR GAZETTE for December 1896, page 376.] The Act provides that no penalty shall be incurred by any person in respect of any work done on a Sunday in a factory or workshop by a young person or woman of the Jewish religion, subject to the conditions that the occupier of the factory or workshop should be of the Jewish religion, and that the factory or workshop should be closed on Saturday, and not open for "traffic" on Sunday. The appellant was a buttonhole machinist, and made buttonholes for master tailors. Being of the Jewish persuasion he closed his workshop on Saturdays and opened on Sundays, in order that his customers might send or fetch garments in pursuance of prior arrangements, but not for the purpose of making arrangements either with old or new customers. The magistrate held that what the appellant did amounted to keeping his house open for "traffic" on Sundays and convicted him. The Court allowed the appeal and quashed the conviction with costs.—*Queen's Bench Division, reported March 16th.*

(4) MISCELLANEOUS.

A Register of "Rats."—In this case there were three pursuers employed in the printing trade, who each claimed £500 damages against the secretary and the executive of a trade union, and as individuals, for alleged slander in respect that the defendants had published the pursuers' names in a "Register of Rats." The pursuers alleged that the fact of their names appearing in the register represented that they had been members of the defendants' association, and that they had been expelled therefrom for unfair and dishonourable conduct in connection with the trade. It was arranged that the evidence taken in one case should apply to the others. One of the pursuers stated that some years ago his fellow-workmen employed by the firm, where he had worked for 19 years, were asked to join the trade union, but they declined, and subsequently a similar request was made to pursuer with the same result. In 1896 pursuer saw his name, with that of other of his fellow-workmen, in the report of the union in a "Register of Rats." Until 1895 it was said that the union only published the names of persons who had been members of the association and had been expelled. Pursuer further stated that he and his fellow-workmen had never been members of the union; that they objected to being classed among those who had been expelled from the union for immoral conduct or for incapacity; that the term "rat" did not simply mean a non-unionist, but was applied to dishonourable as well as unfair persons; and that the publication would prevent men from obtaining employment in another office, or would else force them to become members of the union against their will. The secretary of the union in his evidence said that the word "rat" in the printing trade had a special meaning, and that any man who worked in a closed office was an unfair person and was called a "rat." He further stated that the report was issued direct to the branch secretaries for distribution among members only; that no names appeared in the list which included the pursuers except those who were "rats" in the sense of persons working in closed offices; that he had never heard that a "rat" was a person who had been expelled from the union, or that a "rat" was a person who had been guilty of some immoral conduct. The jury returned a verdict for pursuers. Damages £25 in each case.—*Court of Session, Edinburgh, March 4-5.*

PRICES OF COAL AND IRON.

THE average selling prices of coal and iron in certain districts as ascertained at the last audits are shown in the following table, in which are also included for purposes of comparison the results of the previous audits. The ascertainment are largely used to regulate wages.

| Product and District. | Number of workpeople. | Period over which prices were ascertained at last audit. | Dates from which last audit affects wages. | Average ascertained selling price per ton. | | |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------|--|
| | | | | According to last audit. | According to previous audit. | Increase (+) or Decrease (−) in price per ton. |
| Coal. | | | | | | |
| Northumberland:— (Average for all classes of coal at pit's mouth) | 30,000 | Dec., Jan., Feb. | — | s. d. 4 11 52 | s. d. 5 0 71 | s. d. — 0 1 19 |
| South Wales and Monmouth:— (Average for certain classes of coal, f.o.b.) | 100,000 | Jan., Feb. | April 1 | 9 1 2 to 9 3 2 | 9 0 to 9 1 2 | + 0 0 2* to 0 1 2 |
| Pig Iron. | | | | | | |
| Cumberland and N. Lancashire | 1,500 | Jan., Feb., March | April 1 | 49 8 51 | 49 10 24 | — 0 1 73 |
| Cleveland | 5,000 | Jan., Feb., March | April 1 | 39 4 35 | 38 0 28 | + 1 4 07 |
| Manufactured Iron. | | | | | | |
| North of England:— (Rails, plates, bars and angles) | 6,000 | Jan., Feb. | April | 101 7 18 | 99 0 98 | + 2 6 20 |
| Midlands:— (Bars, hoops, sheets, plates, and strips) | 20,000 | Jan., Feb. | April 3 | 121 0 89 | 117 1 76 | + 3 11 13. |
| West of Scotland:— (Rounds, squares, flats, angles, tees, hoops, and rods) | 3,500 | Jan., Feb. | Mar. 1 | 106 8 44 | 101 6 071 | + 5 2 37 |

* The exact amount of the increase cannot be stated. † The previous audit in the West of Scotland District was for September and October; no audit was made for the months of November and December.

LABOUR IN THE COLONIES.*

(Monthly report, compiled by the Emigrants' Information Office, 31 Broad-way, Westminster, S.W., from official and other reports, newspapers, &c., mostly dated February and March last.)†

Canada.—April is the best month in which to emigrate to Canada, but the only persons in demand are men with sufficient capital (£200) to take up free grant and other land, experienced farm labourers, and female domestic servants. Mechanics are not in demand. A report from Vancouver Island, in British Columbia, states that there is no demand for men without capital, and points out that in many industries, as fishing, lumbering, and farming, large numbers of Japanese, Chinese and Indians are employed instead of Englishmen. A report, however, from Victoria, written in February, states that there is a fair demand for good country blacksmiths, butchers, and carpenters, and a good demand for female servants.

New South Wales.—The report of the Government Labour Bureau for the last six months of 1896 states that there was a marked diminution in the number of the unemployed in Sydney and its suburbs, and that there was even some scarcity of good mechanics in the building trade, owing to so many of the best men having left for Western Australia and South Africa. Coal and gold miners are busy, and the copper-mining industry of Cobar is being revived.

Victoria.—The railway traffic and revenue are improving, and employment is less scarce than it was. Reports from Sale, Warrnambool, Bendigo, Carisbrook, &c., state that there is practically no demand for any kind of labour, except that at Carisbrook there is a fair demand for gold miners.

South Australia.—There is a continued demand for married couples without encumbrances for farm, station, and domestic service at £60 to £80 a year with board and lodging. It is estimated that in the recent harvest the area reaped for wheat was only two-thirds of the area reaped in 1895-96, and that the average yield per acre was under 3 bushels. The gold-mining industry has been unusually active, especially at Blumberg and Echuanga, near Adelaide.

Queensland.—The gold-mining industry in the North has been dull, and many miners have left, at all events temporarily, to search for gold in New Guinea.

Western Australia.—Many of the carpenters and plasterers have been on strike at Perth. They demand that the current wages of 11s. and 9s. a day, respectively, should be raised to 12s. and 10s. The claim of the builders' labourers, who have been on strike, has been granted. The blacksmiths and strikers in the locomotive shops—who receive 11s. and 8s. a day, respectively—have also struck for an increase of 1s. a day. In spite of these strikes, however, the building trade in the colony is brisk, and seems likely to remain so. At the Coolgardie goldfields there appear to be more than enough miners at the present time. Owing to so many men going to the various goldfields farmers find it almost impossible to obtain labourers.

Tasmania.—The supply of labour at Zeehan, the centre of the mining districts on the West Coast, is now sufficient, and some who have lately arrived have had some difficulty in getting work.

New Zealand.—The census returns for 1896 show an increase in the number of factories and employees—especially female employees—as compared with the numbers at the previous census of 1891. There was a large increase in butter and cheese factories, and a large decrease in flax mills.

The following information is taken from the New Zealand Department of Labour Journal of 10th February:—The building trade is brisk at Auckland and Wellington, and fairly so at Dunedin. The engineering trade is only fairly busy at Auckland and Wellington. The boot and clothing trades seem to be fairly busy generally. *Unskilled Labour.*—Local men are fairly well employed at Auckland, but newcomers find

it difficult to get employment at Auckland, or the gold-fields, and Napier was never so free from unemployed for months past. At Wellington the number of applicants for employment has slightly increased, but the number is under that of previous years. At Nelson there is no demand for labourers at present, a number of men looking for work. At Dunedin there is a slight increase of applicants for employment, but at Invercargill there are very few men unemployed.

Cape Colony.—Large numbers of men—including many engaged in the building trades—continue to arrive from England and Australia. A report from Kimberley states that there is a good but limited demand for bricklayers and joiners at 16s. 8d. a day, a good demand for first-class tailors (handworkers) at 15s. a day, and for first-class bakers at 12s. 6d., and a fair demand for female cooks at £4 to £4 10s. a month; in other trades the demand is little or none; coachmen, waiters, brick-makers, and labourers are mainly natives. Reports from Robertson and Bughersdorp in the South of the Colony, and from Bechuanaland in the North state that the local labour is quite sufficient.

Natal.—A Bill has been introduced by the Colonial Government prohibiting the immigration of any person (amongst others) who (1) cannot write in any European language an application to be admitted; or who (2) has less than £25; or who (3) has been assisted in any way by any other person, except under any Government scheme, in respect of his passage to Natal.

South African Republic.—Female domestic servants are specially warned against paying any fee whatever to any association or person professing to procure them situations at high wages in Johannesburg, South Africa, and are not advised to go to Johannesburg at all unless they go to join friends. Building operations in Johannesburg are being postponed for the present, and many carpenters have left the town. Some of the least skilled hands at the mines have been discharged. There is no opening for shop assistants or men without a trade, and according to the last accounts received trade generally was depressed.

LABOUR ABROAD.

FRANCE*.

Employment in March.—The seasonal revival begun in February in the building and boot and shoe trades was more pronounced in March, but employment remained less plentiful in those trades than at the corresponding period of 1896. *Gloves-makers* and *spinning* and *weaving* operatives—except in *silk* mills—had more employment than in February. The *ribbon-weaving* and *clothing* trades are improving. In the *leather* and *mining* trades the situation has scarcely changed. On March 15th, 468 trade unions, with 119,000 members, reported a little under 7 per cent. unemployed. In the previous month the proportion was a little over 7 per cent.

Coal Mining in February.—The average number of days per week on which coal was hewn and wound in February was 5.95, as compared with 6.03 in the previous month. In February, full time (six days and over) was worked by 2 per cent., and from five to six days by 96 per cent. of the miners, while in the previous month the percentages were 92 and 8 respectively. The pits making these returns employ over three-fourths of the coal miners of France.

Labour Disputes in March.—Thirty-four labour disputes were notified to the French Labour Department as having begun in March, as compared with 26 in the preceding month and 42 in March 1896. Six disputes begun before the 1st March were also in progress. The number of persons participating in 29 of the 34 new disputes was 2,080. The trades most affected were the textile, metal and building trades, with 9, 8 and 7 disputes respectively; there were 2 disputes in the mining industry, and the rest were in unclassified trades. Twenty-four disputes had reference to wages questions—including 17 demands for increased wages—and 11 to the dismissal or re-instatement of workpeople or

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

overseers. (Disputes involving more than one demand are counted under each.) The largest number of persons involved in any of the new disputes was 400—a lock-out of miners in Fuveau (Bouches-du-Rhône), who were unsuccessful in their demands for increased wages and the re-instatement of some fellow-workers who had been dismissed. The workpeople were successful in 4, partially successful in 11, and unsuccessful in 10 out of 25 disputes terminating in March.

Conciliation and Arbitration in March.—Three attempts to apply the Conciliation and Arbitration Law were made in March. The first was a dispute between 240 cotton-weaving operatives of Cholet (Maine-et-Loire) and their employers at two factories, and was due to the refusal of the latter to agree to a uniform wages list adopted by five other establishments in the locality. At the employers' suggestion, a meeting took place before the *juge de paix*, but no settlement was effected. In the second case a conciliation meeting in the presence of the *juge de paix* took place between delegates of some plasterers and their employers, from whom they had demanded increased wages. The negotiations failed, and the majority of the men eventually returned to work on the employers' terms. The proposal for conciliation came from the men. In the third case the *juge de paix* took the initiative and convened a meeting at a factory, where 300 cotton weavers had struck to procure the dismissal of a manager. A compromise was effected on the third day of the strike.

GERMANY.

Proposed Regulation of Crafts.—Sir F. C. Lascelles, H.M. Ambassador at Berlin, reports under date of March 18th, that the new Government Bill for re-organising the handicraft guilds (see GAZETTE, February 1897, p. 42) has been laid before the Reichstag.

It is now proposed that membership of a guild shall not be compulsory, except by decision of the majority of the members. The proposal to form "Committees of Handicrafts" has been abandoned, and some modifications have been made in the proposals relating to the examination of apprentices.

Threatened renewal of dispute in Hamburg Docks.—From reports to the Foreign Office by Mr. Ward, H.M. Consul-General at Hamburg, under dates of March 27th and April 1st, it appears that the coal piece workers, who had been discharged by the Associated Hamburg Importers of British Coal in consequence of a disagreement, had enlisted the sympathy of the general body of dock labourers of Hamburg, who threatened a general cessation of work unless the coal workers' demands were granted. According to the employers, the men insisted on having a written undertaking to the effect that the employers "would henceforth do nothing which might prejudice the interests of the workmen" which the employers refused. A general strike was thought, to be imminent. However, a general meeting of representatives of the Hamburg Dock Labourers' Union, on March 31st, advised the men to resume work, but promised to organise a general strike if the result of the investigation into the question of labour in the port (now being conducted by a Commission of the Senate) should prove unsatisfactory, and should the result of an appeal to the Industrial Court be also unfavourable.

Principal Labour Disputes in March.—The most noteworthy disputes reported in the *Deutscher Reichs-Anzeiger* in March were in the boot and shoe trade. Strikes having taken place at two boot and shoe factories in Berlin—both for the dismissal of unpopular employees—the Association of Boot and Shoe Manufacturers of Berlin notified the strikers that, unless they had returned to work by March 13th, a general lock-out would take place on that date. As work was not resumed, the lock-out took effect, 2,519 operatives at 37 establishments being involved. A conference took place on the 13th before the Industrial Court and terms of settlement were arrived at. These, however, were rejected on the following day at a general meeting of the workers. At a second Conference held before the Industrial Court, on March 18th, the delegates had full powers to treat finally as to terms of settlement. The employers waived their demand that the operatives should give a written undertaking to quit their trade union. It was settled that all except 19 of the

strikers—whose places had been filled—should be re-admitted to work on March 19th. A strike of some 1,000 boot and shoe operatives, for increased wages, took place in Offenbach.

A strike of 1,500 workers at a sugar refinery in Tangermünde (Prussian Saxony) was settled through the concession of an increase in wages, amounting to about 10 per cent.

A lock-out affecting some 1,600 quarrymen at Gottliebthal in Saxony, and a strike of 800 colliers of the Konsolidierte Wolfganggrube, in Upper Silesia, are also reported, but details are wanting.

Operations of Public Labour Registries in March.—The total number of situations offered by employers in March at 31 of the municipal or municipally-subsidized registries which have sent returns to *Soziale Praxis* was 21,852, compared with 14,099 in the preceding month and 18,789 in March 1896.

The number of situations sought by workpeople during the month was 25,243, compared with 20,599 in the previous month, and 22,739 in March 1896. The number of situations found was 15,305, compared with 10,244 in the previous month and 13,378 in March 1896. (This last set of figures is subject to some deduction, since in some registries a situation found is counted twice—viz., once to the employer and once to the workman.)

SWITZERLAND.

General Strike on the North-Eastern Railway of Switzerland.—A general strike of the employees of the North-Eastern Railway was begun at midnight between the 11th and 12th of March. The cause of the strike, according to *Schweizerische Blätter für Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik*, was the failure of the directors to improve the conditions of pay and service. On the evening of Saturday, the 13th of March, the strike was settled through the award of the Chief of the Federal Postal and Railway Department, whom the directorate of the North-Eastern Railway and the Central Committee of the Federation of Workers in Swiss Transport Enterprises had agreed to accept as umpire. The terms of the award are published in *Der Grüllianer*. Its chief provisions are that the conditions of appointment, pay, &c., are to be regulated in accordance with those of the Swiss Central Railway—except in so far as the conditions of the latter may be less favourable to the employees; no employee is to be dismissed or otherwise penalized for taking part in the strike; the disputants are to arrive at an agreement, by the 1st of May at the latest, as regards the terms of the service contract, scales of pay, &c., and any difference arising in the course of negotiations must be referred to the umpire pronouncing the present award.

Chamber of Labour in Zürich.—On March 18th, at a general meeting of delegates from 42 workmen's unions of Zürich, representing 5,874 members, the rules for a Chamber of Labour were formally adopted. According to these rules, the Chamber is intended to represent the economic interests of the workpeople of Zürich. It will promote the formation of trade societies, organise trade union labour registries and travelling benefits, establish an information bureau and inquire into social questions. Its funds will be derived from subscriptions of half a franc (about 5d.) from members of affiliated unions, and of an amount not yet fixed from outsiders who wish to join, supplemented, if necessary, by contributions of the unions themselves.

BELGIUM.*

Employment in March.—Partial increases of wages are reported in various Coal districts, the price of coal having risen 1s. 0½d. per ton. Most of the mines are being worked to their utmost capacity, and there is rather a scarcity of workpeople, who are leaving, as usual at this season, for the brickfields. *Steel* and *Engineering* works are in full activity, but a slight lull has occurred in *Rolling Mills* and *Blast Furnaces*. The crisis in the Ghent *Cotton Weaving* industry has passed. The state of the *Cotton Spinning* industry is satisfactory, but men are being gradually supplanted by women. Thirty per cent. of *Cotton Weavers* are unemployed in Ghent; *Wool-dyeing* operatives are idle two days per week. Employment is again satisfactory in the *Combed-wool Spinning* branch, but 20 per cent. of *Carded-wool Spinners* were unemployed at the end of March. *Glass-works* are well employed for the time being, but a serious crisis is considered probable. The seasonal revival of the *Building* trades has, on the whole, been satisfactory.

Labour Disputes in March.—Thirteen new disputes, each affecting a single establishment, occurred in March

* Supplied through the courtesy of the Belgian Labour Department by Dr. F. Vercrusse.

* And the South African Republic (Transvaal).

† Handbooks, with maps of the different Colonies, may be obtained from the Emigrants' Information Office at a penny each, post free.

Four disputes begun in February were also in progress. By April 12th, 13 disputes had terminated, the workpeople being successful in 2, partially successful in 1, and unsuccessful in 10. Five of the disputes were in the coal-mining industry round about Liège.

International Congress on Workmen's Dwellings.—An international congress on workmen's dwellings will be held in Brussels, on July 23rd to 25th. Similar congresses have already been held in 1889 (Paris), in 1894 (Antwerp), and in 1895 (Bordeaux). Intending participants should apply to M. J. Dubois, Secrétaire Général du Comité d'Organisation, rue Latérale, 2, Brussels. The minimum subscription is 10 francs (about 8s.).

