(6.) *Coal-miners, Paparoa.*—Owing to a breakdown on the rope-road and the refusal of the brakesman on the day shift to work overtime, the supply of empty tubs was stopped, and in consequence no work could take place on the back shift. As the company refused to pay for the time lost, eighty miners ceased work; after a lapse of twenty-one days, and upon securing a favourable settlement from the company, they resumed work. Proceedings were taken against the men under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, but were subsequently withdrawn.

(7.) *Coal-miners, State Mines.*—Members of the union employed on Government co-operative contracts refused to terminate them at the request of the union, whereupon the other members (approximately 250) ceased work. After a cessation of nine days the co-operative contractors requested the cancellation of their contracts, and, this being granted, work was resumed.

(8.) *Stage Employees, Wellington.*—Prior to an evening performance the secretary of the union called eight stage employees from their work on the ground that another employee was performing duties in contravention of the terms of the award; the same evening the men offered to resume, but were not required. Proceedings taken under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act against the secretary for instigating an unlawful strike resulted in the imposition of a penalty.

Waterside Workers.—Comment might also be made regarding the refusal of a considerable number of waterside workers at several ports to accept employment on the wharves: this appears to have originated from a desire on the part of the men to show their disapproval of the rates of wages prescribed by the new Waterside Workers award. In a number of other cases disputes arose regarding the rates to be paid for certain special cargoes; it is assumed that these disputes were mostly connected with the larger issue above mentioned. Although conditions of labour on the waterfront were considerably disorganized for a time, there was no disturbance of serious dimensions, and the movement subsided.

It will be seen that most of the disputes that gave rise to these disturbances did not relate to the main question of the rates of wages, hours of employment, &c., but to minor differences occurring in the course of employment.

General.

In view of numbers of complaints and conflicting opinions as to the efficacy of an arbitration system for the settlement of industrial disputes, it may be worth while again noting that the New Zealand Act is not truly compulsory—it does not apply to the workers in an industry unless they elect to register under it; if they do not so elect they automatically come under the Labour Disputes Investigation Act, which requires a short period—about three weeks—to elapse for investigation of the dispute and for a ballot to be taken by a Government official before a strike or lockout may take place. Only three disputes occurred under this Act during the year, while there were 171 dealt with under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act; this is typical of previous years.

In a recent English publication on New Zealand the Hon. Pember Reeves, who is regarded as the founder of the New Zealand conciliation and arbitration system, made, *inter alia*, the following pertinent remarks: That few Acts have been so widely attacked; the fact that it has held its ground for thirty years and is still in full operation is tribute to its principles; that the fact that grumbling occurs is not a proof that the awards thereunder are unjust—rather that they are fair; that disturbances occur in respect of only a very few awards; that the only news from New Zealand received in England is that of an occasional strike; that even so the strikes do not assume the magnitude reached elsewhere; that no other country where labour is organized can show anything like such comforting figures. The Minister of Labour in the late English Labour Government has also expressed the opinion that arbitration is becoming more and more practical as a method of settling industrial disputes. It might perhaps be said that the real grievance amongst the workers that complain is not so much against the Act and its administration as against the general economic system, there being nothing in the Act to correlate wages with prices and other matters affecting the cost and standard of living.

In several countries of Europe there have in recent years been set up national bodies representing the employers, workers, and the public generally; in Germany, for example, there is the Economic Council, and in Belgium the Supreme Labour Council, on which the Government, employers, and workers have equal representation. It is understood that similar bodies are likely to be set up in France and Austria. Recently, too, a British Industrial Institute has been set up, comprising employers, representatives of trade-unions, commercial and financial men, and others; the object of the Institute is to investigate the fundamental problems of industry. It is noticed, further, that in the United States of America a National Civic Federation held an "industrial round table" meeting in New York, comprising representatives of great industries and organized labour, to consider the elimination of industrial waste and the minimization of industrial strife; also that similar meetings are being organized in other cities.

Co-partnerships and Profit-sharing.

The Companies Empowering Bill that was passed into law last session was a small measure, but one containing far-reaching possibilities respecting the industrial situation as between capital and labour. Its originator—the managing director of a sawmilling company—desired to lay down the principle that in business capital should be paid a fixed rate of interest—to be determined at the outset according to the current rate of interest, with an allowance for risk—while any surplus profits should be apportioned amongst all those persons engaged in the work, whether they be owners, or managers, or ordinary employees. He found, however, that the existing Companies Act did not contemplate or permit the issue of shares for which personal service is the qualification. He was therefore unable to give full legal effect to the method he wished to introduce, and the Companies