

The result of the hours regulation is that mines must pay the same wages for shorter hours and lower production. This means that the wages cost per ton produced must be higher and the price charged to British users of coal must be higher.

The Coal Mining Industry, it may be added, has more than any other suffered in recent years from interference by Government.

More to our present point, however, is the recent trend of unemployment in mining. It is not possible to calculate to what extent this unemployment has so far been caused by mechanisation, by generally more efficient methods of production or by the introduction of oil fuel.

### NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES UNEMPLOYED.

#### COAL MINING INDUSTRY.

(Ministry of Labour Statistics).

Monthly Average.	Total Unemployed.	Percentage.
1927 ... ..	221,008	19.0
1928 ... ..	252,404	22.6
1929 ... ..	177,292	16.5
1930 :—		
January ... ..	138,491	12.9
February ... ..	142,325	13.2
March ... ..	155,667	14.5
April ... ..	178,090	16.6
May... ..	237,120	22.1
June ... ..	255,769	23.9
July ... ..	302,620	28.3
August ... ..	253,335	23.7
September ... ..	247,549	23.1
October ... ..	283,597	26.5

#### IRON AND STEEL.

The direct relationship between this industry and engineering is too apparent to need insistence. If engineering is depressed, it uses less iron and steel. Iron and steel being consequently depressed do not need or cannot buy new or additional machinery. Their fortunes are obviously linked together. The relation of the Iron and Steel industry to transport, mining and quarrying is equally obvious.

It is to be noted that an inquiry into the Iron and Steel Industry was recently undertaken by the Civil Research Committee of the