Minimum Wages in Public Contracts.—The Provincial Council of Hainaut has adopted a scale of minimum hourly rates of wages for workpeople employed on works carried out on behalf of the provincial administration. The highest is that fixed for slaters, viz., 3'8d. per hour. After these come glaziers, marble workers, locksmiths and ceiling plasterers, with an hourly rate of 3'5d., then paviors, masons and bricklayers, carpenters and joiners, stone cutters and paperhangers with 3'4d., painters with 3'2d., and white washers with 2'9d. In most of these trades in which it is customary to employ helpers, the minimum hourly wage of the helper is to be 2'2d., but a joiner's helper gets 3'2d.; a slater's helper 2'6d., and a ceiling plasterer's helper 2'5d. per hour. The rate for a carman is 2'7d., for a navvy 2'4d., and for a boy or helper under the age of 17 years, 1'5d. per hour.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY.

Principal Labour Disputes in March.—Of the disputes reported on in Austrian employers' and workers' papers* in March, two only need be mentioned. One was a strike of 426 porcelain workers, belonging to a factory in Dallwitz, near Karlsbad (already referred to in GAZETTE), begun last September, and terminated by a compromise on March 19th. Two hundred and thirty of the strikers were re-admitted to work at once, and the rest are to be called for as occasion may require. The other dispute occurred at Klausenburg, in Transylvania, where 980 workers (of whom 900 were females), a State tobacco factory, struck on March 23rd, alleging that they had been provoked to do so by the incivility of the manager. No settlement has yet been reported.

Accident Insurance on the "Trade Group" System.—The organisation of accident insurance in Austria differs from that of Germany in being mainly territorial, i.e., the whole of the trades in each province unite and form one insurance institution, while in Germany the employers unite in groups (*Berufsgenossenschaften*) composed of the same or kindred trades, one such group sometimes exercising jurisdiction in all parts of the Empire by means of branches or sections, as for example, the group for the mining industry. *Die Industrie* now states that the Association of Employers in the mining, smelting, metal and engineering trades in Austria is taking steps to form an insurance group on the German plan. In order to do so, it will be necessary under the law, that the employers who combine for this purpose employ together at least 50,000 workpeople. An endeavour made by the same association in 1894 to form an insurance group, fell through, as the workers employed by the promoters of the scheme amounted to only 38,781. The only class to whom the trade group system of insurance against accident has hitherto been applied in Austria is that of the railway workers.

Trade Guilds for the Mining Industry.—By a law dated August 14th, 1896,* the establishment of Trade Guilds, resembling those prescribed by the law of March 15th, 1883 (see GAZETTE of December 1895, p. 370), for persons engaged in handicrafts and licensed trades, is made obligatory for the mining industry.

A single guild will, as a rule, be established in each of the sub-districts in charge of an official of the mining administration (*Revierbergamts-bezirk*). Like the handicraft guilds, the miners' guilds are intended to foster community of feeling among their members, to establish schools, *crèches*, and distributive stores, &c.; to promote technical and other training, procure employment, and avert or settle differences arising out of the terms of employment. Each guild consists of two distinct assemblies, one including all the owners or concessionaires of mines within the district, the other including delegates elected by the workers in each mine (one delegate to every hundred miners). Each assembly elects its own committee, the two committees together forming the "grand committee" of the guild. The governing board consists of the

* Including *Die Industrie* (the organ of the Federation of Austrian Manufacturers' Associations), *Das Handels-Museum*, *Die Gewerkschaft*, *Die Arbeiter Zeitung*, and others.
* Gesetz vom 14 August, 1896, betreffend die Errichtung von Genossenschaften beim Bergbaue. Reichsgesetzblatt, No. 156.

president of the guild, the two chairmen of the employers' and workers' committees, and two other members chosen by those committees. The "grand committee" acts as a board of conciliation in actual or impending disputes between employers and bodies of miners (not individual miners) belonging to the guild, irrespective of whether the dispute have reference to claims arising out of existing conditions of employment, or to what such conditions shall be in the future. The conciliation board intervenes at the request of either of the assemblies, or of any of the employers or bodies of workmen concerned, or under exceptional circumstances, by order of the district mining administration. Should the conciliation board fail to effect a settlement, the decision arrived at by a majority of its members must be accepted or rejected by the disputants within a specified time. The governing board of the guild acts as a court for deciding differences between employers and individual workmen. In such cases the usual chairman is replaced by a nominee of the mining administration.

DENMARK.

Strike of Dock labourers at Aarhus.—Capt. James Boyle, H.M. Consul at Copenhagen, in a report to the Foreign Office, dated March 8th, states that this strike (see GAZETTE, February, 1897, p. 43), has come to an end, most of the strikers having resumed work with the grain company at Aarhus.

State and Communal Provision for Old Age.*—The following statement gives the most recent figures available as to the extent and cost of old age relief in Denmark, under the Law of April 9th, 1891, and its supplementary Law on Support of the Aged Poor (see GAZETTE, May, 1896, p. 149).

| | 1892. | 1893. | 1894. | 1895. |
|---|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| | No. | No. | No. | No. |
| Persons receiving Old Age Pensions, or maintained in Old Age Institutions on Jan. 1st:— | | | | |
| Heads of Families | 9,029 | 10,776 | 11,138 | 11,627 |
| Persons living alone | 14,914 | 20,181 | 22,189 | 23,068 |
| Persons dependent on Heads of Families ... | 10,789 | 12,869 | 13,051 | 13,719 |
| Total deriving permanent benefit under the Law on January 1st | 34,732 | 43,826 | 46,378 | 48,414 |
| Persons temporarily relieved during the year | 289 | 368 | 355 | |
| Cost of relief under the Law— | | | | |
| To Communes | £ 85,760 | £ 87,274 | £ 90,596 | Not stated |
| " State | 56,349 | 77,342 | 89,929 | |
| Total | 142,109 | 164,616 | 180,525 | |

The average value of the relief granted in 1894, in the form of old age pensions or maintenance in homes, was £5 15s. for heads of families, and £5 1s. 9d. and £4 15s. 6d. for men and women respectively, who lived alone.

UNITED STATES.

CHICAGO CONSULAR DISTRICT.

The following is based on a report prepared for the Foreign Office by Mr. A. G. Vansittart, H. M. Consul at Chicago, under date of March 24th 1897:—

The Strike of Silver Miners in Leadville (Colorado).—This dispute after having lasted over eight months, terminated on March 9th. The original demands of the Union will be acceded to and wages fixed at 10s. 4d. and 12s. 4d. as a camp standard. The number of members of the Union at the commencement of the strike was stated to be 2,200.

Other Labour Disputes.—On March 7th the Union plasterers and hod-carriers in Chicago struck work for wages of 14s. 0½d. per day for plasterers, and 9s. 1d. for hod-carriers. On the 11th of March the strike was declared at an end, and the men will be at liberty to work for any contractor who pays the present Union rate.

The strike in the Chicago tanneries, referred to in the GAZETTE for March, p. 75, has spread to Milwaukee. The strikers have, however, accepted arbitration, and the State Board of Arbitration has taken the evidence of certain of the principal employers.

* Danmarks Statistik. Statistiske Meddelelser, Tredde Række, 17 Bind, udgivet af Statens Statistiske Bureau, Copenhagen, 1897. On sale at M. Gyldenald's bookselling establishment.

EMPLOYMENT IN MARCH—SPECIAL INDUSTRIES.

REPORTS ON SPECIAL INDUSTRIES.

(a) COAL MINING IN MARCH.

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

Summary.—Employment was generally better than a year ago, but not so good as in February.

Returns received respecting 1,286 pits, employing 412,462 workpeople, show that the average time worked in the four weeks ended March 27th, was 5'14 days per week, as compared with 5'34 days per week in February and 4'81 days in March 1896. The following table gives the average number of days worked in each division of the United Kingdom:—

| District. | No. employed in March 1897 at the Collieries included in the Table. | Average number of days worked per week by the pits in four weeks ended | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|-----------------|----------------|
| | | 27th March 1897 | 28th March 1896 | 20th Feb. 1897 |
| England and Wales | 378,833 | 5'11 | 4'81 | 5'33 |
| Scotland | 33,068 | 5'43 | 4'81 | 5'47 |
| Ireland | 561 | 4'66 | 5'14 | 5'05 |
| United Kingdom | 412,462 | 5'14 | 4'81 | 5'34 |

The following table gives the average number of days worked in the pits classified according to the class of coal principally raised. It will be seen that the principal falling off in the month was in pits producing house coal:—

| Description of Coal. | No. employed in March 1897 at the Collieries included in the Table. | Number of days worked per week. | | Increase (+) or Decrease (–) in March 1897 |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---------------|--|
| | | March 1897 | February 1897 | |
| Coking Coal | 23,167 | 5'61 | 5'57 | +04 |
| Gas " | 31,431 | 5'22 | 5'53 | –31 |
| House " | 70,945 | 4'82 | 5'23 | –41 |
| Manufacturing Coal ... | 16,987 | 5'16 | 5'39 | –23 |
| Steam " | 134,020 | 5'32 | 5'32 | — |
| Mixed " | 135,912 | 5'03 | 5'34 | –31 |
| All Classes of Coal ... | 412,462 | 5'14 | 5'34 | –20 |

If the workpeople be classified according to the number of days worked by the pits at which they were employed, it will be seen that 67'3 per cent. were employed at pits working 5 or more days per week, as compared with 79'5 per cent. in February, and 50'8 per cent. in March 1896.

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

| Number of days on which Coal was hewn and wound in four weeks. | March 1897. | | Corresponding percentages in— | |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| | No. of Workpeople employed. | Percentage proportion to total. | March 1896. | February 1897. |
| 24 days (full time) ... | 47,294 | 11'5 | 8'5 | 15'3 |
| 20 and under 24 days ... | 230,267 | 55'8 | 42'3 | 64'2 |
| 16 " " 20 " ... | 93,785 | 22'7 | 29'8 | 15'5 |
| 12 " " 16 " ... | 31,813 | 7'7 | 14'3 | 4'2 |
| 8 " " 12 " ... | 7,890 | 1'9 | 3'5 | 7 |
| Under 8 days | 1,413 | 0'4 | 1'6 | 1 |
| Total | 412,462 | 100'0 | 100'0 | 100'0 |

The number of workpeople now employed at pits covered by the returns is greater by 7,033 (or 1'7 per cent.) than a year ago. In England and Wales there is an increase of 5,947, and in Scotland of 1,362; in Ireland there is a decrease of 276.

Comparison by Districts.—With the exception of the small Irish District, the average number of days

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

worked was higher in every district than a year ago. In Fife the improvement amounted to nearly one day per week, and there was an improvement of over half a day in Northumberland, North Wales, West Scotland, and Derbyshire. As compared with last month there was an improvement of about a quarter of a day in Northumberland, and slight improvements in both Fife and South Wales and Monmouth. Elsewhere there was a decline in employment, which was greatest in Gloucester and Somerset and in Nottingham and Leicester, in both of which districts the falling off amounted to about two-thirds of a day.

The highest average during the month was again worked in the Lothians (5'70 days). In South Wales and Monmouth the average was 5'61 days per week, and in West Scotland 5'57 days. The lowest average was worked in Nottingham and Leicester (3'96 days). The average in Gloucester and Somerset was 4'62 days, in Ireland 4'66 days, and in Derbyshire 4'80 days. In other districts the average time worked was between 5 and 5½ days.

COMPARISON OF THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS WORKED BY COLLIERIES IN MARCH 1897 AND 1896, AND IN FEBRUARY 1897

| District. | No. employed in Mar. 1897 at the Collieries included in the Table. | Average No. of Days worked per Week by the Collieries in four weeks ended | | | Increase (+) or Decrease (–) in Mar. 1897 as compared with | A year ago. | A month ago. |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|-----------------|-----------------|--|-------------|--------------|
| | | 27th Mar. 1897. | 28th Mar. 1896. | 20th Feb. 1897. | | | |
| ENGLAND & WALES | | | | | | | |
| Northumberland | 31,168 | 5'01 | 4'41 | 4'75 | +60 | +26 | |
| Durham | 83,683 | 5'26 | 5'13 | 5'47 | +13 | –21 | |
| Cumberland | 4,878 | 5'07 | 4'93 | 5'56 | +14 | –49 | |
| Yorkshire | 45,786 | 5'06 | 4'64 | 5'39 | +42 | –33 | |
| Lancashire and Cheshire | 45,527 | 5'18 | 5'17 | 5'41 | +01 | –23 | |
| Nottingham and Leicester | 24,292 | 3'96 | 3'91 | 4'57 | +05 | –61 | |
| Derbyshire | 31,505 | 4'80 | 4'28 | 5'14 | +52 | –34 | |
| Staffordshire | 22,386 | 5'11 | 4'71 | 5'44 | +40 | –33 | |
| Salop, Worcester and Warwick | 6,323 | 5'04 | 4'79 | 5'42 | +25 | –38 | |
| Gloucester and Somerset | 8,101 | 4'62 | 4'57 | 5'30 | +05 | –68 | |
| North Wales | 12,571 | 5'26 | 4'66 | 5'63 | +60 | –37 | |
| South Wales & Monmouth | 62,613 | 5'61 | 5'23 | 5'58 | +38 | +03 | |
| SCOTLAND. | | | | | | | |
| West Scotland | 18,244 | 5'57 | 5'04 | 5'67 | +53 | –10 | |
| The Lothians | 2,925 | 5'70 | 5'29 | 5'74 | +41 | –04 | |
| Fife | 11,899 | 5'17 | 4'25 | 5'06 | +92 | +11 | |
| IRELAND | 561 | 4'66 | 5'14 | 5'05 | –48 | –39 | |
| Grand Total & Averages | 412,462 | 5'14 | 4'81 | 5'34 | +33 | –22 | |

The percentage of unemployed miners in trade unions in Northumberland and Durham amounted to 0'9 per cent. at the end of March, as compared with 1'6 at the end of February and 2'0 per cent. at the end of March 1896.

Exports of Coal.—During March 2,880,910 tons of coal, coke, cinders and patent fuel were exported as compared with 2,340,257 tons in February and 2,472,707 tons in March 1896.

(b) IRON MINING INDUSTRY IN MARCH.

EMPLOYMENT in this industry continues good. It is slightly better than a year ago in all districts except Cleveland, where there was a falling off in the period of employment of about a fifth of a day per week. The number employed has also increased in the twelve months by 4'3 per cent. As compared with February employment showed a slight falling off.

During the four weeks ended March 27th, the 16,655 workpeople employed at the 127 mines and open works included in the returns worked an average of 5'82 days per week, as compared with 5'86 in February and 5'78 in March, 1896. The number employed at the mines and open works was greater by 693 than a year ago. Of these workpeople 68'2 per cent. worked full time, and 96'1 per cent. five or more days per week, as compared with percentages of 70'1 and 93'5 respectively in March, 1895.

The following tables show for the mines included in the returns received:—

EMPLOYMENT IN MARCH—SPECIAL INDUSTRIES (continued).

bridgeshire state that work is generally regular in the Unions of Chesterton, North Witchford, and in the Cambridgeshire portion of the Royston Union (Cambs and Herts). In Lincolnshire work is reported as regular in the Unions of Grantham, Lincoln, Louth, Spilsby, Sleaford, and Stamford (Kesteven Division).

Home Counties.—Favourable reports come from Buckinghamshire from the Unions of Aylesbury, Buckingham and Newport Pagnell; from Berkshire from the Wantage Union; from Surrey from the Farnham and Godstone Unions; from Kent from the Unions of Bridge, Faversham, Hollingbourne and Sevenoaks; and from Hertfordshire from the Unions of Buntingford, Hatfield, Hertford, St. Alban's, and Ware.

Southern and South-Western Counties.—In Sussex employment is said to be generally regular with but few exceptions in the Unions of Battle, Chalely, Hastings, and Lewes. In the Horsham Union a good many men were in irregular work during the first three weeks owing to wet weather, but in the last week they were fully employed. In Hampshire favourable reports come from the Unions of Hartley, Wintney, Kingsclere, and Stockbridge; in Dorsetshire from the Unions of Blandford, Bridport, and Dorchester; in Wiltshire from the Unions of Devizes, Highworth and Swindon, and Wilton. In the Warminster Union some irregularity is reported. Reports from Gloucestershire state that employment is generally regular in the Unions of Barton Regis, Cirencester, and Gloucester; and from Herefordshire from the Unions of Bromyard and Ledbury; in Somersetshire work is said to be generally regular in the Unions of Langport, Taunton, Wells, and Wellington; and in Devonshire, in the Unions of Barnstaple, Crediton, Tavistock and Torrington.

(g) EMPLOYMENT OF SEAMEN IN MARCH.

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

The number of men shipped as the crews of foreign-going vessels from certain selected ports (at which over 80 per cent. of the total tonnage of vessels in the foreign trade is entered and cleared) was 32,929, being 2,098 more than in March 1896. The supply of seamen and firemen during March was reported as equal to or greater than the demand at nearly all the ports. At Dublin and Leith there was a scarcity of seamen for sailing vessels.

Particulars of the changes which have taken place during the month in the rates of wages at Bristol, Cardiff and Hull will be found on page 121.

Table showing the number* of men, &c., shipped as the crews of foreign-going vessels at some of the principal ports of the United Kingdom in March 1897 and 1896 respectively, together with the number* shipped in the three months ended March in each of these years:—

| Principal Ports. | Number of Men, &c., shipped in March 1897. | | | Total in March 1896. | Total number Shipped in three months ended March. | |
|--|--|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---|---------------|
| | In Sailing Vessels. | In Steam Vessels. | Total in Mar. 1897. | | 1897. | 1896. |
| ENGLAND. | | | | | | |
| East Coast. | | | | | | |
| Tyne Ports ... | 97 | 2,692 | 2,789 | 2,760 | 9,421 | 8,459 |
| Sunderland ... | 19 | 553 | 572 | 597 | 1,745 | 1,781 |
| Middlesbrough ... | 71 | 277 | 348 | 445 | 1,298 | 1,471 |
| Hull ... | 84 | 942 | 1,026 | 957 | 3,086 | 3,053 |
| Grimsby ... | 27 | 44 | 71 | 78 | 182 | 184 |
| Bristol Channel. | | | | | | |
| Bristol ... | 9 | 224 | 233 | 287 | 679 | 847 |
| Newport, Mon. ... | 24 | 1,176 | 1,200 | 942 | 3,688 | 3,423 |
| Cardiff ... | 560 | 5,423 | 5,983 | 5,148 | 17,848 | 16,787 |
| Swansea ... | 84 | 500 | 584 | 458 | 1,997 | 1,858 |
| Other Ports. | | | | | | |
| Liverpool ... | 292 | 8,816 | 9,108 | 9,778 | 26,160 | 27,445 |
| London ... | 291 | 5,907 | 6,198 | 5,673 | 17,444 | 16,707 |
| Southampton ... | — | 1,620 | 1,620 | 1,282 | 3,952 | 3,663 |
| SCOTLAND. | | | | | | |
| Leith, Kirkcaldy, Methil and Grangemouth ... | 74 | 588 | 662 | 578 | 1,835 | 1,662 |
| Glasgow ... | 125 | 2,162 | 2,287 | 1,808 | 6,503 | 5,801 |
| IRELAND. | | | | | | |
| Dublin ... | — | 73 | 73 | 60 | 270 | 134 |
| Belfast ... | — | 175 | 175 | 100 | 663 | 501 |
| Total March 1897 ... | 1,787 | 31,172 | 32,929 | ... | 96,741 | ... |
| Ditto, March 1896 ... | 1,679 | 29,152 | ... | 30,831 | ... | 93,176 |

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

(h) LONDON DOCK AND WHARF LABOUR IN MARCH.

