

The above figures show that out of a total of 203 industrial disturbances 180 (88 per cent.) occurred amongst the three classes of workers above mentioned, and the remaining 23 (12 per cent.) took place in eleven other industries. No disturbances occurred in the remaining sixty industries in which there are industrial unions. The three classes of workers referred to were also responsible for 64 (91½ per cent.) of the disturbances lasting over three days (column 3).

A return recently issued by the International Labour Office states that the average number of days lost through strikes and lockouts per annum per 1,000 of the population during the period 1919–23 in the following countries are as shown :—

Great Britain .. ..	819	South Australia ..	270
Sweden .. ..	795	Western Australia ..	461
Germany .. ..	591	Tasmania .. ..	121
Australian Commonwealth	411	Italy .. ..	352
New South Wales ..	661	France .. ..	259
Victoria .. ..	234	Canada .. ..	194
Queensland .. ..	223	New Zealand .. ..	84

Critics of the New Zealand Act, both in New Zealand and abroad, have asserted that the Act has not been effective in eliminating strikes. The above tables show that it has been very successful in reducing them.

#### DISPUTES DEALT WITH UNDER THE LABOUR DISPUTES INVESTIGATION ACT.

(1) Industry affected.	(2) Particulars.	(3) Ballot of Workers.	(4) Nature of Settlement.
Seamen, New Zealand ..	Dispute over question of wages; referred directly to Labour Disputes Committee	Not required ..	Agreement arrived at but not filed.
Tramway workers, Auckland	Conference called by Conciliation Commissioner. Settlement resulted	„ ..	Agreement filed pursuant to section 8 (1).
Fire-brigade employees, Auckland	Ditto .. ..	„ ..	Ditto.
Coal-miners, Ohai .. ..	Agreement reached without recourse to conference called by Conciliation Commissioner or to Labour Disputes Committee	„ ..	„
Glass-workers .. ..	Conference called by Conciliation Commissioner and meeting of Labour Disputes Committee proved abortive. Ballot resulted in vote against strike. Agreement subsequently filed	Duly taken (see col. 2)	„
Shift engineers (in freezing-works, &c.), Auckland	Conference called by Conciliation Commissioner. Settlement resulted	Not required ..	„
Biscuit and confectionery workers, Auckland	Conference called by Conciliation Commissioner proving abortive, dispute was referred to a Labour Disputes Committee and then withdrawn, workers deciding to register under Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act	„ ..	„

None of the above disputes resulted in a strike or lockout. In fifteen instances, however, strikes of coal-miners took place on various minor questions that arose after their agreement was made. These are included in “Industrial Disturbances,” p. 6. Prosecutions were instituted in two of these. In one case the proceedings were withdrawn upon receipt of assurances from the union that the offence would not be repeated, while in the other case convictions were obtained against the men.

This 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-seven unions have had their disputes dealt with under the Act since its inception in 1913. There are now twelve agreements in operation under that Act, while there are 476 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. Arising out of the disputes filed under the Act since its inception to date only five 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 has now been in operation for three years, and each year I have taken the opportunity while visiting the various centres of the Dominion of meeting members of Apprenticeship Committees and also others engaged in the skilled trades, for the purpose of ascertaining the progress being made and discussing any difficulties experienced, in order that, where necessary, steps may be suggested by way of amendment of the Act or regulations to facilitate smooth administration.

During each year it has been found that an increasing number of committees has been set up, most of the skilled trades being now represented in the sixteen chief towns of the Dominion; and while there was for some time a hesitation on the part of members of these committees to exercise the very wide powers given to them under the Act, it is now found that on the whole the representatives of the employers and workers on the various committees are co-operating amicably, and that generally speaking adequate steps are being taken to see that the apprentices and their employers are carrying out their duties to one another and to their industries.