

(4.) As to Rule 52: That this rule be struck out and the following substituted: The proportion of apprentices to men to be as follows: For the first three men or any less number, one apprentice; for more than three men and up to six men, two apprentices; and so on in the same proportion. (5.) As to Rule 55: This was agreed to by all parties. (6.) As to Rule 56: (a.) That the provision as to a foreman's wage be struck out, and the rate of such wage to be settled in each case by agreement between the employer and the foreman. (b.) That the other wages be as proposed in the rule—viz., second hands not less than £2 10s. per week, and table-hands not less than £2 5s. per week. (c.) Members of the union to be employed in preference to non-members, provided there are members of the union who are equally qualified with non-members to perform the particular work required to be done, and are ready and willing to undertake it. (d.) The last-preceding recommendation is not to interfere with the existing engagements of non-members, whose present employers may retain them in the same or other positions in their employment. (e.) When non-members are employed there shall be no distinction between members and non-members; both shall work together in harmony, and both shall work under the same conditions, and receive equal pay for equal work. (7.) As to Rule 57: That this rule be agreed to as framed. (8.) As to Rule 58: This rule was agreed to by all parties. (9.) That the foregoing recommendations be embodied in an industrial agreement, to remain in force for two years from the 1st September, 1897.

The Chairman added: In making the recommendation as to giving preference to union men, the Board desire to say that the Arbitration Court in the bootmakers' dispute, as the Board understands it, laid down the general rule that, unless under special circumstances, union men shall get preference of employment. That decision has been followed in other cases, and, as there are no special circumstances in this case as there were in the seamen's dispute, the Board consider they are bound to follow the ruling in question. So far as the reference affects pastry-cooks, that part has been withdrawn with the consent of all parties, and the Board make no recommendation in regard to it. It is for the parties now to say whether they will accept the recommendation of the Board or not.

Mr. Anning said that, on behalf of the members of the Bakers and Pastrycooks' Union, he thought he could say they would be very well satisfied with the Board's decision. He had to thank the Board for the very fair way in which the case was conducted.

#### SEPTEMBER, 1897.

##### Wellington.

*Furniture Trades Dispute.*—A dispute between the union and various employers, Messrs. Flockton, Scoullar, Linley, Diederich, Drake and Son, Kressig, Eller and Son, Fielder, Stonebridge, D.I.C., and others.

The union's statement for consideration by the Board was as follows:—

(1.) That forty-five hours be a week's work, made up as follows: Eight hours and a quarter for the first five days, and three hours and three-quarters on Saturday. (2.) That the minimum rate of wage be 1s. 4d. per hour. (3.) That all overtime-work and work on holidays be paid for at the rate of time and a quarter for the first two hours, and time and a half after two hours. (4.) That on all outside contracts employers shall provide a properly secured place for employes' tools. (5.) That the proportion of boys or apprentices and non-tradesmen employed by any employer or firm of employers in carpentering- or joining-work be not more than one to every five tradesmen employed by such employer or firm of employers. (6.) That on all jobs beyond three miles from the workshop the employer shall provide conveyance to and from any job, or pay the fare to and from such job, and pay for the time taken in travelling to or reaching such job. (7.) That an industrial agreement embodying the above terms be entered into for two years.

Mr. Flockton made the following statement for the employers: He said the employers were going to ask that three boys be allowed to five cabinetmakers, and one boy to each upholsterer, polisher, and mattress-maker. The idea of the union was to make men so scarce that they would get higher wages. Upholsterers were very scarce at present. People could hardly get one, and why? Because there were no apprentices. This curtailing of the power of the employer was enhancing the value of everything that was produced, and making it more costly to live. They must leave it to the good judgment of the Board to see that one boy to five men was not sufficient. If this was carried these boys would be turned out into the street. If an errand-boy was wanted they were inundated with boys, but if they wanted to make him an apprentice, at better wages, the union stepped in and said, "No, you shan't," and stopped the boy from learning a trade. It was one item of a scheme by which they were trying to get the upper hand of the employers.

The Chairman said the question was not who should have the power, but that they should have a mutual agreement.

Mr. Robinson said the injustice was all the other way. A boy was taken on at 8s. a week, and in his second year he got 15s. That was all very well, but the pinch came when the boy reached manhood. At the end of the third year the boy was kept about the shop doing jobs until he was almost too late to learn. He had then to go on as an improver. If the employer was bound to employ an apprentice, at the end of his five years, if he did not learn his trade properly through the negligence of the employer, the boy had a remedy. At present there was no remedy.

Mr. Scoullar, after explaining that it was not through any act of discourtesy that the employers had not met the men in conference, went on to say that it was absurd to have only one boy apprentice to five men. The population of Wellington was growing at the rate of a thousand a year, and if the Board granted what the men asked in the upholstering trade there would not be an apprentice to be got for love or money in five years. The employers really required the number of apprentices Mr. Fielder had mentioned. He had been paying as high a rate of wages as he could afford, and if he were made to pay a higher rate of wages he would not be able to keep boys at all. If employers were not allowed some benefit for educating boys to earn their living, they would not go to the trouble of teaching them at all. He did not want to say anything rash, but he believed they would admit that there were a number of men not capable of earning 10s. a day. There were a number of elderly men whose sight was failing, and who were not able to earn full wages: If this hard-and-fast rule were drawn, these men would be thrown out in the street. The Dunedin Board had seen the difficulty, and had drawn up a log for inferior men, and fixed a minimum wage at 8s. a