EMPLOYMENT for dock and wharf labourers in London was considerably better during March than in the corresponding period of last year. Compared with the previous month, employment at the docks showed an improvement, but was not so good at the wharves.

At all the docks and at 113 of the principal wharves the average daily number employed during the 4 weeks ended March 27th was 14,596 as compared with 14,762 in the four preceding weeks, and 13,343 a year ago. The first week of the month was the week of worst, and the last the week of best, employment. The estimated numbers employed on any one day ranged from 13,321 on March 3rd to 15,595 on the 25th.

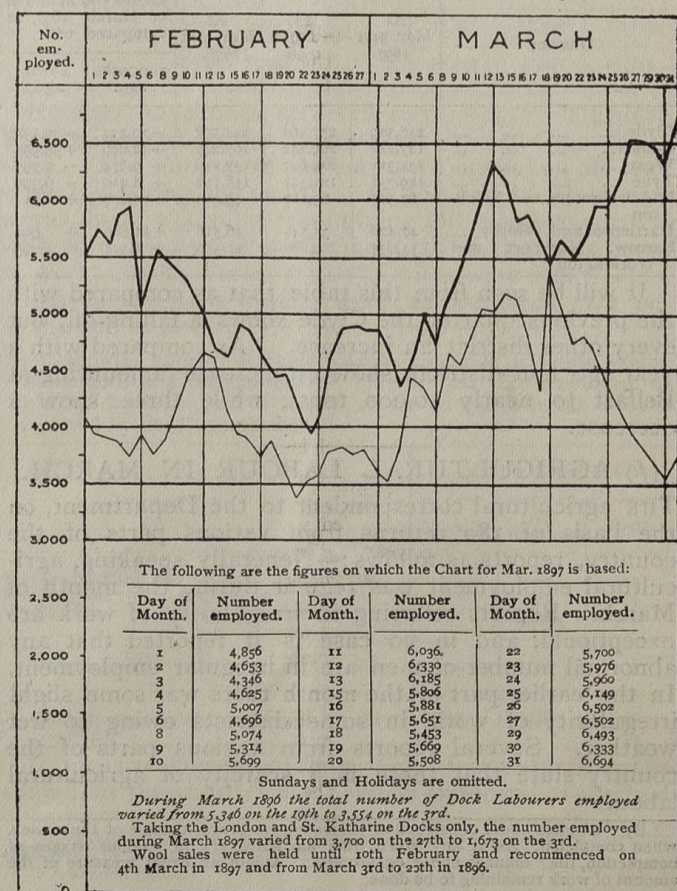
Detailed Figures.—(1) The following table shows the estimated daily average number of dock and wharf labourers employed in each week of the month:—

| Period. | Labourers employed in Docks. | | | Labourers employed at 113 Wharves making Returns. | Total Dock and Wharf Labourers included in Returns. |
|--|--|---------------------|--------|---|---|
| | By Dock Companies or through Contractors | By Ship-owners, &c. | Total. | | |
| 1st week of March ... | 6,240 | 2,175 | 8,415 | 5,402 | 13,817 |
| 2nd " " ... | 7,336 | 2,168 | 9,504 | 5,559 | 15,063 |
| 3rd " " ... | 7,017 | 1,758 | 8,775 | 5,346 | 14,121 |
| 4th " " ... | 7,665 | 2,531 | 10,196 | 5,187 | 15,383 |
| Average for 4 weeks ending Mar. 27, 1897 | 7,065 | 2,158 | 9,223 | 5,373 | 14,596 |
| Average for March 1896 | 6,302 | 1,853 | 8,065 | 5,288 | 13,343 |
| Average for February 1897 | 6,808 | 2,304 | 9,112 | 5,650 | 14,762 |

(2) The daily fluctuation in the number of dock labourers employed by the London and India Docks Joint Committee during February and March is shown on the chart below. The numbers in March ranged from 4,346 on the 3rd to 6,694 on the 31st.

Chart showing the total number of Dock Labourers employed by the Joint Committee at the London, St. Katharine, East and West India, Victoria and Albert Docks, and the Town Warehouses, for each day during the months of February and March 1897. The corresponding curve for February and March 1896 is also given for comparison.

[The thick curve applies to 1897, and the thin curve to 1896.]



EMPLOYMENT IN MARCH—DISTRICT REPORTS.—LONDON.

In mid-stream employment has been fairly good and steady. Stevedores and lightermen have been busy. Deal porters have been slack. Corn porters have been moderately well employed at the lower docks, but rather slack at the Millwall and Surrey Docks. Coal porters, bulkers and winchmen have had fair employment.

The fruit porters in Thames-street have had good and steady employment. The daily average number employed was 413, or 20 less than the average employed in February.

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

ACCORDING to returns from women correspondents, employment for women in the cotton trade during March was considerably better than during February. Employment in the woollen and worsted trade showed a slight improvement. Information has been received with regard to the employment of women and girls in 457 cotton, woollen, worsted and silk mills, which is summarised as follows:—

| State of Employment. | March 1897. | | | Corresponding Percentages in— | |
|--|------------------|--|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| | Number of Mills. | Approximate No. of Women and Girls employed. | Per-centage. | Feb. 1897. | March 1896. |
| Full time ... | 364 | 58,870 | 76 | 67 | 86 |
| Ditto, but partial employment ... | 50 | 11,860 | 15 | 21 | 9 |
| Short time ... | 33 | 5,100 | 7 | 11 | 3 |
| Closed for repairs, bad trade, disputes, or other causes ... | 10 | 1,280 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Total ... | 457 | 77,110 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Cotton Trade.—The number of women and girls usually employed in the cotton mills reported on is 60,160. Of these 80 per cent. were employed in mills working full time (to be compared with 69 per cent. among those for whom returns were received in February, and with 85 per cent. in March 1896); 15 per cent. in mills running full time, but giving only partial employment; 3 per cent. in mills running short time; while mills employing 2 per cent. were stopped during the whole or part of the month.

Woollen and Worsted Trade.—The number of women and girls usually employed in the woollen and worsted mills reported on is 15,630. Of these 67 per cent. were employed in mills working full time (compared with 65 per cent. among those for whom returns were received in February, and 89 per cent. in March 1896); 18 per cent. in mills running full time, but giving only partial employment; and the remaining 15 per cent. in mills running short time.

DISTRICT REPORTS FROM LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS AND OTHERS.

LONDON.

Employment in Various Industries.—The returns received from the various trade unions again show an improvement in the state of employment, both when compared with last month and with March 1896. Returns from 400 branches of 104 unions, with an aggregate membership of 72,423, show that 1,565 (or 2.2 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of March, compared with 2.7 in February, and 2.8 per cent. in March of last year.

The **Engineering, Metal, and Shipbuilding** trades are still busy. Reports from 116 branches of 24 unions, with a membership of 23,018, show that 446 (or 1.9 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of March, as in February. The percentage for March 1896 was 2.5.

Employment in the **Building** trades continues brisk. Reports from 180 branches of 7 unions paying unemployed benefit, with a membership of 11,068, show that 111 (or 1.0 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of March, compared with 1.5 last month, and 1.8 per cent. in March 1896. The bricklayers, painters and decorators, mill-sawyers, and stone carvers describe employment as good; the carpenters and joiners, stonemasons, and plasterers as fair; the plumbers as moderate.

Employment in the **Furnishing** trades has still further improved and is now brisk. Reports from 35 branches of 9 unions, with a membership of 5,816, show 27 (or 0.5 per cent.) unemployed, as against 4.2 in February and 0.9 per cent. in March 1896.

The **Coopers** remain well employed. Two societies, with a membership of 967, return 10 (or 1.0 per cent.) unemployed. In February, and also in March last year, less than 1 per cent. were unemployed.

The **Coachbuilding** trades continue actively employed. Returns from 11 branches of 8 unions, with a membership of 1,225, show only 4 (or 0.3 per cent.) unemployed at the end of March, compared with 1.9 in February and 1.8 per cent. in March of last year.

The **Printing and Bookbinding** trades have still further improved, and on the whole are now well employed. Reports from 21 unions, with a membership of 21,254, show that 622 (or 2.9 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of March, compared with 3.6 in February, and 3.8 per cent. in March 1896.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in the wholesale tailoring trade, and in the East End bespoke trade has been busy; the West End bespoke trade was dull at the commencement, but improved towards the close of the month. Employment in the mantle trade has been fair. The hat trade has been fairly good; the cap trade moderate; the helmet trade good. The fur skin dressers were fairly busy at the commencement of the month, but are now slack; the furriers are fairly well employed for time of year. The silk weavers report employment as fair.

Boot and Shoe Trades.—Employment in the machine branch remains fairly good; the high-class bespoke and the slipper branches have improved.

Employment in the **Leather** trades continues good. Returns from 6 societies, with a membership of 1,644, show that 28 (or 1.7 per cent.) were unemployed at the end of March, compared with 1.2 in February and 1.8 per cent. in March 1896.

Glass and Pottery Trades.—Employment in these trades has somewhat improved. Returns from 7 unions, with a membership of 1,447, show 86 (or 5.9 per cent.) unemployed at the end of March, compared with 6.8 last month and 5.6 per cent. in March 1896.

Workers in Fibre, Hair, &c.—Employment in these trades has still further improved. Returns from 5 societies, with a membership of 886, show that 11 (or 1.2 per cent.) were unemployed, compared with 3.6 in February, and 2.3 per cent. in March of last year.

The **Gold and Silver** trades still remain steadily employed. Reports from 6 societies, with a membership of 1,093, show that 18 (or 1.6 per cent.) were unemployed, compared with 1.7 in February, and 1.1 per cent. in March 1896.

The **Tobacco** trades are scarcely so well employed. Reports from 3 societies, with a membership of 2,143, show that 88 (or 4.1 per cent.) were unemployed, compared with 3.5 in February and 7.6 per cent. in March of last year.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—At the docks and wharves employment was better than a year ago, but not quite so good as in February. During the four weeks ended March 27th, an average daily number of 14,596 were employed at all the docks and the principal wharves, compared with 14,762 in February, and 13,343 a year ago. Stevedores and lightermen have been busy; mid-stream workers fairly well employed; deal porters have been slack; coal porters, backers, and winchmen fairly employed; corn porters moderately well employed at the lower docks, but rather slack at the Millwall and Surrey Docks. Fruit porters have had good and steady employment. (For further details see page 108.)

Labour Bureaux.—The eight labour bureaux which furnished returns, registered 1,173 fresh applications for work during March, being 1,129 less than in March 1896. Work was found during the month for 676 persons (446 being engaged by private employers and 230 by local authorities), as compared with 2,131 persons (1,655 by private employers and 476 by local authorities) during March 1896. The falling off is chiefly attributable to a large decline in the operations of one of the bureaux. (See table on page 123.)

Pauperism.—The number of persons relieved on the last day of the second week of March was 104,879. This is a decrease of 3,121 on the number relieved on the corresponding day of February. As compared with March 1896, there were decreases in all the Metropolitan districts, except the Western district which showed a small increase. The decrease for the whole of London amounted to 1,458.

The number of vagrants in London on one day in the second week of March was 971, as compared with 1,079 in March 1896.

In West Ham the number of paupers on one day in the second week was 8,477 in March, 8,643 in February, and 9,444 in March 1896.

EMPLOYMENT IN MARCH—DISTRICT REPORTS (continued).—NORTHERN COUNTIES AND LANCASHIRE.

ENGLAND: NORTHERN COUNTIES.

Tyne and Wear District.

Coal Mining.—Northumberland.—Employment at the steam coal pits has slightly improved, the average number of days worked being 4.93, as against 4.56 per week in February. At house coal pits, the average number of days worked per week was 5.39, as against 5.33 in February. Of the 19,894 union miners 23 (or 0.11 per cent.) are idle, as against 67 (or 0.33 per cent.) at the end of February. **Durham.**—With a few exceptions pits hewing a mixed class of coal are working well. Some steam and house coal pits have lost time. Gas and coking coal collieries have averaged 5.23 and 5.62 days per week respectively, as against 5.54 and 5.59 in February. Returns from 175 collieries, employing about 84,000 men and boys, show an average number of days worked of 5.26 per week, as against 5.47 in February. The number of unemployed union miners, owing to bad trade, is 665 (or 1.14 per cent.), as against 706 (or 1.21 per cent.) at the end of February.

Metal Mining.—Employment at the ironstone mines is scarcely so good, a number of men having been discharged during the month. Lead mining continues quiet.

Quarrying.—Freestone quarries at Blyth are busy. At Gateshead and district employment is fairly good. Limestone quarries in Stanhope with two exceptions have worked full time.

Engineering and Shipbuilding.—On the Tyne.—Of the 11,002 union members of these trades, 228 (or 2.1 per cent.) are unemployed, as against 404 (or 3.6 per cent.) at the end of February. At most of the yards platers are well employed. The demand for riveters and caulkers is better. Shipsmiths are now fully employed. Electrical engineers, locomotive builders and the Elswick Ordnance Works continue busy. **On the Wear.**—In several of the shipyards overtime is worked. In all engineering shops employment is fairly brisk. Of the 1,300 drillers and hole cutters on the Tyne, Blyth, and Wear, none are idle. At Consett blast furnaces, steel plate and angle mills and smelting shops have worked full time; iron mills five shifts per week. Of the 4,370 union members of the engineering and iron shipbuilding trades, 86 (or 2 per cent.) are idle, as against 207 (or 4.8 per cent.)

Shipping and Dock Labour.—There has been a slight decline in the demand for sailors and firemen in the lower reaches of the Tyne. Coal porters and shippers have been badly employed in the steam and house coal trade. Although better employed on gas coal, both porters and trimmers report a decline. Quayside labourers report employment as improved; Tyne watermen as fairly good.

Building Trades.—On the Wear.—Masons are better employed, especially on monumental work. Slaters and tilers continue slack. At Blyth all branches are well employed. Bricklayers on the Tyne are fully employed; plasterers only moderately so. Out of 600 plumbers (house and ship) on both rivers, 22 (or 3.6 per cent.) are idle. Ship and house joiners are all employed.

Woodworking Trades.—Millsawyers and woodcutters on both rivers have 2.5 per cent. out of work. Coopers report employment as improved, and lathrenders as fair.

Printing and kindred Trades.—At Sunderland letterpress printers are badly employed, 10 per cent. being idle. Of the 560 on the Tyne, 40 (or 7.1 per cent.) are out of work. Bookbinders and machine rulers have 1 per cent. idle. Five paper mills on the Tyne have worked 0.8 shifts out of a possible 2.50; one mill is stopped, three mills are busy, and one has lost three shifts.

Glass and Chemical Trades.—Employment in cement factories is moderate; chemical works are improving; white lead factories continue busy; copper works are fairly active; glass bottle-makers on the Wear and at Blaydon report full employment; pressed glass-makers are fairly employed.

Fishing.—Trawl and line fishing has been interrupted by bad weather. The catches, however, are fairly good, and values are above the average.—*J. Ratcliffe.*

Middlesbrough, Stockton, and District.

Iron Mining.—Cleveland miners are reported as steadily employed throughout the month.

Iron and Steel Trades.—Finished ironworkers are reported as fairly employed. Under the sliding scale of the North of England Conciliation Board wages remain unchanged for the next two months. Employment with the steelworkers continues fairly good, one firm is working five shifts per week, against four in February; an improvement is also reported from Eston. At Hartlepool the rolling mills

are well employed. Employment is good at the blast furnaces, foundries and bridge works throughout the district.

Engineering.—Employment is good throughout the district. Branches with 3,305 members report 26 (or 0.8 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 29 (or 0.9 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Shipbuilding.—At Hartlepool considerable improvement is reported, although one yard is still at a standstill. The yards at Stockton and Thornaby continue busy. Two yards at Middlesbrough are busy, one moderately so. Shipwrights report employment as fairly good; joiners as only moderate.

Building Trades.—All branches report employment as good considering the weather. Branches of carpenters and joiners (house and ship), sawyers and machinists, with 1,199 members, report 46 (or 3.8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—Sailors and firemen are quiet at both ports. Dock labour is quiet at Hartlepool; busy at Middlesbrough during the month, but quiet at the end. Riverside labour is fair.—*A. Main.*

Cumberland and Barrow District.

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

Iron and Steel Trades.—Returns received from Cumberland and North Lancashire show that 45 furnaces for the production of pig-iron were in blast at the end of March. The same number of furnaces was in blast at the end of February and also at the end of March 1896. The number of workpeople employed was 3,378, an increase of 37 as compared with the previous month and of 82 as compared with last year.

Coal Mining.—Employment in this industry in Cumberland during March was not so good as in February, but was better than in the corresponding period of last year, the average number of days worked at the pits from which returns were received being 5.07 per week in March, 5.56 in February, and 4.93 in March 1896. Part of the falling-off in March as compared with February is accounted for by a strike at some of the pits. The number of workpeople employed, so far as shown by the returns, is slightly more than last year.

Iron Mining.—Employment at iron mines in Cumberland and North Lancashire has again been very good. The average number of days worked per week during the four weeks ending March 27th at the 44 mines for which returns have been received was 5.94, which is exactly the same as the average for February, and slightly better than that for March 1896. The number of workpeople employed at the 44 mines was 6,145, or 3.5 per cent. more than a year ago.

LANCASHIRE AND NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS.

Oldham and District.

Cotton Trade.—Employment in cotton spinning is reported as moderate in Oldham, Mossley, Stalybridge and Rochdale; as good in Stockport and slack in Ashton-under-Lyne. All the mills in Stalybridge are working full time, while 100 spinners in Mossley are out of employment through the stoppage of mills for repairs, and the failure of one firm. Out of 9,146 union members 385 (or 4.2 per cent.) are on unemployed benefit, as against 308 (or 3.4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. The Oldham and Mossley cardroom operatives, with 11,941 members, report employment as moderate with 253 (or 2.1 per cent.) on unemployed benefit, as against 237 (or 2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. The overlookers and weavers report employment as bad on velvets, slack on calicoes, and moderate in winding, reeling, and sectional warping. Ring frame spinners, continue well employed; twiners report no improvement.

