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Memorandum: Losses from Strikes and Lockouts

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LOSSES FROM STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS.

The Department of Labor has endeavored to compile figures showing the losses of employers and employees as the result of strikes and lockouts. It is admitted that the figures are far from accurate. For instance, the estimate as to the losses of strikers is based on the reported amount of time lost and the daily rate of wages, and it is impossible to know whether the rate of wages taken as a basis represents a correct average for all the strikers. Losses of employers are still more difficult to estimate correctly. According to these statistics the aggregate loss of employees in wages, as the result of labor disputes from 1881 to 1900, inclusive, was \$306,683,223, or a little over \$15,000,000 yearly. The loss to employers during the same period is stated at \$142,659,104, or rather less than one-half of the amount lost by strikers. The aggregate losses thus amount to nearly \$450,000,000, or an average of about \$22,500,000 yearly. No attempt has been made by the Department of Labor to ascertain the financial value of the advantages obtained by successful strikers, or the length of time which would have to elapse in order that the losses during strikes would be offset by such gains.