who have found work elsewhere or been replaced by others. Though this figure is the best general index of the importance of the disputes of each year, it is but a rough approximation to the time actually lost through disputes.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year. | Principal Disputes of the Year. | | | All other Disputes. | | |
| Trade and Locality. | Number of Work-people affected. | Aggregate Duration in Working Days. | Number of Disputes. | Number of  Work-people affected. | Aggregate  Duration in Working Days. |
| 1893 | Coal Miners (Federated Districts) .... | 300,000 | 21,137,000 | 613 |  | 7.830.765 |
| Coal Miners (South Wales and Monmouth) . | 90,000 | 1,500,000 | 244,301 |
| 1894 | Coal Miners (Scotland). | 70,000 | 5,600,000 | 928 | 255.248 | 3,929,000 |
| 1895 | Boot and Shoe Operatives | 46,000 | 1,564,000 | 744 | 217,123 | 4,160,670 |
| 1897 | Engineers, Maehinemen and others. . |  | 5731,000 | 863 | 182,767 | 4.614,523 |
| 1898 | Engineers, Maehinemen and others—*continued* | 47,500 | 1,118,000 |  |  | 2,521,478 |
| Coal Miners (South Wales and Monmouth) . | 100,000 | 11,650,000 | 710 | 153,907 |

For example, if a strike causes a postponement or accumulation of work, the extra demand for labour, and the overtime worked after its conclusion, may partially compensate for the stoppage. On the other hand, if a dispute should drive away trade or cause the closing of works, it may lessen the field of employment for a long period after its termination, and such lost time cannot be taken into account in the estimates of “aggregate duration.”

For these reasons all estimates of wages lost through disputes are somewhat fallacious. The real importance of strikes lies less in the value of the actual time consumed by their duration, than in their indirect effects on the organization and effective­ness of the industry, and on the relations of employer to em­ployed, and also in their reaction on the conditions pf allied trades. The comparative insignificance of the actual loss

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group of Trades. | Mean Annual | | | Percentage of Total Number employed who were affected by Disputes. | Percentage of  Aggregate Working Time occupied by Disputes. |
| Number of Disputes. | Number of Work-people affected (directly and indirectly). | Aggregate Duration in Working Days. |
| Building ..... | 43 | 5,260 | 234,651 | 0∙5 | 0∙07 |
| Mining and Quarrying . | 133 | 87,509 | 1,348,289 | 8·7 | 0·45 |
| Metal, Engineering and Shipbuilding | 95 | 22,470 | 534,549 | 1∙6 | 0∙13 |
| Textile | 90 | 27,736 | 326,468 | 2∙3 | 0∙09 |
| Clothing | 36 | 4,992 | 104,619 | 0∙7 | 0∙05 |
| Other | 72 | 9,047 | 180,793 | 0∙2 | 0·0I |
| All Industries, except Agricultural Labour­ers, Seamen and Do­mestic Servants . | 469 | 157,014 | 2,729.369 | 1∙6 | 0∙09 |

to production owing to the mere loss of time caused by strikes will be seen from the fact that the total duration of strikes during the seven years 1901-1907, if spread over the entire adult male working population, would be equivalent to less than the loss of one-third of a day per head per annum. As a matter of fact, however, the loss owing to strikes is very un­equally distributed over the industrial population. In large groups of industries, *e.g.* agriculture, strikes are of rare occurrence. In others, such as the building trades, they are frequent, but mostly small and local; while in mining they are not only fre­quent and often prolonged, but in many cases they involve large numbers of persons and extend over wide areas. Thus on an average of the seven years 1901-1907 there were 43 disputes annually in the building trades, and 133 in mining and quarrying, but the latter disputes have involved nearly seven­teen times as many persons and had an aggregate duration nearly six times as great. Intermediate between these groups of trades is the metal, engineering and shipbuilding group, in which, more perhaps than in any other group, the importance of disputes varies according to the state of trade.

The principal facts relating to the distribution of trade dis­putes among the more important groups of trades are given in the above table for the mean of the seven years 1901-1907.

It would be natural to expect that trade disputes would be most prevalent at or just after a turn in the tide of employment,

to enable any regular law of variations in disputes to be estab­lished by statistical evidence. It is to be remembered that in recent years there has been a great development in the means available for avoiding stoppages by conciliatory action (see Arbitration and Conciliation), and this of itself would greatly complicate the task of tracing any correspondence between the prevalence of actual stoppages and the state of employ­ment. Broadly it may be said that the great majority of up­ward and downward changes of wages are settled nowadays without strikes, and in many trades actual stoppages, instead of being a normal feature in the relations between employer and employed, are rather to be looked on as cases of accidental breakdown of the recognized machinery of negotiation.

The causes of disputes are of course very varied, embracing all the matters relating to conditions of employment on which differences may arise between employers and employed. Experience shows, how­ever, that the great bulk of disputes relate to questions of wages, a much smaller proportion to hours of labour, and the balance to a large number of miscellaneous questions, such as the employment of per­sons or classes obnoxious to the strikers on the ground that they do not belong to their union, or have worked against its interests, or because they are held to have no “right ” to the particular occupation on which they are employed, either on account of not having gone through the recognized training or of belonging to another trade.

Among this class of strikes are to be included the so-called “ de­marcation ” disputes between two bodies of workmen as to the limits of their trades, which frequently cause suspension of work by both groups, to the great inconvenience of the employer. Strikes are also not uncommon on the question of trade unionism pure and simple—*i.e.* to obtain or defend freedom to belong to a union, or to act through its agency in negotiations with em­ployers. This question enters more or less as a factor into a large number of disputes, most usually, however, as a secondary cause or object, so that it does not appear prominently in the tabulation of causes in the board of trade statistics, which is based on principal causes only. Thus the formulated demands of the strikers are usually for improved conditions of work, the ques­tion of “ recognition ” of the trade union only arising incidentally when the parties attempt to negotiate as to these demands. The following table, showing the principal causes of disputes for the seven years 1901-1907, is based on the official statistics:—

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Percentage Proportion of Work-people directly affected by Disputes in the seven years, 1901-1907, relating to | | | | |
| Questions of Wages. | Questions of Hours. | Employment of particular Classes or Persons. | Trade Unionism. | Other  Causes. |
| 54∙5 | 3∙6 | 9∙2 | 18∙2 | 14∙5 |