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

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Owing to a dispute in Oldham, 11,992 men are idle. Apart from this, employment is reported as good with the pattern-makers, iron grinders, plate and machine moulders, spindle and flyer makers, brassfounders, and boiler-makers; as moderate with ironfounders, tinplate-workers, and engineers, and as slack with gasmeter-makers.

Building Trades.—Carpenters and joiners, painters and plumbers report employment as moderate the plasterers as fair; and the bricklayers as good.

Coal Mining.—Employment in this industry continues fair. The miners are working 6 days per week in Royton, Chadderton, and Ashton, and from 5 to 6 days in the Oldham District.—*T. Ashton.*

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

Bolton and District.

Cotton Trade.—Spinning.—Employment shows a slight improvement in the Bolton district; one mill remains closed, all the rest are working full time. In Chorley and Bury employment continues fairly good. In the card-room branch employment is fair in Bolton, Bury, Chorley, and Wigan. **Weaving.**—Employment continues unsatisfactory in Bolton. In Bury and Chorley many looms are idle.

Engineering and Iron Trades.—The engineers, with 1,821 members, have 26 (or 1.4 per cent.) on unemployed benefit, as against 11 (or 0.6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. Most firms are reported as busy. The machine making trades are fairly busy in most departments. Ironfounders are still slack at one large firm, but active at others. In Bury engineers are busy, and employment in machine shops continues good. In Wigan the engineers report a falling off. Iron rolling mills are working from three to four days per week; steel smelters are fully employed. In Chorley employment in the iron trades is moderate.

Building Trades.—Employment in Bolton has slightly improved, and is now moderate. Improvement is also reported in Bury and Wigan; in Chorley employment is abnormally slack.

Coal Mining.—In Bolton, Walkden, Darcy Lever, Little Lever, Little Hulton, and Radcliffe, most collieries are working full time. In Wigan and district employment continues moderately busy. *R. Tootill.*

Blackburn, Burnley, and District.

Cotton Trade.—Weaving.—Employment continues to show an improvement in most of the districts, few firms being now on short time; but in all districts many looms are stopped for want of warps. In Burnley the number of looms on short time is only about 1,600, as compared with 7,426 at the end of February. In Nelson 400 looms are on short time, the stoppage for warps being heavy. In Darwen the number of looms totally stopped is 650 whilst 450 are stopped for want of warps. In Colne three firms have gone on full time during the month. An improvement is also reported from Blackburn, but in Preston employment is reported as bad. Employment in the hardware and the coloured goods trades continues moderate. Winders and warpers in all the districts are only partially employed. Loomers and drawers in the Burnley district are better employed; in the Blackburn district work is still irregular. **Spinning.**—Employment is good in Preston, Blackburn and Darwen; fair in Burnley and Accrington. Card-room workers are fairly well employed. Branches of twisters, warp dressers and spinners, with 3,907 members, return 179 (or 4.6 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 156 (or 3.9 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Building Trades.—Employment has improved with masons and bricklayers; painters report employment as fair; plumbers as moderate; carpenters and joiners as fair in Blackburn, moderate in Accrington and Burnley.

Engineering and Iron Trades.—Employment in machine shops is reported as good; in the other works as declining.

Mining and Quarrying.—Employment in the Burnley district is brisk; in Townley the men are working, on an average, three days per week at one pit, at another four days per week. Quarrymen are fully employed.

Miscellaneous.—Calico printers and dyers are only moderately employed, some departments working five days per week. Tinplate workers are busy.—*W. H. Wilkinson.*

Manchester and District.

General.—Branches with 22,894 members return 430 (or 1.9 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 650 (or 2.9 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Branches with 11,123 members return 252 (or 2.3 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 243 (or 2.2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. The steam-engine makers report none out of employment in this district. The engineers report employment in Manchester and Northwich as moderate; the boiler-makers at Northwich as good; in Manchester and district as moderate; the ironfounders, machine workers, brassfounders and finishers as good; the braziers and sheet metal workers as bad. At Macclesfield and Warrington the ironworkers in general are fairly well employed. Wire drawers and wire-weavers are fully employed, and filesmiths moderately so.

Textile Trades.—Employment in cotton spinning in this district is reported as good, all mills running full time. Doublers are busy and plush-weavers moderately so. In Macclesfield all cotton workers are employed full time. Both hand and power loom silk-weavers are slack, and silk dressers are not busy; silk dyers

show a slight improvement; the fustian cutters report an improvement; the dressers, dyers, finishers and bleachers report employment as moderate.

Clothing Trades.—Employment with bespoke tailors in Manchester, Stockport, Warrington and Macclesfield is moderate, with fewer unemployed. In the wholesale tailoring department employment is fair; ready made mantle-makers are busy; capmakers and umbrella-makers are moderately employed. In the waterproof garment-making trade employment is bad; shirtmakers in Manchester and Macclesfield are fairly well employed; boot and shoe operatives, felt hatmakers and trimmers describe employment as moderate.

Building Trades.—The carpenters and joiners in Manchester and Northwich report employment as moderate; the bricklayers as fairly good; the plasterers, stonemasons, painters, fret lead-gaziers and bricklayers' labourers as good; the plumbers as slack. In Macclesfield employment is slack. Branches with 4,539 members return 42 (or 0.9 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 75 (or 1.7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress printers in Manchester and Stockport report employment as better; lithographic printers and bookbinders as moderate; pattern cardmakers as not so busy.

Woodworking and Coachbuilding Trades.—Branches with 1,551 members have only 5 (or 0.3 per cent.) unemployed, as against 58 (or 3.7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. The cabinet-makers, French polishers and upholsters in Manchester, Stockport and Warrington report employment as good. Employment for coachmakers in Warrington is described as moderate; in Manchester and Stockport as good. Coopers are fairly well employed.—*G. D. Kelley.*

Liverpool and District.

Engineering and Shipbuilding.—Boilermakers and iron shipbuilders engineers, patternmakers and whitemiths continue fairly well employed. Brass and ironfounders, iron and steeldressers and cyclemakers report employment as good; shipwrights as fair; shipjoiners as moderate, ship-painters as dull.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Cabinet-makers and upholsters report employment as fair; French polishers and coachmakers as moderate; millsawyers and woodcutting machinists as good; wheelwrights and coopers as dull.

Shipping, Dock and Transport Labour.—Sailors and firemen report employment as moderate in regular liners, dull in casual ships; dock labourers and quay and railway carters as dull; Mersey flatmen as fair, coal and saltheavers as dull.

Printing and Kindred Trades.—Letterpress printers report employment as fair, lithographic printers, bookbinders, and stereotypers as good. Branches with 1,269 members return 57 (or 4.5 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 60 (or 4.7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Clothing Trades.—Employment is reported as improved with bespoke tailors; busy in the ready-made branches; quiet with boot and shoe makers.

Building Trades.—Employment generally is good.

Coal Mining and Quarrying.—Coal miners are still working five days per week in St. Helens, and full time in Skelmersdale. Quarrymen are fully employed.

Glass and Chemical Trades.—Glass bottle makers continue well employed. Chemical workers remain dull.—*C. Rouse.*

A report from Winsford states that employment with the salt makers has improved at Winsford, and is fair at Middlewich. Chemical workers at Middlewich remain slack. Fustian cutters at Middlewich and Winsford report full employment. Employment in the building trades is reported as moderate. Moulders at Winsford are slack.

YORKSHIRE.

Hull and District.

Shipbuilding and Engineering.—The shipbuilding yards, engineering works and boiler shops continue busy. The engineers, machine workers, smiths and strikers, pattern-makers, ironfounders, brass founders and finishers, iron and steel dressers, boiler-makers, drillers and hole cutters, and shipwrights report employment as good; the shipyard, engineering and boiler shop general labourers as moderate; the sailmakers as bad. Employment on repair work is very good. Engineers at Doncaster report employment as moderate; shipwrights at Grimsby as good; at Goole as fair.

Building Trades.—All sections of the building trades are well employed in Hull, Grimsby, Goole, Doncaster, Driffield, and Selby.

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

Shipping and Dock Labour.—The seamen and firemen report employment as fair, with fewer unemployed; dock labourers at Hull as moderate, at Goole as fair, at Grimsby as quiet.

Fishing Industry.—Owing to the high winds employment generally has not been good or remunerative. The trawling engineers and firemen report employment as good, the fish-curers and general labourers in the fish markets in Hull and Grimsby as moderate.

Seed Crushing, Paint, and Colour Works.—Employment in the seed-crushing mills has not been so good in Hull, and some mills have been stopped. The oil and colour works continue fairly busy.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress printers in Hull and Doncaster report employment as good; the bookbinders in Hull as good, the lithographic printers as moderate.

Woodworking and Furnishing Trades.—The coachbuilders in Hull and Doncaster report employment as moderate; the coopers, cabinet-makers and brushmakers as good.

Miscellaneous.—Employment at Doncaster with curriers and leather dressers is good; with the tailors moderate.—*W. G. Millington.*

Leeds and District.

General.—Branches of societies with 7,589 members return 166 (or 2·2 per cent.) unemployed, as against 168 (or 2·2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Employment continues good in Leeds, much overtime being worked; at Wakefield it is fair. Ironfounders are busy; boiler-makers fair; pattern-makers, spindle and flyer-makers, machine workers, and shovel makers, well employed; stove grate workers dull. Branches with 3,143 members return 33 (or 1·0 per cent.) as unemployed, against 36 (or the same per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Clothing Trades.—The boot and shoe industry in Leeds continues quiet, with short time at some firms; at Heckmondwike, employment is fair; at Bramley it is moderate. Employment in ready-made clothing factories is fair, but with less overtime than is usual at this season. Bespoke tailoring has slightly improved.

Textile Trades.—Employment at the cloth mills in Leeds has been moderate, but has slightly improved. Woollen spinners and wilters and felters are slack; blanket raisers quiet; linen workers moderate; flax workers brisk. At Yeadon, employment continues bad with a number out of work; at Wakefield it is moderate.

Building Trades.—Employment in Leeds continues good for joiners, bricklayers and masons; painters are now well employed; plumbers are slack. At Harrogate employment is good; at Wakefield fair.

Coal Mining.—At most pits in the Leeds district work has been fair, five and six days per week being generally maintained.

Leather Trades.—Tanners and curriers show a slight improvement, but are still quiet; coloured leather shavers are fairly well employed; the kid calf department is quiet.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Letterpress printers report employment as fair; lithographers as moderate. Bookbinders and machine rulers are busy; papermill workers quiet.

Glass Trades.—Employment in the glass bottle industry at Castleford, Wakefield and Hunslet is fair.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Cabinet-makers are busy, with a demand for men; coachmakers and brushmakers are well employed.—*O. Connellan.*

Bradford and Huddersfield District.

Worsted Trade.—Employment in nearly every branch of the textile industry in Bradford is reported as bad. Employment in the Keighley, Haworth and Huddersfield districts is also quiet, though some slight improvement is reported from the latter district.

Woollen Trade.—Employment in the woollen trade in Huddersfield is somewhat better, and the improvement in the Colne Valley, reported last month, has been maintained. Three firms are working overtime, two of them all night. The heavy woollen trade is reported as bad, but rather better than last month.

Other Textile Trades.—Employment in the silk trade at Manningham is reported as still slack in all departments; in Brighouse moderate, and in Halifax as a little better than last month. Employment in the cotton trade is reported as good in Brighouse and Huddersfield.

Metal Trades.—Employment in the metal trades is reported as good in nearly every part of the district. Branches of the engineers and ironfounders at Halifax, Dewsbury, Huddersfield, Bradford and Keighley with 2,913 members have 113 (or 3·9 per cent.) unemployed, as against 153 (or 4·9 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Building Trades.—Employment in the building trades is reported as fair in most centres; in Huddersfield men are difficult to get.

Miscellaneous.—Employment in the printing and bookbinding

trades is fair; in the tailoring trade it is improving; as also in the wholesale clothing trade at Batley. Employment in the blanket trade is fair; in the carpet trade rather quiet.—*A. Gee.*

Sheffield, Barnsley, and Rotherham District.

General.—Branches of societies (exclusive of coal miners) with 14,311 members have 81 (or 0·6 per cent.) unemployed, as against 95 (or 0·7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Iron and Steel Industries.—Blast furnaces are working full time, and workmen in the iron trades are well employed. The engineers, ironfounders, boiler-makers, Bessemer steel workers, railway spring tyre and axle makers, report employment as good, and in other branches employment generally is satisfactory. Branches with 4,986 members have 27 (or 0·5 per cent.) unemployed, as against 42 (or 0·9 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. At Barnsley, Chapeltown, Thornccliffe and Rotherham, engineers, ironfounders and steel workers are well employed.

Cutlery and Tools.—Workers in the table cutlery trade report employment as good. In the pen and pocket knife trade workmen employed on American orders are busy. Employment in the file, engineers' and joiners' tool trades is good. Sawsmiths are well employed, and saw-handle makers are fairly brisk. Haft and scale pressers report employment as improving. Wool shear grinders and benders employed on American shears are fairly well employed; those on Australian work are quiet. In the razor trade employment is better. Bayonet and sword makers continue slack. Societies with 5,743 members have 16 (or 0·3 per cent.) unemployed, the same percentage as at the end of February.

Other Metal Trades.—Silversmiths report employment as good; electro-platers, finishers, hollow-ware buffers, plate, spoon and fork filers, and brass workers as fair; silver and metal stampers as quiet. Branches with 972 members, in Sheffield, have only 4 unemployed. In Barnsley, Rotherham, and Mexbro' workmen are well employed, and in many cases making overtime.

Coal Mining.—Employment is well maintained, and the bulk of the men stopped by breakage in February have now resumed work. Returns from 59 of the principal collieries show that thirty are working 5 days per week, five 5½ days, and eleven 6 days, whilst thirteen others average 4 days per week. Employment in the coking trade is good.

Building Trades.—The masons report employment as quiet; the carpenters and joiners, and bricklayers as fair; the plumbers as moderate. Branches with 1,308 members have 9 (or 0·7 per cent.) unemployed, as against 12 (or 0·9 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. Painters are busier. At Barnsley, employment is moderate; at Rotherham good.

Linen Trade.—Employment in Barnsley is improving, two firms working full time again.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in the bespoke tailoring trade is improving in Sheffield. In the ready-made branch it is moderate. The boot and shoe workers in Barnsley are only working about two days per week.

Glass Trades.—Bottle and flint glass makers are well employed in the Barnsley district. Medicine bottle makers at Rotherham are fairly well employed; at Mexbro' moderately so.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress and lithographic printers, and bookbinders are moderately employed.

Woodworking and Coachbuilding Trades.—Cabinet-makers and coachmakers report employment as good. Railway carriage and wagon builders are busy. At Rotherham also wagon builders are busy.

S. Utley.

ENGLAND: MIDLAND COUNTIES.

Derbyshire District.

General.—Branches of societies (exclusive of coal miners), with 6,460 members, have 48 (or 0·7 per cent.) on unemployed benefit, as against 81 (or 1·3 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Engineering and allied Trades.—Branches with 2,312 members have 17 (or 0·7 per cent.) on unemployed benefit as against 27 (or 1·2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. Employment in the locomotive and other engineering branches, and in the bridge and girder yards remains good. Iron foundries report employment in Derby as improving, and at Butterley, Somercotes and Chesterfield as good. Brass moulders and finishers in Derby and Burton-on-Trent report employment as good. Iron wagon builders in Long Eaton are brisk; overtime being the rule; lace machine builders are slack; cycle makers busy, night shifts being worked. Stove grate workers in Derby, Langley Mill and Belper are well employed.

Coal Mining.—Employment generally continues fair. Returns

EMPLOYMENT IN MARCH—DISTRICT REPORTS (continued).—MIDLAND COUNTIES.

from 81 collieries employing 31,500 men show an average worked of about 4½ days per week, some few pits playing on Saturdays.

Quarrying.—Employment in limestone quarries in Wirksworth and Middleton is reported as dull; in Buxton, Millersdale, and Peak Forest as fair.

Textile Trades.—Employment with cotton spinners and weavers is good at Borrowash, fair in Belper, Glossop and Hadfield hosiery workers in Belper, Heanor and Ilkeston are dull, some departments only working three days per week; dyers and bleachers are busy; lacemakers in Long Eaton are dull; at Ilkeston employment in the curtain branch is slack; surgical bandage makers are slack; elastic web weavers show no improvement; calico printers and engravers in Hayfield, Dinting and New Mills report employment as dull.

Building Trades.—All branches are well employed. Branches with 1,588 members have 7 (or 0·4 per cent.) on unemployed benefit, the same percentage as at the end of February.

Clothing Trades.—Employment with boot and shoe operatives, tailors, and dress and mantle makers is improving.

Coachbuilding Trades.—Employment with railway carriage and wagon builders is reported as good, with some overtime. Wagon builders in Long Eaton continue busy, overtime being the rule; carriage builders in private shops are fairly well employed.

Woodworking and Furnishing Trades.—In Burton-on-Trent the coopers continue well employed; cabinet makers report employment as dull; in most timber yards employment continues regular.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Employment with the letterpress printers is improving; other branches are fairly well employed.

C. White-Deacon.

Nottingham and District.

Lace Trade.—A slight improvement is reported in the levers' branch the plain net branch continues well employed; the curtain branch, warp lace workers, curtain readers, designers, draughtsmen, and wipers report employment as unsatisfactory; levers' punchers as moderate; female lace workers as slightly improved. Dyers at Nottingham and bleachers at Basford report improvement; dyers at Basford, however, are slack.

Hosiery Trade.—Power frame work knitters on best goods are fully employed; but on half-hose and common goods half time is general. Circular hosiery workers are well employed in some branches, very slack in others. Hand frame workers are slack except on best work. Employment is slack at Arnold, Carlton, Kirkby and Sutton. Shet and wool shawl makers are well employed at Hucknall Torkard. Female labour is fairly well employed in finishing departments, but slack in factories. Hosiery trimmers at Basford, Bulwell and Nottingham are moderately employed.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Employment generally is good in Nottingham, moderate at Mansfield, and fair at Grantham. Branches with 3,443 members return 68 (or 2 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 82 (or 2·5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Building Trades.—In Nottingham employment continues fair in most branches. Plumbers are only moderately busy. Nearly all branches return favourable reports. At Retford, Newark, Mansfield and Grantham, branches with 2,581 members report 21 (or 0·8 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 76 (or 3 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Coal Mining.—Employment has declined during the month, most pits working less than 5 days, and some only 2 and 3 days per week. A few pits in North Notts continue fairly well employed.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Letterpress printers report employment as moderate at Nottingham, good at Retford; lithographic artists and bookbinders fairly busy; lithographic printers are moderately employed.

