

assistance. They are designed to meet unemployment to tide the country over a period of difficulty, and to endeavour in some measure to get a return from those men who are out of employment, and who would in any case have to be kept in some way, for since we are dealing with individuals we must realize that they cannot be left to starve, and if they are not kept in one way they must be kept in another. It is just possible that these men, being kept in employment even at lower rates of wages, will buy more butter than would be bought for them if there was just State aid between them and starvation.

The next question was one asked by Mr. Roberts, as follows: "As the dairy-farmers have to face the same competition in the home and overseas markets, would Mr. Sterling be in favour of a National Industrial Council, representative of the farmers and dairy workers, to discuss and decide conditions of employment, wages, improvements in production, marketing, transport, &c., and would he be in favour of a third party, the consumers, being represented on this Council to decide the price?" There are two sections to that question: in regard to the first, it is, like Mr. Bloodworth's question, a very vital question of policy that has not yet been discussed, but I can say that the dairy people will be quite prepared to discuss that matter: at the same time it would not be fair for me to commit them at this juncture. I do say, however, that we are aware that this principle has been applied in industry in New Zealand, and we would consider it our duty to make inquiries of those who have been acquainted with the machinery, to see whether it has worked satisfactorily or not. It is a question for closer investigation. The second part of Mr. Roberts's question is as to whether I would be in favour of a third party, the consumers, being represented on this Council to decide the price. That is another question that involves the difference between theory and practice. It may be that none of us would dispute that the man who has ultimately to pay should have a say in the fixing of the price. That is a matter of theory. What I want to investigate—and I would do so with an entirely open mind—is the practicability of the suggestion. At that point I must leave it.

The next question is on these lines: "As Mr. Sterling's paper deals principally with conciliation, is it not a fact that the dairy-factory unions have generally adopted that course?" Yes, and I heartily congratulate them, and congratulate ourselves. What I want to say is that it has been my first observation of circumstances connected with the industry which has led me to concede that we might find a solution of this difficulty along the lines suggested in the paper. The fact that we have largely been able to solve our industrial difficulties in our industry in the Conciliation Councils, and the fact that our negotiations have been conducted on a pretty satisfactory basis, are the strongest arguments in favour of the idea that permeates our paper.

Then I come to Mr. Cornwell's question, as to what machinery I would suggest to settle those disputes where the parties fail to come to an agreement in Conciliation Councils. With regard to that, there must be some machinery, and the suggestion that we have to offer is contained in the paper as I have delivered it, where we suggest that we ought to have conciliation brought more to the fore in some way. I admit it will be difficult, but arbitration should be kept in the background.

Afternoon Tea.

Mr. Bishop: Before the next business is called on I rise to say that the delegates on this side would be delighted if the members attending the Conference would accept our invitation to afternoon tea to-day at 4 o'clock in Bellamy's dining-room. We feel that a little chance of fraternizing before we separate to-night will be for the good of the Conference, and some of our delegates would like the opportunity of personally meeting some of those on the other side of the room.

Mr. Roberts: On behalf of labour I certainly accept the kind invitation from the other side, and thank them for their courtesy in that direction. Perhaps a cup of tea will tend to better results as regards both sides of the Conference.

The Conference adjourned for half an hour at 4 p.m.

Unemployment, Immigration, Apprenticeship, Sources of Labour-supply: Report of Labour Delegation to Conference.

Mr. Bloodworth: Following the example of those who read previous papers, I wish to make one of two introductory remarks. This paper would not appear to make any special reference to the Arbitration Act, or to the problems relating to farming, but the question of the Arbitration Court will be dealt with in a separate paper. The questions referred to in this paper are all directly relevant to industries, and no doubt the farmers' delegates would claim that the cause of the secondary industries is bound up to a greater or less degree with that of the farming industry. It is therefore clear that in as far as that contention is true the matters referred to in this paper are of concern to the farming community as well as to the industrial section generally. My paper is as follows:—

UNEMPLOYMENT, IMMIGRATION, APPRENTICESHIP, SOURCES OF LABOUR-SUPPLY: REPORT OF LABOUR DELEGATION TO CONFERENCE.

We think it will be readily admitted that during the past two years unemployment has been more in evidence in New Zealand than had been the case for a number of years if ever before. Accurate statistics as to the extent of this evil it is impossible to obtain, but such statistics as there are indicate the extent of unemployment and the problems arising therefrom. A committee of the Auckland Branch of the Economic Society of Australia and New Zealand was set up early in 1927 to ascertain the causes and extent of unemployment in New Zealand. It carefully examined such statistics as were available, and after a long and careful study of the matter published a report, some copies of which are available to members of this Conference. The report sets out what, in the opinion of that committee, are the main and subsidiary causes of unemployment in New Zealand, and suggests some possible remedies and palliatives.