

Comparative Statement of Minimum Wages fixed by Awards and Industrial Agreements in force in Wellington in December, 1918.

AWARDS OF COURT OF ARBITRATION.

Industry.	Rates.	Length of Apprenticeship.
	Per Hour. s. d.	Years.
Plasterers	1 9½	5
Carpenters	1 9	5
Plumbers—Registered	1 8	6
„ Unregistered	1 7	6
Boilermakers	1 7½	5
Blacksmiths	1 7½	5
Bricklayers	1 7½	5
Engineers	1 7½	5
Furniture-makers	1 7½	5
Iron and Brass Moulders	1 7½	5
Coachworkers	1 6	5
Painters	1 6	5
Bakers—Foremen	1 5½	4
„ Journeymen	1 3	4
Tailors	1 4½	5
Saddlers	1 4	5
Bootmakers	1 3¾	Not less than four years or more than five.
AWARDS (NO APPRENTICESHIP).		
Labourers—Builders'	1 5½	..
„ General	1 4½	..
Gold-miners—Thames and Ohinemuri	1 5	..
„ „	1 2¼	..
Drivers	1s. 2½d. to 1s. 3½d.	..
„ Motor	1s. 3d. to 1s. 4¼d.	..

AGREEMENTS (NO APPRENTICESHIP).

Wharf labourers: General, 1s. 10d. per hour; coal, 2s. 5d. per hour; meat, 2s. 2d. and 1s. 10d. per hour; superphosphate, 2s. 3d. per hour.

During 1917-18 763 waterside workers in Wellington earned an average of 2s. 3½d. per hour (or £4 7s. 9d. per week) for an average of 38.6 hours per week.

Tramway employees: Motormen—First and second year, 1s. 2½d. per hour and 10s. per week = 1s. 4¾d.; third year, 1s. 3d. per hour and 10s. per week = 1s. 5½d.; fourth year, 1s. 3½d. per hour and 10s. per week = 1s. 6d.; over seven years, 1s. 4d. per hour and 10s. per week = 1s. 6½d. Conductors—First and second year, 1s. 1¼d. per hour and 11s. per week = 1s. 4d.; third year, 1s. 1½d. per hour and 10s. per week = 1s. 4d.; fourth year and over, 1s. 2d. per hour and 10s. per week = 1s. 4½d.

Coal-miners: Stockton, 1s. 9½d. per hour or piece rates; Brunner, 1s. 9½d. per hour or piece rates; Kaitangata, 1s. 9½d. and 1s. 7¾d. per hour or piece rates; Nightcaps, 1s. 9½d. and 1s. 7¾d. per hour or piece rates.

Wool-storemen: Wellington, 1s. 9d. per hour.

SUMMARY.

Skilled trades requiring apprenticeships, from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 9½d. per hour.

Unskilled and semi-skilled trades, from 1s. 2¼d. to 2s. 5d. per hour.

It will be seen that the lowest paid wharf labourer has received 1s. 10d. per hour, while the plasterer, the highest paid skilled worker, after five years' apprenticeship, has received an award rate of 1s. 9½d. (minimum). His work is intermittent like that of the wharf labourer. A painter (who must serve an apprenticeship of five years) has received as a journeyman a minimum award rate of 1s. 6d. per hour, while the builder's labourer working on the same job (who need not serve an apprenticeship) has received 1s. 5½d. The painter (1s. 6d.) could go to unskilled work on the wharves and obtain from 1s. 10d. to 2s. 5d. per hour, or to coal-mines from 1s. 7¾d. to 1s. 9½d., or to a wool or grain store at 1s. 9d. per hour. It might be mentioned that in the apprenticeship trades the rates mentioned are minima, and that many workers therein receive higher wages, while in the non-apprenticeship callings the wages shown are generally the actual rates paid, but this remark removes the anomaly to only a slight extent.

Factors which doubtless have their influence in this matter are whether the cost of the increased wages proposed in the settlement of an industrial dispute can be readily passed on to the general public, as distinguished from those cases where the trade is restricted, as to price, by competition; also whether the industry is such a vital one that the public interest demands an instant settlement of any dispute that may arise.