Miscellaneous.—Bakers report employment as fairly good; coachbuilders and box-makers as good; boot and shoemakers as slack; bespoke tailors as better.—*W. L. Hardestaff.*

Leicester and Northampton District.

Boot and Shoe Industry.—Employment in the boot and shoe trade is good in Northampton and the surrounding villages, and expert workmen are wanted in most branches. At Leicester and Kettering work is more regular, and some departments are working overtime. Curriers engaged on coloured leathers are fully employed, but work is slack in other branches.

Hosiery, Yarn and Woolspinning Trades.—In nearly all branches of the hosiery trade employment is reported as slack, many being on short time. It is quieter in the yarn and woolspinning mills and moderate in the trimming, dyeing and scouring departments.

Clothing Trades.—Workpeople are now fully engaged both in the wholesale and bespoke branches of the tailoring trade. Milliners and dressmakers are busy, and corset-makers continue in full work. There is no improvement in the hatting trade, some branches being on short time.

Elastic Web and Rubber Trades.—Employment is fairly good with cord and braid hands, and moderate in the gusset webbing branch. Rubber cycle tyre-makers are busy.

Engineering and Cycle Trades.—At Leicester and Loughborough employment is good with pattern-makers, smiths, lamp-makers, fitters, turners, ironfounders and boiler-makers, but moderate at Northampton and Rugby. Shoe-machinery builders are busier; needle and hosiery machine makers are slack. The demand for skilled labour in the cycle trade continues.

Mining and Quarrying.—Employment with coalminers is reported as less regular. Of 15 pits in Leicestershire from which reports have been received, 2 worked 5 days per week, 3 worked 4 days and under 5, 8 worked 3 days and under 4, and 2 worked 2½ days per week. Employment is good with ironstone workers and with paving sett makers and kerb-dressers in the stone quarrying industry.

Printing and Bookbinding Trades.—The letterpress and lithographic printers continue well employed, several firms working overtime. Bookbinders are in regular work.

Building Trades.—Employment continues good with bricklayers, plasterers, and labourers. Eight branches of carpenters and joiners report none unemployed. Work has improved with painters, but remains moderate with stonemasons and plumbers, a few of the latter being unemployed at Leicester.

Furnishing and Coachmaking Trades.—With cabinet-makers and upholsterers employment is better. It is now good with coachmakers, road car, and railway wagon-builders.

Miscellaneous.—All grades of railway men are in full work. Employment is also good with cigar-makers, sawyers, woodcutting machinists, paper boxmakers, and bakers; moderate with basket-makers, farriers, and labourers in gasworks.—*T. Smith.*

Potteries District.

Pottery Trades.—Employment is now fairly good, the improvement noticeable in January having been maintained. Hollow-ware pressers report a further improvement, and are averaging close on five days per week. Sanitary pressers generally are working well, but in a few departments are not averaging more than four days per week. Flat pressers, although better employed, are still slack; printers and transferers report an improvement; women gilders and decorators are averaging 3½ days per week; throwers and turners report a further improvement in the open and furniture trade, but a decline in the electrical department. Encaustic tilemakers keep busy; ovenmen are working better, and average four days per week.

Iron and Steel Trades.—The improvement at the forges throughout North Staffordshire continues, but at the mills there is a further decline, the operatives averaging less than four days per week. Blast furnacemen are busy. There are no iron or steel workers out of employment. Anchor chain-makers at Ford Green are well employed.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—The engineers at Crewe, Stafford and the Potteries, with 2,290 members, are busy, with only four out of work. At Longport brassmoulders on heavy work are very busy, and finishers are much better employed. Copperworkers at Oakamoor and Froghall are working overtime. Agricultural engineers are very slack at Uttoxeter, busy at Rugeley. At Crewe steel moulders and pattern-makers are busy; malleable moulders are slack.

Coal Mining.—In Talk-o'-th'-Hill district colliers are working full time. In the Potteries and at Rugeley there is a further decline. At Cheadle the miners are averaging only 4 days per week.

Textile Trades.—At Leek silk trimming weavers are busy; hard silk workers report a decline; dyers are working overtime. At Congleton silk trimming weavers report 6 per cent. out of work and a large number on short time; silk dressers also report a decline, throwsters an improvement; fustian cutters are well employed. At Cheadle and Tean, in the silk and tape mills, the operatives are working full time.

Clothing Trades.—Bespoke tailors report an improvement in the Potteries, and at Crewe overtime is general in all shops. Boot and shoemakers at Stafford report employment as exceptionally good, and at Stone as very good.

Building Trades.—Employment generally is good.

Printing and kindred Trades.—In the Potteries letterpress printers report employment as slack, but improved; at Stafford as good.

EMPLOYMENT IN MARCH—DISTRICT REPORTS (continued).—MIDLAND, E. AND S.W. COUNTIES.

Miscellaneous.—Railway servants at Stoke are working well, and at Crewe are fairly busy. Gasworkers report a decline. Stone-quarrymen at Alton and Hollington report employment as good.

I. S. Harvey.

Wolverhampton and District.

Iron and Steel Trades.—In South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire steel smelters report employment as very good. Employment is good in the steel and iron bar trades, but is still dull in the sheet trade. The mills and forges are fully employed. In Shropshire, the forges are working full time at Trench and Snedshill, and an average of 4 days a week at Haybridge and Wombridge. Wire rollers are reported as busy. One furnace was blown out at Prior's Lee at the beginning of March.

Engineering and allied Trades.—Employment in all branches throughout the district is reported as good, overtime being worked in some cases.

Hardware Trades.—Employment in the chain trade is reported as fair. Makers of anchors, anvils, tubes, nuts and bolts, iron fences, hurdles, wrought nails, malleable nails and protectors, cycle castings, brassworkers, tipmakers, tin and galvanized oddware and tinplate workers, stampers and piercers, makers of hand-cut files, wrought iron odd work and builders' ironmongery, spring traps and keys, report employment as good; makers of hollow-ware, steel-toys, iron-plate, edge-tools, cut nails, rim and mortice, latch and cabinet locks, as moderate; makers of common padlocks, plantation hoes and tackmakers as slack.

Coal Mining.—The colliers are still only working half time in Cannock Chase. The collieries in the Tamworth District are slack, and there is a decline in Shropshire, a few pits being on short time.

Building Trades.—Carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers and plumbers report employment as good; painters and builders' labourers as improved.

Glass Trades.—The flint glassworkers at Wordsley and Brettle Lane are well employed, except in the etching and engraving branches. The glass bottle-makers at Brierley Hill are still working half time.

Textile Trades.—Employment at the Kidderminster carpet mills is fairly good; the looms are well employed, and spinners are busy. The carpet trade at Bridgnorth is reported as good. The tape mills at Tamworth are busy.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in ready made and bespoke tailoring is good. Boot and shoe factories are working full time, and employment is good in all branches.—C. Anthony.

Birmingham and District.

Engineering.—All in this trade still find plenty of work, and a number are working overtime. Cycle engineering is still the busiest. Machine tool-makers are also busy.

Brass and Copperworking.—Brassworkers on chandelier and cabinet work are busy. Employment on cased tubes and bedstead and fender mounts is moderate; in all other departments it is good. Employment in copperworking generally is good.

Jewellers, Silversmiths and Electro-platers.—Jewellers and silversmiths are busy. The electro-plate workers are quiet, though some firms are working overtime. Employment in Britannia metal work is fair; in metal spinning good.

Other Metal Trades.—Employment in the bedstead trade is fairly regular, but with several unemployed. Ironfounders report employment as good, with half the men working overtime. File-smiths are busy. Steel pen work is good. Japanners and tinplate workers are fairly busy. Employment is good with Diamond Jubilee medal makers, metal rollers and workers, and lampmakers. The cycle trade is still growing rapidly in Birmingham, Coventry and Redditch. Needle-makers in Redditch are fairly brisk.

Building Trades.—Employment generally is good.

Glass Trades.—Flint glass blowers are more fully occupied. Bevelers and silverers report employment as good.

Woodworking Trades.—Cabinet-makers, mill sawyers, and coach-builders report employment as good.

Miscellaneous.—Printers generally are busy. Tailors are well employed. In Coventry weavers and watchmakers are slack. Employment in Walsall is fairly good all round.—W. J. Davis.

ENGLAND: EASTERN COUNTIES.

Norfolk and neighbouring District.

General.—Branches of societies with 2,406 members return 53 (or 2.2 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 146 (or 6.1 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Clothing Trades.—Bespoke tailors throughout the district are fairly busy. The clothing factories at Norwich are running full time. Boot and shoe makers at Cambridge are fairly busy. At Norwich,

employment in the boot and shoe trade is largely interrupted by the dispute.

Building Trades.—At Norwich employment has considerably improved, and in all other parts of the district employment is brisk. Branches with 1,075 members return 12 (or 1.1 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 59 (or 5.6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Engineering and Shipbuilding.—Engineers and boiler-makers are fairly well employed at Norwich, Thetford, Lynn, and Lowestoft; at Yarmouth they are slack, but with none idle; shipwrights at both Yarmouth and Lowestoft are slack; electrical engineers at Norwich are busy.

Textile Trades.—Employment in these trades at Norwich and Yarmouth is fair, full time being made.

Fishing Industry.—The Lowestoft fleet of drift fishing vessels carrying upwards of 2,000 fishermen is now engaged in the English and Irish Channel mackerel fishing. The Lowestoft trawling fleet with upwards of 1,500 hands is fishing in the North Sea with fair success. At Yarmouth trawlers are not doing well.

Printing Trade.—At Norwich, Yarmouth, and Fakenham employment is fair.

Miscellaneous.—Horticultural builders in Norwich are busy. Electric light workers are on full time. Maltsters are busy throughout the district. Navvies and labourers are fairly well off for work in all parts of the district.—G. Cleverley.

Suffolk, Essex, and District.

Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades.—Reports from Bury St. Edmunds, Beccles, Colchester, Chelmsford, Halstead and Earl's Colne describe employment as good; at Ipswich and Leiston as moderate; at Wickham Market as bad. The boiler-makers at Ipswich report employment as moderate; the moulders as dull; the shipwrights at Ipswich, Wivenhoe, and Rowhedge as good.

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

Textile Trades.—Employment is reported as good with the mat-makers at Sudbury, Lavenham and Long Melford; as moderate at Hadleigh and Glemsford. The horse-hair weavers report employment as good at Lavenham; the silk-weavers as good at Sudbury; as moderate at Braintree. Employment in the silk trade is reported as good at Bocking, Halstead and Earl's Colne.

Building Trades.—Employment generally is good throughout the district.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress printers report employment as moderate at Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds; good at Beccles; bad at Colchester; the bookbinders at Ipswich as good; the lithographers as moderate.

Miscellaneous.—The horticultural workers at Ipswich and Chelmsford, the brickmakers at Chelmsford, and the brushmakers at Braintree report employment as good; the curriers at Colchester as moderate; the general labourers at Ipswich, Colchester, Chelmsford, and Halstead as fair. The shipping trade at the port of Ipswich has been steady, and employment with dock labourers fair.

R. W. Mather.

ENGLAND: SOUTH-WESTERN COUNTIES.

Bristol, Somerset, and Gloucestershire District.

General.—Societies with 7,804 members report 86 (or 1.1 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 107 (or 1.4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Building Trades.—Employment generally is good. Branches with 2,263 members return 22 (or 1 per cent.) as out of work, as against 27 (or 1.2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Coal Mining.—Employment in the Radstock district varies, from 4 to 6 days per week being worked. In the Forest of Dean employment in house coal pits is bad; in the steam coal pits fair. No change is reported in the Bristol coalfield.

Engineering and allied Trades.—Employment continues good in nearly all branches. Branches with 3,112 members return 7 (or 0.2 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 12 (or 0.4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—Seamen and dock labourers report employment as dull.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in the bespoke and ready-made tailoring trades is now reported as good. In the boot and shoe trade in Bristol employment has slackened with some firms; in the Kingswood district it is reported as bad.

Textile Trades.—At Stroud employment is reported as quiet upon worsted trouserings, suitings, and heavy woollens; as bri on

EMPLOYMENT IN MARCH—DISTRICT REPORTS (contd.).—S.W. COUNTIES, WALES AND SCOTLAND.

South Wales District.

Coal Mining.—Blaenavon and Tredegar collieries have worked full time; the collieries in the Ebbw Vale, Ogmere and Garw Valleys, and those of the Western district have averaged from 4½ to 5 days a week. Returns from 49 collieries in the Rhondda and Ferndale districts show that 41 collieries have worked full time, and 8 collieries have made stoppages amounting in the aggregate to thirteen days. The sliding scale audit gives an advance of 1½ per cent. from the 1st April, making the wages 11¼ per cent. above the standard of 1879.

Building Trades.—Returns show a marked improvement in most districts. Masons, plasterers, bricklayers, and plumbers in most instances report employment as moderate; painters and paper-hangers as much better. Branches of carpenters and joiners with 1,186 members, have 22 (or 1.8 per cent.) unemployed, as against 47 (or 4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Ship Repairing and Engineering.—Every branch of the ship repairing industry has had fairly good employment throughout the month, most steamers and ships arriving requiring more extensive repairs than usual. Returns from branches of the engineers with 2,565 members, give 75 (or 2.9 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 63 (or 2.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. Moulders report employment as moderate; many of the engineering firms and foundries in the inland districts are busy, and working overtime.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—Coal shipments have not been so good. Employment in the iron ore and timber trades has been slack; in the pitwood and general cargo trade moderate; and in the grain trade quiet. Seamen report no change.

Iron and Steel Trades.—Returns from all the iron and steel works state that the mills and furnaces are going regularly except Dowlais Works, Cardiff, where the mills are averaging 4 days a week. The South Wales and Monmouthshire steel workers' sliding scale audit gives an advance of 2½ per cent. to all governed by the scale from 1st March, 1897.

Miscellaneous.—Wagon builders and lifters report employment as good; workers in chemical and smelting industries as quiet; employment in the fuel trade has improved, and is reported as brisk in some factories. Letterpress printers report employment as slack.

T. Davies.

The Tinplate Trade in South Wales, Monmouthshire and Gloucestershire.—The unemployed have diminished in the Swansea district, but in the Aberavon district a number are idle. At 88 works respecting which returns have been made, the number of mills at work has decreased from 334 at the end of February to 320 at the end of March. Fifty-two works with 274 mills were giving full employment, and 24 works with 134 mills were idle. The remaining 12 works were giving partial employment, 46 of the mills being at work and 33 idle.

SCOTLAND.

Edinburgh and District.

General.—Branches with 15,714 members return 161 (or 1.0 per cent.) as unemployed as against 258 (or 1.6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Coal Mining.—Employment in the coal industry in the Lothians shows no change. In West Lothian full time is generally obtained. In Mid and East Lothian 80 per cent. are working full time, viz., 11 days per fortnight; others are only working from eight to nine days per fortnight.

Mineral Oil Trades.—Employment in these trades continues good with all classes of workers. Thirty out of the 33 shale mines in Mid and West Lothian from which returns have been received, worked full time. The number of men employed at these mines was 4,324 as compared with 4,622 in March 1896.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Branches with 2,347 members have 23 (or 1.0 per cent.) idle, as against 33 (or 1.4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. Branches of these trades in Falkirk with 2,035 members again return none idle.

Shipbuilding.—Employment with the boiler-makers is worse. Three branches of boiler-makers and shipwrights with 600 members have 50 (or 8.3 per cent.) idle, as against 26 (or 4.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Textile Trades.—Employment in the linen industry in Dunfermline has improved. Employment in the woollen industry in Selkirk is fairly good, and in Galashiels and Hawick it has somewhat improved. In the hosiery industry in Hawick and Selkirk

fabrics for ladies costumes. The Wellington and Westford mills are running full time. In the Trowbridge district employment in the heavy woollen and covert coating branches is slack; in the worsted departments moderate; on ladies' costume fabrics brisk.

Printing and kindred Trades.—All branches report employment as good. Out of 669 members 21 (or 3.1 per cent.) are reported as unemployed, as against 24 (or 3.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Branches of wood cutting machinists, basket-makers, polishers, upholsterers, and cabinet-makers report employment as good; the brushmakers as improving.

Miscellaneous.—The curriers report employment as quiet; the saddle and harness makers as fair; the glass bottle-makers and glass bevellers and cutters as good; laceworkers at Tiverton are busy.—J. Curle.

Plymouth and South-Western District.

Mining, Quarrying and Clay Industries.—The metal mining industry of Cornwall shows no improvement. The quarrymen and clay-workers are well employed.

Engineering and allied Trades.—The engineers, ironfounders, brass-founders and finishers and boiler-makers, with a membership of 1,462, report only 4 as unemployed. The wheelwrights and smiths continue well employed.

Clothing Trades.—Employment in the ready-made department of the tailoring trade is good; the bespoke branch has shown an improvement. The boot and shoe operatives continue moderately well employed; the bespoke branch has shown an improvement.

Building Trades.—The building trades generally have shown an improvement. Branches of carpenters and joiners, masons, bricklayers, plasterers, plumbers and painters, with a membership of 2,403, have 10 (or 0.4 per cent.) unemployed, as against 96 (or 3.9 per cent.) at the end of February.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—Employment with the quayside and dock labourers and porters has improved. Seamen are still quiet except in the coasting trade.

Printing Trades.—Employment with the letterpress and lithographic printers remains slack.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Employment is fair with the upholsterers, polishers, and those engaged in the furnishing trades generally; good with the cabinet-makers, mill sawyers, and machinists; moderate with the brushmakers.

Miscellaneous.—The fishing industry has been bad owing to stress of weather and other causes. At the brickyards employment continues good. The gas workers show a further decline. General labourers have shown an improvement.—J. Welland.

WALES.

North Wales District.

Mining.—Employment at the coal mines of North Wales continues good, except at one or two small house coal collieries. At the lead and blende mines of Flintshire employment is good, several old mines are being re-opened, and work is proceeding satisfactorily.

Quarrying.—Employment continues good in the slate quarries of North Wales, except at the quarries closed owing to the dispute; it is brisk in the granite sett quarries, good at the freestone and the limestone quarries.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Employment continues fair at the Brynbo steel works, moderate at the Mold tinplate works, good at the spelter works at Mold and at Baggilt, and also at the railway wagon works, Johnstown. The engineers at Ruabon are fully employed, at Sandycroft and at Oswestry moderately so.

Building Trades.—The plasterers at Wrexham report employment as dull, the decorators and painters as quiet, the carpenters and joiners as fair. The carpenters and joiners at Oswestry are slack. Employment is brisk in all branches at Ruabon, Rhos and Cefn.

Brick and Terra Cotta Industries.—Employment has been good during the month at Wrexham, Rhos, Ruabon, Mold, Buckley, Penybont, Rhydymwyn and Coed Tallon districts.

