

Under the Shop and Offices Act there have been 119 convictions, and 8 cases dismissed (see "Legal Decisions" published in the Report). Thirty-six cases were necessitated under the gazetted requisitions of different trades. The more interesting matters dealt with were as follows:—

A restaurant company was fined for employing waitresses for excessive hours. (June, 1906.)

A restaurant-keeper was fined for not giving a weekly half-holiday to his assistants. It was decided that an award of the Arbitration Court is subject to the provisions of the Act, except where otherwise distinctly excepted. (July, 1906.)

Tobacconist case, in which the question "Who is a tobacconist?" was raised, and it was decided that grocers, storekeepers, hotelkeepers, &c., who sell tobacco are not tobacconists. (June, 1906.)

Non-naturalised Chinese closing their shops at the hour (9 p.m.) gazetted as closing-time. The defence was that defendants were fruiterers, and not grocers, so were not bound by grocers' closing-time; also that as Chinese were not allowed to sign the requisition as to closing-hours they were not bound to close. The Chinese were convicted and fined. (August, 1906.)

A case was heard against shopkeepers who had closed but not locked their doors on half-holiday, and defendants were fined. (September, 1906.)

Auctioneers' assistants were held to be shop-assistants if they sell goods otherwise than at auctions. (January, 1907.)

For decision on the question of the closing of shops under requisition from shopkeepers, and the hours of assistants working in such shops, see September, 1906.

The following table shows the number of shops, assistants, &c., in each of the four cities and in each industrial district (excluding the four cities):—

Districts.	Number of Shops.			Number of Persons employed, including Occupiers.			Total Wages paid during the Year.
	Without Assistants.	With Assistants.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
Auckland (City) ...	521	625	1,146	2,732	1,022	3,754	£ 204,545
Wellington (City) ...	638	548	1,186	2,556	761	3,317	186,449
Christchurch (City) ...	704	575	1,279	3,002	938	3,940	217,762
Dunedin (City) ...	666	493	1,159	2,257	799	3,056	165,898
Northern ...	583	721	1,304	2,454	503	2,957	121,104
Taranaki ...	182	283	465	940	211	1,151	47,070
Wellington ...	671	815	1,486	3,302	806	4,108	210,752
Marlborough ...	45	87	132	281	61	342	13,243
Nelson ...	120	136	256	525	133	658	32,667
Westland ...	245	224	469	878	203	1,081	49,930
Canterbury ...	356	411	767	1,648	348	1,996	108,895
Otago and Southland ...	487	591	1,078	2,237	544	2,781	124,058
	5,218	5,509	10,727	22,812	6,329	29,141	1,482,373

#### THE INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT.

The annual returns are made up by the industrial unions on the 31st December of each year. At that date in 1906 the numbers of members were as follows:—

December, 1905, 113 employers' unions, with	3,276	members.
„ 1906, 109 „ „	3,337	„
„ 1905, 261 workers' unions, „	29,869	„
„ 1906, 274 „ „	34,978	„

This shows a decrease of 4 employers' unions, with an increase of 61 members, and an increase of 13 workers' unions, with 5,109 members, during the year.

The total number of cases presented under the Act was 406, of which 359 were won, 38 dismissed, and the other 9 withdrawn. A list of these cases will be found in the tables attached to this report. The following matters disposed of by the Court are of special interest:—

A case brought by the New Zealand Federated Tailloresses to extend the award obtaining in Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago to the Auckland District on the ground that the southern workers could not successfully compete with those of the North while difference in the wage exists. The Court did not see its way to interfere, and refused the application. ("Book of Awards," Vol. vii, page 665.)