

WELLINGTON.

REPORT OF CONCILIATION COMMISSIONER FOR THE WELLINGTON, MARLBOROUGH, NELSON, AND WESTLAND DISTRICTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1912.

Office of the Commissioner of Conciliation,
Wellington, 25th April, 1912.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit, for the Hon. the Minister's information, the following report in respect to the settlement of disputes dealt with in the above-mentioned industrial districts during the year ending 31st March, 1912.

In the period under review 54 industrial matters received consideration. Of this number, 45 were fully settled; in 8 partial agreements were arranged; and in 1 the whole dispute was referred to the Court. The following is a list of the cases disposed of:—

Merchant Service Guild, No. 1.
Wellington Engine-drivers.
Masterton Engine-drivers.
Napier Engine-drivers.
Palmerston North Engine-drivers.
Wanganui Engine-drivers.
Napier Carpenters.
Napier Trawlers.
Wellington Furniture Trade.
Napier Furniture Trade.
Palmerston North Furniture Trade.
Wanganui Furniture Trade.
Wellington Slaughtermen (Abattoirs).
Wellington Cooks and Stewards (Union Company).
Wellington Boilermakers.
Napier Boilermakers.
Palmerston North Boilermakers.
Wanganui Boilermakers.
Napier Drivers.
Napier Carpenters.
Wellington Shoeing and General Blacksmiths.
Napier Gas Employees.
Wellington Bakers and Pastrycooks.
Napier Hotel Employees.
Palmerston Hotel Employees.
Wanganui Hotel Employees.
New Plymouth Waterside Workers.

Merchant Service Guild, No. 2.
Wanganui Butchers.
Wellington Tramways.
Wellington Electrical Workers.
Wellington Woollen-mills.
Nelson Carpenters.
Wanganui Carpenters.
Palmerston North Carpenters.
Masterton Carpenters.
Wellington Pullers.
Greymouth Engine-drivers.
Wanganui Tramways.
Palmerston Tailoresses.
Wanganui Tailoresses.
Wellington Tailoresses.
Blenheim Drivers.
Napier Painters.
Napier Casing-makers.
Wellington Building Labourers.
Wellington Plumbers.
Wellington Plasterers.
Manawatu Flax-millers.
Westland Bakers and Pastrycooks.
Wellington Iron and Brass Moulders.
Wellington Meat-workers.
Wanganui Bookbinders and Paper-rulers.
Wellington Cooks and Stewards (Levin and Co.'s workers).

In addition to the foregoing list of ordinary cases heard in accordance with the provisions of the Act, a number of other industrial disputes received my attention, all of which, with one exception (Typographical case), were adjusted to the satisfaction of the parties. The following is a list of the industries in this class:—

New Zealand Typographical Conference.
Wellington Tramways strike.
Manawatu Flax-mill Workers' dispute.

Wellington Meat-workers' strike.
New Zealand Section Australasian Federated Seamen Conference.

In giving consideration to the amount of business dealt with by means of conciliatory measures and the results obtained during the year, and especially when the nature of some of the disputes is not overlooked, it may be fairly assumed that this method of arranging industrial troubles must be satisfactory to all concerned, and in particular to those persons directly interested—viz., the employers and wage-earners.

Notwithstanding the many long and arduous conferences held during the year, the feeling between employers and workers has, with one exception, been of a pleasant nature. The exception referred to had reference to the attendance of an agent during the hearing of a dispute before a Council of Conciliation, and in this connection, and in order to prevent future trouble of a similar character, I would respectfully suggest that the Act should be amended in the following direction: "That no person other than those who are substantially employed or engaged in the industry in dispute should be permitted to take part in any proceedings during the hearing of such disputes before a Council of Conciliation."

Other matters which I would respectfully submit for your consideration in connection with the Act, with a view to improving its efficiency, are as follows:—

(1.) That the Court should have power to make awards for a longer period than three years (the present limit).

(2.) That assessors on Conciliation Councils should be nominated from those persons who are eligible as at present, but who should reside within the district in which it is sought to make the award or agreement operate.

(3.) That the fixing of a specific number of workers in an industry in order to obtain registration of a union should be abolished; and, in lieu thereof, "That the union should, prior to application for registration, have within its ranks a reasonable number of those persons working at the particular trade or industry—say, 33½ per cent.—within the industrial district, with a minimum of fifteen members."