Chemical Trades.—Employment has been good at Flint and Ruabon.

Textile and Clothing Trades.—Employment is reported as fair in the tweed and flannel industries of Montgomeryshire. The bespoke tailors at Bangor and Rhyl report employment as improving; at Oswestry as good.—G. Rowley.

EMPLOYMENT IN MARCH—DISTRICT REPORTS (contd.)—SCOTLAND AND IRELAND.

employment is on the whole quiet, and in the hand-made department in Hawick it is bad. The carpet-weavers in Midlothian report employment as good.

Building Trades.—Branches with 5,373 members have 19 (or 0.4 per cent.) idle, as against 127 (or 2.3 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Woodworking and Furnishing Trades.—Branches with 1,035 members, have 15 (or 1.4 per cent.) idle, as against 16 (or 1.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Shipping and Dock Labour.—The seamen and firemen again report a considerable number unemployed. The coal porters and dock labourers have not been so busy.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Branches with 2,234 members have 30 (or 1.3 per cent.) idle, as against 40 (or 1.8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Miscellaneous.—The bakers report employment as quiet, the curriers and saddlers as improving, the tailors as fair, the shoemakers, settmakers, glasscutters and glassmakers as good.—*J. Mallinson.*

Glasgow and West of Scotland.

Shipbuilding.—Employment has continued good on all the reaches of the Clyde. Branches with 10,311 members have 328 (or 3.2 per cent.) idle, as against 454 (or 4.8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Engineering and Metal Trades.—Reports from branches and also from outside districts are good. Branches with 24,786 members return 479 (or 1.9 per cent.) as idle, as against 431 (or 1.8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Mining.—In Stirlingshire employment does not appear to be so good, much idle time being experienced. In most of the large collieries employment is better than in the smaller ones. In the aggregate 5 days per week is about the average time worked. Reports from Lanarkshire are hardly so favourable as last month. Collieries in nearly every district are idle for want of trucks, which really means want of sale. In Dumbartonshire employment is reported as good. From Ayrshire no change is reported, employment is good, the miners working every day. In Renfrewshire the miners are fully employed. The ironstone miners are not so brisk.

Building Trades.—Reports are favourable, but work has been interrupted by the weather and by scarcity of material. Branches with 12,761 members return 164 (or 1.3 per cent.) as idle, as against 96 (or 0.8 per cent.) of their membership at the end of February.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Employment continues good. Branches with 4,040 members return 59 (or 1.5 per cent.) idle, as against 81 (or 2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Textile Trades.—The weaving industry in Glasgow shows no improvement. Employment in silk and cotton weaving is dull; in woollen and mixed goods very quiet. In Ayrshire, in the New-mills, Galston, and Darvel districts, employment has been better but is not yet in full swing. In Kilbirnie it is good all round except with some of the networkers; thread and ropeworks are also busy. The Greenock textile workers are not busy; the woollen mills are working short time. In Port Glasgow the weavers are on full time. In Glasgow employment with callender-men, power loom beamers and warpers is still dull; carpet weavers are busy, working 11 hours per day; the dyers report an improvement.

Clothing Trades.—The tailors report an improvement. The clothiers operatives report that the wholesale and ready-made clothing branches slackened during the month; the bespoke branch improved and is now busy; mantlemakers are rather dull; the boot and shoe makers report employment as fairly good; the boot and shoe operatives and slippers makers as still dull.

Dock Labour and Transport Trades.—Sailors and firemen state that the improvement reported last month has been maintained; the dock abouers, carters, railway and tramway men, and hackney carriage drivers are fairly well employed.

Printing and kindred Trades.—The letterpress printers report a slight improvement; the lithographic printers and bookbinders are still dull; the electrotypers and stereotypers busy.

Miscellaneous.—The spindle and flyer makers, settmakers and potters are busy; the calico engravers and saddlers report an improvement. The curriers, flint glassmakers and bottlemakers are dull, though the medical branch of the bottle makers report employment as good; the bakers report a number idle; the general labourers report employment as fairly good.—*A. J. Hunter.*

Dundee and District.

Textile Trades.—Employment in the textile trades remains exceptionally good, especially in the jute section. In the linen trade all looms are going.

Coal Mining.—During the last week of the month a great improvement took place in the coal trade of Fifeshire, and the miners at nearly all the collieries were fully employed. Returns from pits employing about 12,000 workpeople show for the 4 weeks ending 27th March a weekly average of 5.17 days during which work was carried on.

Engineering and Shipbuilding.—In every department of the engineering industry employment continues good, and overtime is being worked at several foundries. The trades engaged in boiler-making and shipbuilding are also well employed, branches with 2,135 members report 48 (or 2.2 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 50 (or 2.4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Building and Woodworking Trades.—Branches with 1,422 members return no unemployed, as compared with 33 (or 2.4 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Dock and General Labour.—Employment at the docks has been fairly brisk. In the city, general labourers have been moderately employed.

Fishing Industry.—Although irregularly prosecuted, fair success has attended the haddock fishing. The winter herring fishing is practically over. There is no improvement to report in the salmon fishing on the Tay and Earn.

Miscellaneous.—Employment in the printing and allied trades continues fairly good. Tailors are busier. Floorcloth and linoleum makers remain fully employed.—*P. Reid.*

Aberdeen and District.

General.—Branches with 4,105 members report 36 (or 0.9 per cent.) unemployed, as against 73 (or 1.8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Quarrying.—Blockers, drillers, cranemen and labourers report employment as good; monumental masons as moderate; granite polishers as also good, all yards working full time; settmakers are busy, but material is still scarce.

Building Trades.—Branches of joiners, plasterers, painters and plumbers, with 1,209 members, have 5 (or 0.4 per cent.) unemployed, as against 32 (or 2.7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. Masons report employment as good; but hewers seem to be slack.

Shipbuilding and Engineering.—The boiler-makers and iron shipbuilders report employment as good, but bridge work as dull; the shipwrights, engineers, blacksmiths, ironmoulders, pattern-makers, brassmoulders and finishers, tinplate workers and horseshoers as also good. Branches with 1,149 members, return 16 (or 1.4 per cent.) as idle, as against 18 (or 1.6 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Printing and kindred Trades.—Letterpress and lithographic printers report employment as good.

Clothing and Textile Trades.—Boot and shoe makers report employment as good; boot and shoe riveters and finishers as moderate; flax, jute and cotton operatives and knitters as good; tailors as improving; carpet weavers as bad.

Transport Trades.—Railway servants, seamen and firemen report employment as good.

Fishing.—In March at the port of Aberdeen, the trawl and line boats landed 45,487 cwts., valued at £31,851, a marked increase in value, but a decrease in quantity on the previous month.

Miscellaneous.—Combmakers report employment as good; cork-cutters as quiet.—*W. Johnston.*

IRELAND.

Dublin and District.

Building Trades.—Employment remains dull with paviors and glaziers; it has improved with painters, and in all other branches is fair. Branches (not including painters) with 2,783 members return 211 (or 7.6 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 201 (or 7.2 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Woodworking Trades.—Employment was dull with the trunkmakers and saddlers; fair with the organ builders, coach, cart, and wagon builders, upholsterers, cabinet-makers, and coopers. Branches with 753 members return 50 (or 6.6 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 57 (or 7.7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

INDUSTRIAL PROSECUTIONS IN MARCH.

I.—Under Factory and Workshop Acts.*

| Nature of Offence. | Informations laid. | Con- victions. | Amount of Penalties. | Amount of Costs. |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| By Owners, Managers, &c.: | | | | |
| Neglecting to Limewash ... | 9 | 9 | £ 5. 4. | £ 5. 4. |
| Failure to keep Factory in cleanly condition | 1 | 1 | 7 12 6 | 4 1 6 |
| Allowing Factory to be in dangerous condition | 1 | 1 | 0 10 0 | 0 5 6 |
| Neglecting to Fence Machinery ... | 10 | 10 | 30 16 0 | 0 17 6 |
| Employing Young Persons without necessary Certificates ... | 50† | 60 | 32 15 9 | 21 6 0 |
| Illegal Hours or Times of Employment— | | | | |
| Before or after the legal hour | 116 | 116 | 57 12 6 | 50 19 4 |
| During meal times, or without proper intervals for meals ... | 67† | 81 | 35 7 6 | 29 15 6 |
| Beyond legal hour on Saturday or day substituted ... | 9 | 8 | 4 10 0 | 3 8 6 |
| At night ... | 8 | 7 | 4 3 0 | 3 7 3 |
| Other ... | 4† | 6 | 3 7 9 | 1 16 3 |
| Neglecting Rules as to Registers, Abstracts, Notices, &c.: | | | | |
| Not keeping Registers ... | 15 | 15 | 6 10 6 | 7 3 4 |
| Not affixing or properly filling up Notices and Abstracts ... | 20 | 19 | 13 14 6 | 5 7 6 |
| Not sending Notices required by Act ... | 14 | 14 | 10 16 0 | 4 18 3 |
| Not supplying sufficient or correct particulars for Prosecutions for breach of (or not affixing) Special Rules ... | 1 | 1 | 0 10 0 | 0 4 0 |
| Prosecutions under Truck Acts, 1831, 1837, 1839 ... | 6 | 2 | 10 0 0 | 4 4 0 |
| By Workmen: | | | | |
| Employment during meal times, or without proper intervals for meals ... | 3 | 3 | 0 3 0 | 1 12 6 |
| Allowing a person to be between the fixed and traversing parts of a machine ... | 1 | — | — | — |
| Allowing a person to remain in prohibited room at meal times ... | 1 | 1 | 0 5 0 | 0 13 6 |
| By Parents: | | | | |
| Allowing children to be illegally employed ... | 1 | 1 | 0 1 0 | 0 2 6 |
| Total for March 1897 ... | 341† | 355 | 218 15 0 | 145 12 2 |
| Total for March 1896 ... | 243 | 246 | 166 18 6 | 113 17 2 |

II.—Under the Mines and Quarries Acts.*

| Nature of Offence. | Prosecu- tions. | Con- victions. | Cases with- drawn. | Cases missed. | Amount of Fines and Costs. |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| UNDER THE MINES ACTS. | | | | | |
| By Owners, Managers, &c.: | | | | | |
| Ventilation ... | 1 | 1 | — | — | £ 1 0 0 |
| Shafts and Manholes ... | 1 | 1 | — | — | 2 0 0 |
| Miscellaneous ... | 7 | 4 | 3† | — | 16 14 6 |
| By Workmen: | | | | | |
| Safety Lamps ... | 6 | 6 | — | — | 6 18 0 |
| Shot-firing and Explosives ... | 2 | 2 | — | — | 1 0 0 |
| Timbering ... | 7 | 6 | — | 1 | 6 18 0 |
| Lanifer Matches, &c. ... | 9 | 9 | — | — | 10 13 6 |
| Riding on Trams ... | 2 | 2 | — | — | 1 8 0 |
| Miscellaneous ... | 19 | 19§ | — | — | 21 19 0 |
| Total for March 1897 ... | 54 | 50 | 3 | 1 | 68 11 0 |
| Total for Mar. 1896 ... | 50 | 45 | — | 5 | 91 19 9 |
| UNDER THE QUARRIES ACT. | | | | | |
| By Owners, Managers, &c.: | | | | | |
| Abstracts, Registers, Notices | 1 | 1 | — | — | £ 1 15 6 |
| Other Special Rules ... | 4 | 4 | — | — | 2 18 0 |
| Miscellaneous ... | 3 | 3 | — | — | 7 0 0 |
| By Workmen: | | | | | |
| Explosives and Blasting ... | 1 | 1 | — | — | 2 0 0 |
| Total for March 1897 ... | 9 | 9 | — | — | 12 13 6 |
| Total for March 1896 ... | 7 | 7 | — | — | 2 15 0 |

III.—Under Merchant Shipping Acts.

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

| Nature of Offence. | Prosecu- tions. | Con- victions. | Penalties. | Costs. |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| By Owners or Masters of Ships: | | | | |
| Carrying excessive deck cargoes | 1 | 1 | £ 5 0 0 | £ 5 0 0 |
| Not providing lights or look-out or life-saving appliances ... | 1 | 1 | 2 12 0 | 2 8 0 |
| By Seamen: | | | | |
| By Boarding-house Keepers and Others: | | | | |
| Illegal boarding ... | 1 | 1 | 5 0 0 | — |
| " supply ... | 1 | 1 | 0 5 0 | 4 0 8 |
| Total for March 1897 ... | 4 | 4 | 12 17 0 | 6 17 8 |
| Total for March 1896 ... | 8 | 8 | 87 5 0 | 16 9 6 |

* Supplied by the Home Office.

† In these cases the number of convictions is greater than the number of informations laid, the practice in Scotland being to lay one information against one person, however many offences he is charged with.

‡ Withdrawn on payment of costs.

§ One of these defendants was convicted for cruelty to animals, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour.

|| Or thirty days' imprisonment. Defendant absconded.

Metal Trades.—The engineers report employment as good; the boiler-makers, brassfounders, and smiths as fair.

Printing and allied Trades.—The letterpress printers report employment as good the stereotypers, despatch and machine assistants, and lithographic printers as fair. Branches with 1,233 members return 74 (or 6 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 58 (or 4.7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February.

Clothing Trades.—The bespoke tailors report employment as dull; the boot and shoemakers as fair.

Dock and Transport Labour.—The dock labourers report employment as fair; seamen and firemen, tram-men and railway servants as good.—*J. P. Nannetti.*

Belfast and District.

General.—Societies with a membership of 20,693 return 332 (or 1.6 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 480 (or 2.4 per cent.) of their membership at the end of February.

Shipbuilding and Engineering.—Branches with 9,569 members return 116 (or 1.2 per cent.) as out of employment, as against 141 (or 1.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. The boiler-makers, and iron shipbuilders, and blacksmiths report employment as moderate; strikers as fair; machine drillers and hole cutters as busy; engineers, ironfounders, brassfounders, machine workers, pattern-makers, shipwrights, enginemen, cranemen, and firemen, carpenters and joiners (furnishing trades), general labourers and platers' helpers as good.

Linen Trades.—Societies with 3,997 members return 96 (or 2.4 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 96 (or 2.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. The powerloom yarn dressers report employment as dull; powerloom tenters as moderate; flax dressers, flax roughers, and yarn bundlers as fair; linen lappers, spindle and flyer makers, and hackle and gill makers as good; the women workers are well employed.

Building Trades.—Societies with a membership of 3,299 return 2 as out of employment, as against 63 (or 2.3 per cent. of their membership) at the end of last month. All branches connected with these industries report employment as good.

Furnishing and Woodworking Trades.—Societies with 563 members report 24 (or 4.3 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 37 (or 6.5 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. The French polishers and upholsterers report employment as improving; the cabinet-makers as fair; and the coopers, coachbuilders and packing case makers as good.

Printing and allied Trades.—Branches with 882 members report 37 (or 4.2 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 47 (or 5.4 of their membership) at the end of February. The letterpress printers report employment as moderate; the bookbinders and machine rulers, lithographic artists and designers and lithographic printers as good.

Clothing Trades.—The boot and shoe operatives and the tailors, with 712 members, report 20 (or 2.8 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 50 (or 7 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. The boot and shoe operatives report employment as bad and the tailors as good.

Miscellaneous.—Societies, with 1,671 members, return 37 (or 2.2 per cent.) as unemployed, as against 46 (or 2.8 per cent. of their membership) at the end of February. The butchers, carters, and sailmakers report employment as fair; the bakers, locomotive engine drivers, railway servants, tinplate workers, and paviors as good.—*R. Sheldon.*

Cork and District.

Shipbuilding and Engineering.—Boiler makers and iron shipbuilders throughout the district report employment as fair. All branches of the engineering trade report a decline; shipwrights, sailmakers and riggers report employment as dull in Cork and Passage West; ship joiners as good.

Building Trades.—Employment is reported as good in Cork and fair in Limerick.

Textile and Clothing Trades.—Flax and tweed operatives in Douglas, Millfield and Blarney, and leather operatives in Cork, report employment as good; bespoke tailors and boot and shoe operatives as bad.

Furnishing and Woodworking.—Coachmakers, cabinet-makers, mill-sawyers and coopers report employment as fair.

Miscellaneous.—The letterpress printers report employment as fair; engine drivers, railway servants, coal porters, gas workers, corporation and quay labourers as good.—*P. O'Shea.*

CHANGES IN RATES OF WAGES REPORTED IN MARCH.

(Based on information obtained from all available sources, verified and corrected by direct application to the Employers, Trade Unions, and other parties concerned.)

Summary.—The total number of workpeople affected by the changes in rates of wages reported during March was 172,000, and the nett effect of all the changes on the week's wages of these workpeople was an average increase of 8d. per head. About 169,500 received increases averaging 8d. per week, and 2,500 sustained decreases averaging 9d. per week.

Increases.—About 114,700 miners received increases, including 100,000 in South Wales and Monmouthshire, and 14,400 in Scotland. In the iron and steel trades the principal advances affected 5,000 blastfurnacemen in Cleveland, 5,000 iron and steel workers in South Wales, 3,500 ironworkers in the West of Scotland, and 1,000 steel millmen at Consett and Jarrow. The increases in the engineering and shipbuilding trades affected about 28,000 workpeople, of which number about 18,900 were employed in the establishments on the North-East Coast. In the building trades about 10,612 workpeople secured advances.

Decreases.—The principal decrease reported affected the blastfurnacemen in Cumberland.

Method of Settlement.—Of the 172,000 workpeople whose wages were changed, about 115,000 had their wages altered under sliding scale agreements, wages boards, &c., and 55,000, after negotiation, mutual arrangement, or by the voluntary concession of employers. The changes in the case of the remaining 2,000 workpeople were preceded by strikes, although in some cases only a portion of the workpeople whose wages were altered actually struck work.

Totals for first three Months of 1897.—For the three months, January-March, about 245,000 workpeople are reported as affected by advances of wages, and 4,200 as having sustained decreases. The nett effect of all these changes on the weekly wages of these 249,200 workpeople is estimated at an increase of 10½d. per head.

NOTE.—It will be understood that increments accruing under scales of pay, as in the case of policemen, some municipal employees, and many railway servants, &c. are not recorded here. The same remark applies to changes in the pay of individuals, the grant of extra pay as compensation for extra work, &c.

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate Number of workpeople directly affected, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of wages in a full Week, exclusive of overtime, Increase or Decrease in a full Week, exclusive of overtime. Includes sections for BUILDING TRADES and IRON AND STEEL TRADES.

* Where the winter and summer hours are known to differ in any trade, the weekly rate given in the table is the result of averaging the wages for five summer weeks and two winter weeks. ... † See also under Changes in Hours of Labour.

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

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

* See also under Changes in Hours of Labour. † The weekly wages have been computed on the basis of five days constituting an average full week's work for coal miners in Scotland.

