

*Comparative Statement of Minimum Wages, &c.—continued.*AWARDS OF COURT OF ARBITRATION—*continued.*

<i>Awards (no Apprenticeship).</i>						Rate per Hour (including Bonus).	
						s. d.	s. d.
Labourers—Builders'	..	..	..	..	..	1 10 $\frac{3}{4}$	to 1 11 $\frac{3}{4}$
„ General	..	..	..	..	..	1 10 $\frac{3}{4}$	
Drivers	..	..	..	..	..	1 9 $\frac{1}{4}$	to 1 10
„ Motor	..	..	..	..	..	1 10	to 2 0
Wool and grain storemen	..	..	..	..	..	2 1	
Threshing-mill hands	..	..	..	..	..	1 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	and found.
Timberyard employees	..	..	..	..	..	1 10 $\frac{3}{4}$	
Truckers—Millerton and Granity	..	..	..	..	..	2 1 $\frac{3}{4}$	or contract rates.
„ Denniston	..	..	..	..	..	2 1 $\frac{3}{4}$	„
„ Stockton	..	..	..	..	..	2 2 $\frac{1}{4}$	„

INDUSTRIAL AGREEMENTS (NO APPRENTICESHIP).

						Rate per Hour (including Bonus).	
						s. d.	s. d.
Wharf labourers—General	..	..	..	..	..	2 3	
„ Coal	..	..	..	..	..	2 10	
„ Meat	..	..	..	..	..	2 7	and 2 3
„ Superphosphate	..	..	..	..	..	2 8	

During the year ended 4th August, 1920, 968 waterside workers in Wellington earned an average of 2s. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour (or £4 17s. 10d. per week) for an average of 38.8 hours per week; during the year ended 3rd August, 1921, an average of 1,423 men earned an average of £4 19s. 8d. per week.

Tramway employees—

Motormen—First, second, and third year	..	..	..	..	..	1 11 $\frac{1}{4}$	
„ Fourth and fifth year	..	..	..	..	..	2 0 $\frac{1}{4}$	
„ Sixth year and over	..	..	..	..	..	2 0 $\frac{3}{4}$	
Conductors—First and second year	..	..	..	..	..	1 10 $\frac{1}{4}$	
„ Third year and over	..	..	..	..	..	1 10 $\frac{3}{4}$	
Gold-miners—Waihi	..	..	..	..	..	1 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	to 2 1

SUMMARY OF ABOVE.

				s. d.	s. d.
Skilled trades requiring apprenticeships	..	..	..	1 10 $\frac{1}{4}$	to 2 3 $\frac{3}{4}$
Unskilled and semi-skilled trades	..	..	..	1 9 $\frac{1}{4}$	to 2 10

It will be seen that the *lowest*-paid wharf labourer has received 2s. 3d. per hour, and truckers in mines 2s. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to 2s. 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour, while the award rate (including bonus) for the *highest*-paid skilled workers in the building trade (which is also intermittent), after five years apprenticeship, the purchase and maintenance of an expensive kit of tools, and in some cases the passing of an examination before they can work at their trade, has been 2s. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per hour. The award rate (including bonuses) for a baker or a tailor (who must serve an apprenticeship of five years) has been 1s. 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour, while a wool and grain storeman (who need not serve an apprenticeship) has received 2s. 1d. per hour, and a first-year tram-conductor 1s. 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. plus uniform.

It might be mentioned that in the skilled trades the rates mentioned are minima, and that many workers, through the shortage of skilled labour during the past five or six years, have received higher wages, while in the non-apprenticeship callings the wages shown are generally the actual rates paid; but this remark removes the anomaly to only a slight extent, as during normal times the award wage is the usual wage.

The Court has recently laid down the principle that in awards the wages of skilled workers should be about 25 per cent. more than those of unskilled hands—viz., 2s. and 1s. 7d. per hour respectively (plus bonuses)—and several of the awards made during 1920 are based on this principle. In the United States the wages of skilled workers range from 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. more than for unskilled men.

The above figures are sufficient in themselves to account for the shortage of apprentices in New Zealand; and the fact that the shortage is not entirely due to the breaking-down of skilled trades by the introduction of machinery and specialization is indicated from the above remark regarding the position in the United States.

Public Representative on Arbitration Court.

It has been publicly urged on a number of occasions that for the purposes of the settlement of industrial disputes the public should be represented on the Arbitration Court by some person whose duty it would be to watch the public interest. While such an appointment seems desirable, it might be pointed out that several difficulties would arise in connection therewith:—

- (1.) The difficulty of finding a means of enabling the public to select such a representative.