

As stated in last year's report (page 8), the industrial disturbances in New Zealand over the five-years period of 1919-23 resulted in a loss of eighty-four days' work per annum per 1,000 of the population. (This is equivalent to only about two hours per annum for each breadwinner throughout the Dominion.) During the same period the number of days lost per 1,000 of the population in Australia ranged from 121 days in Tasmania to 661 in New South Wales, and elsewhere from 194 in Canada to 819 in Great Britain; other European countries show 259 in France, 591 in Germany, and 795 in Sweden.

INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE.

For the purpose of enabling a full discussion of the Industrial Arbitration system to take place between all sections of the community concerned, the Government decided to call an Industrial Conference during the forthcoming recess and this Conference commenced its sittings in the month of March of this year. In the meantime a temporary measure was passed providing that no award relating to the farming industry, including the manufacture of dairy-produce, should be amended or extended, nor should any new award in the industry be made, before the 1st September in the following year (1928). It was also decided that the opportunity be taken to place other legislation that affects the relationships between employers and workers before the Conference for its consideration. A full report of the Conference has been issued, entitled "National Industrial Conference, 1928" (H.-35), and is obtainable from the Government Printer; price, 5s.

DISPUTES DEALT WITH UNDER THE LABOUR DISPUTES INVESTIGATION ACT, 1913.

The following table is interesting as showing the extent to which the workers have preferred the method provided by the above Act for the settlement of their disputes to the procedure to be followed if they register under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act:—

(1) Industry affected.	(2) Particulars.	(3) Ballot of Workers.	(4) Nature of Settlement.
Gas Company's clerical and showrooms employees, Auckland	Conference called by Conciliation Commissioner agreed upon minor points. Dispute then referred to a Labour Disputes Committee, which failed to arrive at a decision. Matter adjourned indefinitely	Not required ..	Employees continue to work under the expired agreement.
Gas Company's employees, Auckland (other than above)	Conference called by Conciliation Commissioner resulted in agreement not to alter present conditions	„ ..	Ditto.
Tramway workers, Auckland	Agreement reached without recourse to conference called by Conciliation Commissioner or to Labour Disputes Committee	„ ..	Supplementary agreed filed pursuant to section 8 (1).
Glass-workers, Auckland ..	Conference called by Conciliation Commissioner and meeting of Labour Disputes Committee failed to settle dispute. Ballot resulted in vote against strike. An agreement was subsequently arrived at by the Committee	Duly taken (see column 2)	Agreement filed pursuant to section 8 (1) amending the expired agreement.
Marine and power engineers, Auckland	Agreement reached without recourse to conference called by Conciliation Commissioner or to Labour Disputes Committee	Not required ..	Agreement in terms of the expired agreement filed pursuant to section 8 (1).
Chemical fertilizer and acid workers, Wanganui	Conference of parties with Conciliation Commissioner arranged settlement	„ ..	Agreement filed pursuant to section 8 (1).
Shift engineers (in freezing-works), Wellington and Taranaki Industrial Districts	Agreement reached without recourse to conference called by Conciliation Commissioner or to Labour Disputes Committee	„ ..	Ditto.

The Act permits of strikes and lockouts taking place, provided there is no award or industrial agreement in force under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and provided that a certain period—about three weeks—has been allowed for an investigation and for a ballot on the question at issue. Only twenty-eight unions have chosen to have their disputes dealt with under the Act since its inception in 1913. There are now eleven agreements in operation under that Act, while there are 472 awards and industrial agreements in force under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. It will be noticed that all the disputes dealt with last year were settled without any strike taking place. In one case a ballot on the question of striking was taken, but did not result in favour of a strike. In thirteen instances, however, strikes of coal-miners took place on various minor questions that arose after their agreements were made. These are included in "Industrial Disturbances" (page 7). In one instance proceedings were taken against the workers, and fines were imposed. Arising out of the disputes filed under the Act since its inception to date only six ballots have been necessary, and in none of these cases did a strike take place in pursuance of such a ballot.

APPRENTICES ACT.

This Act applies generally to all apprenticeships previously covered by awards and industrial agreements under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, but the Court may extend the Act to other cases. Apprenticeship orders have been made respecting fourteen trades in localities which were not previously covered—viz., carpenters and joiners, plasterers, stonemasons, painters, plumbers, hairdressers, electrical workers, moulders, boilermakers, engineers, motor mechanics, and wicker-workers in Taranaki, Wanganui, Wellington, Nelson, Westland, and Otago Districts.