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

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate Number of workpeople directly affected, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of Wages in a full week, Increase or Decrease in a full week. Includes sections for Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, and various localities like Barrow-in-Furness, Sowerby Bridge, etc.

Table for Textile Trades. Columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate Number of workpeople directly affected, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of Wages in a full week, Increase or Decrease in a full week.

Table for Clothing Trades. Columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate Number of workpeople directly affected, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of Wages in a full week, Increase or Decrease in a full week.

Table for Woodworking and Furnishing Trades. Columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate Number of workpeople directly affected, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of Wages in a full week, Increase or Decrease in a full week.

Table for Employees of Local Authorities. Columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate Number of workpeople directly affected, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of Wages in a full week, Increase or Decrease in a full week.

* See also under Changes in Hours of Labour.

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

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of Change, Approximate Number of workpeople directly affected, Particulars of Change, Estimated Rate of Wages in a full week, Increase or Decrease in a full week. Includes sections for Miscellaneous Trades and Seamen.

Table for Seamen. Columns: Port, Voyage, Occupation, No. shipped at new Rate during Mar., Particulars of Change, Monthly Rates, Increase, Decrease.

Rise in Agricultural Wages.—In some of the Poor Law Unions of Norfolk, Lincoln, Beds., Hants and Sussex, wages of agricultural labourers were increased 1s. per week from the beginning of March, and are higher by that amount than in March of last year.

CHANGES IN HOURS OF LABOUR REPORTED IN MARCH.

The changes in hours of labour reported during March affected about 12,409 workpeople. Of this number 12,339 had their working hours reduced, including 7,467 in the metal trades; 2,485 in the building trades, generally accompanied by an increase in wages, and 1,121 in the printing and bookbinding trades. Only one increase was reported, affecting 70 workpeople.

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate number of workpeople directly affected, Hours of labour in a full week (Before change, After change), Extent of change per week.

Table for Building Trades. Columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate number of workpeople directly affected, Hours of labour in a full week, Extent of change per week.

Table for Metal, &c. Trades. Columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate number of workpeople directly affected, Hours of labour in a full week, Extent of change per week.

Table for Metal, &c. Trades. Columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate number of workpeople directly affected, Hours of labour in a full week, Extent of change per week.

DECREASES—(continued).

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate number of workpeople directly affected, Hours of labour in a full week (Before change, After change), Extent of change per week. Includes various trades like Employees of Local Authorities, etc.

INCREASES.

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date of change, Approximate number of workpeople directly affected, Hours of labour in a full week (Before change, After change), Extent of change per week.

West Indies.—A new handbook has been issued by the Emigrants' Information Office, containing a sketch map and a description of the West Indies, with general information useful to intending settlers as to the demand for labour, the cost of living, the wages in certain industries, and other matters of interest.

* See also under Changes in Wages. † Mid-Winter. ‡ Summer. § Winter. ¶ General information for intending settlers in the West Indies, March 1897. Price 6d.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS REPORTED IN MARCH.

THE numbers of workpeople of the undermentioned classes killed or injured by accidents reported in March 1897 and 1896 respectively are shown in the following table.

SUMMARY.

Table with columns: Occupations, Killed (March 1897, March 1896), Injured (March 1897, March 1896). Rows include Railway Servants, Miners, Seamen, etc.

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

I. Railway Servants.

(Supplied by the Railway Department of the Board of Trade.) Table showing the number of railway servants reported as killed or injured by accidents in which the movement of railway vehicles was concerned during the month of March 1897.

(The number of Servants employed by the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom was 465,112 on 31st December, 1895.)

Table with columns: Class of Service, Killed, Causing Amputations, Dislocations, Contusions and Bruises, Cuts, Sprains, Burns, &c., Unspecified and Miscellaneous Injuries, Total Injured.

NOTE.-In addition to the above the companies have reported 2 servants killed and 1,101 injured by accidents occurring on the companies' premises, but in which the movement of vehicles was not concerned, during March, as compared with 6 killed and 692 injured in March 1896.

II. Miners and Quarrymen.*

Table showing the number of persons reported as killed or injured in and about mines and quarries during the month of March 1897. (The number of persons employed in and about mines was returned as 733,657, and in and about quarries as 104,625 in 1895.)

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

* Supplied by the Home Office.

III. Seamen (Fatal and Non-fatal Accidents).

(Supplied by the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen.) Table showing the number of persons forming the crews of registered vessels of the undermentioned classes, belonging to the British Islands, reported during the month of March 1897 as having been killed or injured by accidents at sea, or in rivers or harbours.

Table with columns: Cause and Class of Accident, Number reported as Killed or Injured (In March 1897, Total for 3 months Jan. to March 1897, Corresponding total for months of 1896).

* One of this number was included in the number of non-fatal injuries in the return for December last. NOTE.-Deaths or injuries on yachts and vessels employed exclusively in rivers and inland navigation, and injuries on fishing vessels employed in and out of Scottish Ports, and on vessels trading exclusively between Scottish Ports, or to Asiatics serving under Asiatic articles of agreement, are not included.

IV. Factory and Workshop Operatives.*

Table showing the number of persons reported to H.M. Chief Inspector by Certifying Surgeons as killed or injured during the month of March 1897, distinguishing Factories and Workshops. (The classes of accidents reported are those specified in Section 18 (2) of the Factory and Workshop Act of 1895.)

Table with columns: Class of Accident, Number of Males, Number of Females, Total Males and Females.

* Supplied by the Home Office. † There were also 1,840 other non-fatal accidents only required to be reported to H.M. Inspectors, viz., 1,823 in Factories and 12 in Workshops.

V. Accidents reported under Notice of Accidents Act, 1894

(Supplied by the Railway Department of the Board of Trade.) Table showing the number of persons killed and injured in accidents reported to the Board of Trade under the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894, during the month of March 1897.

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

* Accidents during the working of railways being reportable under other Acts are not notified under the Act of 1894.

† Authorised by any local or personal Act of Parliament. ‡ Or other steam engine or machine in the open air.

PAUPERISM IN MARCH.

Data supplied by the Local Government Boards in England, Scotland, and Ireland. THE number of persons relieved in 35 selected urban districts of the United Kingdom on one day in the second week of March was 335,708, a number which corresponds to a rate of 214 per 10,000 of the estimated population of these districts in 1897.

Compared with February last there is a decrease of 7,422 in the number relieved, and of 5 in the rate per 10,000. Five districts only showed an increase-viz., Paisley and Greenock (7 per 10,000), Galway (3), Barnsley (2), North Staffordshire and Glasgow districts (1 each). The districts showing the largest decreases are Leicester (15 per 10,000), Bristol (12), Central London (11), Manchester (10), and Coatbridge and Airdrie (9). All the London districts show decreased rates, the fall in the rate for the whole Metropolis amounting to 7 per 10,000.

Compared with March 1896, the total number relieved has decreased by 6,054, and the rate per 10,000 of population by 7. The decrease was mainly in outdoor pauperism. Nine districts show an increased rate, the largest increases being in Paisley and Greenock district (24), Cork, Waterford, and Limerick district (11), and Dublin (10). In the Bradford district the rate was unchanged; while in the remaining 25 districts showing decreases, those in which the falling off was most marked were West Ham (28), Stockton and Tees district (27), Barnsley (26), Hull (23), Nottingham (18), Wolverhampton (17), Sheffield (14), Central London and Bristol districts (13 each).

Table with columns: Selected Urban Districts, Paupers on one day in second week of March 1897, Paupers on corresponding date in previous year.

Table with columns: ENGLAND & WALES, Metropolitan, Other Districts, Total Metropolis, West Ham, etc.

Table with columns: SCOTLAND, IRELAND, Total for above 35 districts in March, Total for previous month.

* Exclusive of Vagrants; of Patients in the Fever and Small-pox Hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Boards; and of Lunatics in Asylums, Registered Hospitals and Licensed Houses. † Excluding Casuals, but including persons maintained in Institutions for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb, &c., who are classified as not able-bodied.

WORK OF LABOUR BUREAUX IN MARCH.

DURING March 1,840 fresh applications for work were registered by the 13 bureaux making returns. Private employers engaged 642 persons, and local authorities 237. Of the 3,119 workpeople remaining on the registers at the end of the month, 1,724 were men, 177 lads and boys, and 1,218 women and girls.

Comparing the figures of the 12 bureaux which also furnished returns for March 1896, the number of fresh applicants for work decreased by about 45 per cent.

(I). Work Done in March.

Table with columns: Name and Address of Labour Bureau, No. of Fresh Applications, No. of Situations offered, No. of Workpeople found.

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

Table with columns: Name of Labour Bureau, Men (Buildings, Carmen, Clerks, Porters, General Labourers, Other Occupations, Total Men).

Table with columns: Name of Labour Bureau, Women and Girls (Lads, Charwomen, Servants, Dress-makers, Others, Total Women and Girls, Grand Total).

* New register opened 1st January 1897. † Not furnished. ‡ Women and Girls are not registered.

TRADE DISPUTES IN MARCH.

(Based on information obtained from all available sources, verified and corrected by direct application to the Employers, Trade Unions, and other parties concerned.)
Number and Magnitude.—Ninety-six fresh disputes occurred in March 1897, compared with 77* in February, and 95 in March 1896. In these disputes 29,582 workpeople were involved, compared with 24,231* in February, and about 22,000 in March 1896.

Trades Affected.—In the building trades 13 disputes occurred, involving 472 workpeople; mining, 14 disputes, involving 8,451 workpeople; metal, engineering and shipbuilding trades, 37 disputes, involving 16,391 workpeople; textile trades, 11 disputes, involving 3,442 workpeople; clothing trades, 9 disputes, involving 285 workpeople; dock labour, 2 disputes, involving 65 workpeople; and in the miscellaneous group of industries, 10 disputes, involving 506 workpeople.

Causes.—Of the 96 disputes 60 arose chiefly on wages questions, 11 on questions of working arrangements or quality of material supplied, 6 on questions of the employment of non-unionists, 3 on questions of the observance of employers' or trade union rules, 6 on questions of re-instatement or discharge of colleagues or officials, 3 were sympathetic strikes, and 7 were due to other causes.

Results.—Sixty-four new disputes, involving 15,369 workpeople, and 36 old disputes involving 3,187 workpeople, were reported as settled. Of the 96 new and old disputes, of which the terms of settlement are known, 32, involving 4,036 persons, were successful from the point of view of the workpeople; 28, involving 7,708, partially successful; 36, involving 6,631 persons, unsuccessful.

Number of Working Days Lost.—The number of working days lost in March owing to labour disputes, new and old, was about 470,000, as compared with 220,000 in February, and 310,000 in January.

Total disputes for first three months of 1897.—For the three completed months of 1897 the aggregate number of workpeople involved in the 235 disputes which commenced in those months was nearly 72,000, as compared with about 46,500 in the corresponding months of 1896. The number of working days lost owing to disputes in the first quarter of 1897 was about 1,000,000.

I.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN IN MARCH 1897.

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date when Dispute began, Alleged Cause or Object, No. of Workpeople directly and indirectly affected, Total Duration of Dispute in Working Days, Result. Sub-sections include BUILDING TRADES, MINING AND QUARRYING, and IRON AND STEEL MANUFACTURE.

* Corrected figures.

Table with columns: Employment, Locality, Date when Dispute began, Alleged Cause or Object, No. of Workpeople Affected, Total Duration of Dispute in Working Days, Result. Sub-sections include ENGINEERING AND SHIPBUILDING TRADES, TINPLATE MANUFACTURE, OTHER METAL TRADES, TEXTILE TRADES, CLOTHING TRADES, and DOCK LABOUR.

DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN IN MARCH 1897—(continued).

| Trade. | Locality. | Date when Dispute began. | Alleged Cause or Object. | No. of Workpeople Directly and Indirectly Affected. | Total Duration of Dispute in Working Days. | Result. |
|---|-------------|--------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| 10 Disputes. MISCELLANEOUS TRADES. 506 Workpeople affected. | | | | | | |
| Lithographic Printers... | Dublin | 1 | For reduction in hours of labour to those generally prevailing in the trade | 2 | ... | Still unsettled. |
| French Polishers ... | Gloucester | 27 | For advance in wages and against "lump" work | 17 | ... | Ditto. |
| Cabinet Makers ... | Inverness | 2 | For advance in wages of 10 per cent., and reduction in hours from 54 to 51 per week, and time-and-a-half for overtime | 40 | ... | Unsettled at end of March. |
| Cabinet Makers and French Polishers | Kirkcaldy | 23 | Against the employment of non-unionists... | 97 | ... | Still unsettled. |
| Curriers ... | Walsall | 23 | Alleged excessive amount of boy labour ... | 12 | ... | Ditto. |
| Operatives (Tobacco Factory) | Dublin | 16 | Objection to action of new manager in suspending workmen | 151 | 5 | Work resumed, 7 days notice in future to be given to terminate contracts on either side. |
| Operatives (Mineral Water Factory) | Dublin | 26 | For advance in wages and reduction in hours ... | 100 | 2 | Men's demands acceded to. |
| Leather Shavers ... | Leeds | 2 | Dispute as to shaving by a machine process ... | 23 | ... | Still unsettled. |
| Corporation Employees (Night Soil Dept.) | Birmingham | 31 | Alleged unjust suspension of one of their number | 58 | 1 | Permission given to man to resume work. |
| Roadmen ... | Saddleworth | 15 | Against reduction in wages from 5d. to 5d. per hour | 6 | ... | Still unsettled. |

II.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN BEFORE MARCH AND WERE SETTLED DURING THAT MONTH.

| Engineering and Shipbuilding. | Locality. | Date | Alleged Cause or Object. | No. of Workpeople | Duration of Dispute | Result. |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--|-------------------|---------------------|--|
| Blacksmiths (ship) ... | Stockton and Thornaby | 6 Jan. 1897 | For advance of 3s. per week on time wages and 10 per cent. on piece prices | 44 | 67 | Concession to smiths of a special 1s. per week advance on time wages in Tees district, together with 1s. 6d. per week on time wages and 5 per cent. on piece rates in the Tyne, Wear, Tees and Hartlepool districts. |
| Ditto ... | Hartlepool | 26 Jan. 1897 | Ditto | 54 | 50 | |
| Ditto ... | Newcastle-on-Tyne | 17 Feb. | For advance of 2s. per week on time wages and 7½ per cent. on piece rates | 139 | 31 | |
| Ditto ... | N.-E. Coast | 22 Feb. | General lock out with object of compelling Stockton and Hartlepool smiths to resume work | 517 | 27 | |
| Engineers ... | Ditto | 22 Feb. | Came out in sympathy with the locked out smiths | 476 | 27 | |
| Engineers ... | Pallion, Sunderland | 13 Feb. | Against the employment of a machineman at a horizontal boring machine, alleged to be work for skilled men only | 26 | 38 | Work resumed pending a general trade conference; no machines of the class in dispute to be worked in the meantime. |
| Engineering Hands ... | Fazakerley, Liverpool | 8 Feb. 1896 | For reduction in hours from 54 to 53 per week ... | 80 | 37 | Some of the old hands returned to work on old terms, others were replaced. Work resumed unconditionally. |
| Plate and machine moulders | Burnley | 12 Oct. 1897 | For advance in wages ... | 95 | 130 | |
| Boilermakers ... | Southampton | 26 Feb. | For increased rate of pay for repair work, increased overtime rates, and a code of bye-laws | 205 | 14 | Increased ordinary and overtime rates granted for repair work on board ships. |
| Other Trades. | | | | | | |
| Joiners ... | Leeds | 30 Jan. | Dispute as to arrangement of working hours ... | 40 | 42 | Men found work elsewhere, and were replaced by cabinet-makers. |
| Slaters ... | Aberdeen | 1 Jan. | Refusal of employers to adopt or discuss code of bye-laws proposed by men | 111 | 58 | An amended code of bye-laws accepted. |
| Shale and Coal Miners | Blackstone, Paisley | 25 Jan. | Objection to the new arrangements for sending up the minerals in a cleaner condition without additional pay | 70 | 38 | Work resumed unconditionally. |
| Stonebreakers ... | Weardale | 5 Feb. | For increase in price per ton for stonebreaking ... | 51 | 34 | Work resumed at a reduction of 2d. per ton. |
| Ironworkers ... | Wishaw | 18 Jan. | For reinstatement of a discharged colleague ... | 205 | 43 | Man reinstated for 3 months, at the end of which period he was to give 14 days' notice if employer still desired it. See Page 100. |
| Cotton Spinners ... | Slaithwaite | 1896 | For payment for breaking out of rovings, turning strings, and tubing | 75 | About 230 | |
| Boot and Shoe Makers | Edinburgh | 9 Nov. 1897 | Against certain jobbing work, hitherto repaired in shops by hand, being sent to a factory to be sewn by machinery by persons not belonging to Cordwainers' Society | 73 | 98 | Dispute settled under Conciliation Act of 1896, see LABOUR GAZETTE for March, page 70. |
| Ditto ... | Ditto | 27 Nov. 1897 | Men locked out by two firms in support of firm affected in above dispute | 54 | 77 | |
| French Polishers ... | London, E.C. | 18 Jan. 1897 | Against reduction in wages of 3d. per hour ... | 2 | 37 | Men found work elsewhere. |
| Lamp-lighters ... | Newcastle-on-Tyne | 22 Feb. | For advance in wages and increased number of holidays | 62 | 18 | Work resumed at 1s. per week advance, and 7 days holiday per year, the men being relieved from cleaning large private lamps. |
| Gasworkers ... | Derby | 26 Feb. | For advances in wages and overtime rates, and other concessions as to working conditions. | 130 | 24 | Hands replaced. |

III.—DISPUTES WHICH BEGAN BEFORE MARCH, BUT OF WHICH INFORMATION HAS ONLY RECENTLY BEEN RECEIVED.

| Building Trades. | Locality. | Date | Alleged Cause or Object. | No. of Workpeople | Duration of Dispute | Result. |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|--|-------------------|---------------------|--|
| Bricklayers ... | Blyth | 18 Jan. 1897 | Employer not finding work for bricklayers in wet weather | 23 | 12 | Inside work to be shared among men in wet weather, and not to be continued in fine weather except in cases of emergency. |
| Ditto ... | Bolton | 1 Dec. 1897 | Against sub-contracting ... | 6 | 40 | Day workmen discharged. |
| Ditto ... | Sheffield | 22 Feb. 1896 | Against a stonemason doing bricklayers' work ... | 2 | 5 | Mason stopped from doing bricklayers' work. |
| Ditto ... | London, N.W. | 18 Nov. 1897 | Against tiles being put on by slaters and tilers ... | 16 | 81 | Work finished March 20th by non-union men. |
| Ditto ... | London, W. | 11 Feb. 1897 | Against slaters' doing work alleged to belong to bricklayers | 5 | ... | Still unsettled. |
| Ditto ... | London, S.W. | 17 Jan. | Against the employment of tilers and slaters on work alleged to belong to bricklayers | 55 | 36 | Hands replaced. |
| Ditto ... | Kingston | 9 Jan. | For advance in wages from 9d. to 10d. per hour | 6 | 2 | Hands replaced. |
| Ditto ... | Bridgnorth | 4 Jan. | For advance in wages from 6d. to 6½d. per hour, and against reduction in winter hours | 14 | 51 | Advance granted, but winter hours to remain as before. |
| Stonemasons ... | Wombwell | 8 Feb. | Alleged defective sheds and mess-houses ... | 17 | 6 | Satisfactory assurances given. |
| Coal Mining. | | | | | | |
| Coal Miners ... | Dofcocker, Bolton | 25 Feb. | For advance in wages of 6d. per ton ... | 25 | ... | Still unsettled. |
| Coal Miners ... | Hindley, Wigan | 3 Feb. | For advance in tonnage rates equal to amount lost through employer refusing to continue to pay for "scavage" | 100 | ... | Mine closed. |
| Coal Miners ... | Ossett | 17 Feb. | For dismissal of manager ... | 200 | 10 | Work resumed unconditionally. |
| Sinkers (coal mining)... | Near Dover | 26 Feb. | Refusal to accept employers' offer of 4s. a day on surface work until sinking work could be found for them | 26 | 1 | Employers' offer accepted. |
| Other Trades. | | | | | | |
| Engineers ... | Belfast | 15 Feb. | Against the employment of an alleged unskilled workman on a horizontal boring machine | 60 | 1 | Work resumed, the machine being stopped pending general settlement of the point in dispute. |
| Assorters (Tinplate Trade) | Llansamlet | 22 Feb. | Alleged neglect of assorters in the performance of their work | 57 | 24 | Men resumed work, and paid for damages for neglect. |
| Twisters ... | Oxenhope | 15 Jan. | Against a reduction in piece rates ... | 30 | 2 | Work resumed at the reduction. |
| Machinists, Tailors and Pressers | London, E. | 25 Feb. | For advance in wages of 1d. per garment ... | 30 | 21 | Hands replaced. |
| Cranemen, Coal Porters, &c. | Belfast | 27 Feb. | For advance in wages of 2s. per week, and time and a half for overtime | 38 | 2½ | Advance of 1s. per week granted, and modified overtime rates. |

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

The following 31 disputes, the commencement of which has previously been reported, and which now involve about 3,890 workpeople, were still unsettled at the end of March.—Disputes commencing in February 1896: fustian weavers, Norden; June: joiners, Chorley; July: engineers, Shipley; August: cotton-weavers, Padiham; September: quarrymen, Bethesda; October: brass-workers, Rotherham; cotton operatives, Oldham; November: steel-smelters and millmen, Brymbo, Wrexham; flaxdressers, Belfast; fitters and turners, Colne; bakers, Plymouth; cabinet-makers, Shipley and district; December: plasterers, and plasterers' labourers, Douglas; plasterers, Ipswich; fitters and turners, &c., Earlestown; January 1897: plush weavers, Reddish, Stockport; boot and shoe operatives, Cork; February: silk weavers, Macclesfield; spinners, near Chorley; coal miners and others, Blaina, Mon. (since settled, April); tinplate and sheet metal workers, Ayr and Barrhead; bricklayers, Cambridge; sawmillers, boxmakers, &c., Glasgow; boot and shoe operatives, Norwich; lithographic printers, Glasgow (two disputes), cotton spinners, Bolton (since settled 5th April); ironfounders, Plymouth; lace-workers, Nottingham.

FOREIGN TRADE FOR MARCH.

Imports.—The total declared value of the imports during March was £40,655,114, an increase of £2,288,364, or 6.0 per cent. over their value in March 1896. For the first three months of the year the imports are greater by 4.9 per cent. than for the corresponding period of 1896.

The following table shows the declared values of the imports, grouped in large classes, for March 1897 and 1896:—

| Class of Goods. | March, 1897. | March, 1896. | Increase. | Decrease. |
|--|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| Food, Drink, and Tobacco ... | £16,113,080 | £15,618,190 | £494,890 | — |
| Metals ... | 2,060,013 | 1,602,956 | 457,057 | — |
| Oils, Chemicals, Dyeing and Tanning Substances ... | 1,489,215 | 1,535,561 | — | 46,346 |
| Raw Materials for Manufacture of Manufactured Articles ... | 10,968,417 | 10,424,398 | 544,019 | — |
| Miscellaneous ... | 8,537,313 | 7,868,203 | 669,110 | — |
| Totals ... | 40,655,114 | 38,366,750 | 2,288,364 | — |

The imports of wheat were less by 135,630 cwt. than a year ago, but their value was greater by £203,154. The increase in the value of the imports of bacon was £272,099; the decrease in that of sugar was £302,606. All classes of metals except lead, and angle and similar iron were imported in increased quantities. The import of sheep and lamb's wool was greater by nearly 29,000,000 lbs. in weight, and by £815,945 in value; that of raw cotton was, however, less by 136,491 cwt., or in value by £472,289. The increase in the imports of manufactured iron (including machinery) amounted to £199,142, and of woollen manufactures to £136,338.

British and Irish Exports.—The exports during March were of a total declared value of £21,647,269, an increase of £1,197,646, or 5.9 per cent. on the value for March 1896. For the first three months of the year the value of the exports is lower by 3.3 per cent. than for the corresponding period of 1896. In so far as the exports to the United States can be separated out, it appears that the net increase during March of these alone amounted to nearly £450,000.

The following table shows the declared value of the exports, grouped in large classes, for March 1897 and 1896:—

| Class of Goods. | Mar. 1897. | Mar. 1896. | Increase. | Decrease. |
|---|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Articles of Food and Drink ... | £910,986 | £829,886 | £81,100 | — |
| Raw Materials ... | 1,656,978 | 1,315,365 | 341,613 | — |
| Yarns and Textile Fabrics | 9,077,450 | 9,343,263 | — | 265,805 |
| Metals and Articles manufactured therefrom (except machinery) ... | 3,169,955 | 2,684,456 | 485,499 | — |
| Machinery and Mill Work ... | 1,661,820 | 1,341,020 | 320,800 | — |
| Miscellaneous ... | 5,170,070 | 4,935,631 | 234,439 | — |
| Totals ... | 21,647,269 | 20,449,623 | 1,197,646 | — |

The increase in the value of coal, coke, and patent fuel exported, amounted to £188,660. Sheep and lamb's wool increased by £146,636, the exports to the United States alone having leapt up from £19,101 in March, 1896, to £179,635 last month. Cotton piece goods decreased by £127,476 (wholly due to the reduced exports to Bombay), and woollen and worsted tissues by £124,274. Most varieties of iron and steel were exported in increased quantities especially railroad iron. The total increase in value of the iron and steel exported was £428,446, tin plates and sheets accounting for £72,881 and railroad iron and steel for £126,045. The value of textile machinery exported increased by £165,905.

Re-exports of Foreign and Colonial Merchandise.—These amounted in March to £5,270,853 or £664,731 more than in March 1896.

Tonnage of Vessels Entered and Cleared.—The total tonnage of vessels entered at ports in the United Kingdom in March from Foreign Countries and British Possessions was 2,736,688 tons, or 157,784 tons more than in March 1896. The tonnage cleared was 3,169,931 tons, an increase over March 1896, of 303,498 tons. The tonnage of vessels entered Coastwise amounted to 2,679,891 tons or 88,557 tons more than a year ago, and the tonnage cleared to 2,858,953, an increase of 88,368 tons.

RECENT PROGRESS IN CO-OPERATION.

England and Wales.—One new distributive and one new productive co-operative society were registered during March. A baking society at Brixton* was dissolved, and a cotton manufacturing society at Burnley has commenced to "wind up," while a distributive society at Porth has amalgamated with a society at Tonypandy.

During the first quarter of the year ten distributive societies have reported the opening of eleven new premises or branches; one productive society has opened new workshops, and the Co-operative Wholesale Society has opened new premises at London and Northampton, and has commenced the manufacture of candles at Irlam.

A Tailors' Trade Union has opened a co-operative workshop in East London (not registered).

Returns for the year 1896 received from the nine existing co-operative corn mill societies show a total of 7,358 shareholders—including 402 distributive societies—with a total share and loan capital of £448,124 and sales amounting to £1,070,544, compared with £957,906 in 1895, an increase of 11.8 per cent. Three hundred and ninety-four persons were employed at the end of 1896, the total salaries and wages paid during the year amounting to £29,204.

The six co-operative farm and dairy societies at work in 1896 reported a total of 639 shareholders (including 61 distributive societies) with a total share and loan capital of £5,969, and sales amounting to £12,255, compared with £10,010 in 1895, an increase of 22.4 per cent. Twenty-seven persons were employed at the end of 1896, the total salaries and wages paid during the year amounting to £1,106.

The Joint Committee of Trade Unionists and Co-operators have decided to abandon the attempt to secure the adoption of a trade union label for manufactured goods in view of the discouraging replies received from the various trades.

Scotland.—One new productive society was registered in Scotland during the month.

Four distributive societies report having opened during the quarter 5 new branches and departments, and the Scottish Wholesale Society has opened new premises and purchased a new flour and meal mill.

Ireland.—Two new distributive and six new agricultural and dairy societies were registered during March.

DISEASES OF OCCUPATIONS.

Table showing number of cases of Lead and Phosphorus poisoning, or Anthrax, reported as having occurred in factories and workshops during March, classified by industries:—

| Disease and Industry. | Adults. | | Young Persons. | | Children. | | Total. | | Grand Total. |
|--|-----------|-----------|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| | M.† | F.‡ | M.† | F.‡ | M.† | F.‡ | M.† | F.‡ | |
| Lead Poisoning— | | | | | | | | | |
| China, Earthenware, and Glass | 20 | 9 | 2 | 1 | — | — | 22 | 10 | 32 |
| White Lead and Colour Works | 18 | 15 | — | — | — | — | 18 | 15 | 33 |
| Smelting ... | 6 | — | — | — | — | — | 6 | — | 6 |
| Tinning and Enamelling | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | 1 | — | 1 |
| File making ... | 6 | — | — | — | — | — | 6 | — | 6 |
| Other Industries ... | 14 | — | 1 | — | — | — | 15 | — | 15 |
| Total Lead Poisoning | 65 | 24 | 3 | 1 | — | — | 68 | 25 | 93 |
| <i>Corresponding Total for February 1897</i> | <i>55</i> | <i>31</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>57</i> | <i>31</i> | <i>88</i> |
| Anthrax— | | | | | | | | | |
| Wool Sorting ... | 3 | — | — | — | — | — | 3 | — | 3 |
| Tanners, Fellmongers, Curriers | 5 | — | — | — | — | — | 5 | — | 5 |
| Total Anthrax— | 8 | — | — | — | — | — | 8 | — | 8 |
| <i>Ditto, February 1897</i> | <i>7</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>7</i> | <i>—</i> | <i>7</i> |

* Last month (p. 96) a society was reported as dissolved at "Long" Eaton. This should have read "Little" Eaton.

† Males. ‡ Females. § Including sorting of hides.

MISCELLANEOUS TRADE NOTES.

Cotton Statistics.—The imports of raw cotton during March were 20 per cent. less than in March 1896, this decrease being chiefly due to American cotton, which shows a falling off of 63,662 bales in the quantity imported. As compared with March 1895 the total imports show a decrease of 15½ per cent. The quantity forwarded from ports to inland towns was more than in March 1896, but slightly less than in March 1895.

The figures for the different periods are given below:—

| | Imports. Bales. | Forwarded from Ports to Inland Towns. Bales. | Exports. Bales. |
|-------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| March 1897 | 286,540 | 307,364 | 38,102 |
| „ 1896 | 358,500 | 276,515 | 31,125 |
| „ 1895 | 339,339 | 309,994 | 32,493 |

Traffic Receipts.—The total receipts of 21 of the principal railways of the United Kingdom during the five weeks ended April 3rd, amounted to £7,020,239, being £130,765 (or 1·9 per cent.) more than for the corresponding period of 1896. The receipts from passenger traffic were £2,741,443, a decrease of £92,082, while the receipts from goods and mineral traffic amounted to £4,278,796, an increase of £222,847.

Fishery Statistics.—The total value of the fish (including shell fish) landed on the coasts of the United Kingdom during March was £573,698, an increase of £22,390 as compared with March 1896. In England and Wales the increase amounted to £38,187, while in Scotland there was a decrease of £15,054, and in Ireland one of £743.

Bankruptcies.—The bankruptcies gazetted during March numbered 413, being 23 less than in March 1896, 35 less than in March 1895, and 40 less than in March 1894.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

Total Emigration.—The number of passengers who left the United Kingdom for places out of Europe during March was 15,042 as compared with 17,758 in March 1896.

British and Irish.—Of the 15,042 passengers 9,682 were of British or Irish origin, being a decrease of 1,203 as compared with a year ago. An increase is shown in the number of passengers to British North America and Australasia, while the numbers to the United States and to the Cape show a decrease.

The figures for March 1897 and 1896 are as follows:—

| Destination. | March 1897. | March 1896. |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| United States | 5,283 | 6,455 |
| British North America | 1,289 | 1,128 |
| Australasia | 837 | 613 |
| South Africa | 1,370 | 1,844 |
| Other places | 903 | 845 |
| Totals | 9,682 | 10,885 |

Foreign.—The remainder of the 15,042 passengers, viz., 5,360, were foreigners and others whose nationality was not distinguished being 1,513 less than in March 1896.

Alien Immigration.—The number of aliens that arrived in the United Kingdom from the Continent during March, was 8,022. Of this number 3,753 were stated to be *en route* to America, compared with 5,815 so stated in March 1896. The number of those not stated to be on their way to America, was 4,269 (including 976 sailors), the corresponding figure for March 1896 being 3,816 (including 1,079 sailors).

INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS
REGISTERED OR DISSOLVED IN MARCH.

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

FROM the following summary of the changes in the Register of Industrial Organisations in March it will be seen that 3 Trade Unions, 3 Co-operative Associations for Distribution, 8 Associations for Production, 4 Miscellaneous Industrial and Provident Societies, 12 new Friendly Societies, and 35 new branches of existing Friendly Societies have been added to the Register for the United Kingdom during the past month. Twenty-three Building Societies, 4 Industrial and Provident Societies (1 of which has amalgamated with an existing society), and 2 Trade Unions are reported as having ceased to exist, or to have commenced "winding up."

NEW ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED.

Trade Unions.—*England and Wales.*—Yorkshire Blanket Raisers' Association, Savile Hotel, Dewsbury; Leeds and District Fish-fryers' Trade Protection Society, 21 Woodsley Road, Leeds; Manchester Fruit Buyers Association, Smithfield Market, Manchester. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—None.

Industrial and Provident Societies.—(A) *Associations for Distribution.*—*England and Wales.*—Butterworth Hall Co-op. Soc., Ltd., Newhey Road, Milnrow, Rochdale. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—Portadown Co-op. Soc., Ltd., 20 Woodhouse St., Portadown, co. Armagh; Tullamore Dist. Co-op. Agricultural Soc., Ltd., Tullamore, Kings co.

(B) *Associations for Production.*—*England and Wales.*—Wigston Magna Hosiers, Ltd., Hosiery Works, Wigston Magna, Leicester. *Scotland.*—Edinburgh Handmade Bootmaking Soc., Ltd., 133 Rose St., Edinburgh. *Ireland.*—Co-op. Agricultural and Dairy Societies at Riverstown, co. Sligo; Gurteen, Ballymote, co. Sligo; Collooney, co. Sligo; Spamount, co. Tyrone; Kingscourt, co. Cavan; Ballinamallard, co. Fermanagh.

(C) *Miscellaneous.*—*England and Wales.*—Ovenden Ward Liberal Builders Soc., Ltd., Lee Mount, Ovenden, Halifax; Chatsworth Social and Athletic Club, Ltd., 26 Brooksby's Walk, Homerton, N.; National Deposit Guarantee Association, Ltd., Market Square, Biggleswade; Greenfield Liberal Club, Ltd., Road End Greenfield, Saddleworth.

Friendly Societies.—(A) *New Friendly Societies.*—*England and Wales.*—Ordinary Friendly, 3; Dividing, 2; Working Men's Clubs, 2; Juvenile, 1. *Scotland.*—Ordinary Friendly, 1; Juvenile, 1. *Ireland.*—Specially Authorised, 1; Tontine, 1.

(B) *New Branches of Existing Societies.*—*England and Wales.*—A.O. Foresters, 5; I.O. Rechabites, S.U., 6; I.O. Oddfellows, M.U., 4; R. Hearts of Oak, Yearly Dividing, 2; Various, 6. *Scotland.*—L.O.A. Shepherds, A.U., 2; St. A.O.A. Free Gardeners, 2; C.O.U.O., 2; Various, 4. *Ireland.*—Various, 2.

OLD ORGANISATIONS DISSOLVED.

Trade Unions.—*England and Wales.*—London and Counties Trade Society of House Painters and Decorators, London, E.C.; Independent Society of Bricklayers, London, N.E. *Scotland.*—None. *Ireland.*—None.

Industrial and Provident Societies.—*England and Wales.*—Dissolved by Instrument:—East Surrey Co-op. Industrial Society, Ltd., Brixton; Workmen's Freehold Habitation and Land Society, Ltd., Walthamstow; Resolution to wind up received from the Oak Mount Self-help Manufacturing Society, Ltd., Burnley. By Amalgamation:—The Thomas Griffiths & Co. Porth Co-op. Society has amalgamated with the Ton-y-pandy Industrial Co-op. Society, Ltd.

Building Societies.—By instrument of dissolution, 3; notice of commencement of dissolution, 6; notice of termination of dissolution, 14.

EXAMINATIONS FOR MINING MANAGERS' CERTIFICATES.

Liverpool District.—An examination for Certificates of Competency as Manager or Under-Manager of a mine will be held shortly. Intending candidates should at once communicate with the Secretary of the Examination Board, Mr. Thomas Ratcliffe Ellis, 18 King-street, Wigan.

Yorkshire and Lincolnshire District.—An examination for Certificates of Competency as Manager or Under-Manager of a mine will be held shortly. Intending candidates should at once communicate with the Secretary of the Examination Board, Mr. John R. Jeffery, 5 Piccadilly, Bradford, Yorks.

East Scotland District.—An examination for Certificates of Competency as Manager or Under-Manager of a mine will be held on 20th May. Intending candidates should communicate, on or before 10th May, with the Secretary of the Examination Board, Mr. R. Calder, Fintry Place, Broughty Ferry, N.B.

INFORMATION FOR INTENDING EMIGRANTS.

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

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