

*Christchurch.*

*Furniture Trades Dispute.*—This was a dispute between the Furniture Trades Union and various employers. The statement filed by the union was as follows:—

This agreement is made in pursuance of "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1894." (1.) That forty-four hours constitute a week's work. (2.) That the minimum rate of wages be £2 10s. a week of forty-four hours for cabinetmakers, upholsterers, polishers, turners, framemakers, and carvers, and £2 for mattress-makers. (3.) Piecework, according to Exhibits A, B, C. Disputes to be settled by three delegates from employers and three from the union. (4.) Overtime to be paid as overtime and a quarter up to 12 p.m. After 12 p.m., and on Sundays, double time. (5.) Apprentices: No arrangement in force at this date shall be interfered with except that the increase of wages shall apply. All apprentices shall serve five years, wages to be 5s. per week first year, and rise 5s. each subsequent year. The proportion to be one apprentice to every three men or portion thereof who have been employed the previous six months at equal to two-thirds full time. (6.) Only two classes shall be recognised—viz., apprentices and journeymen. (7.) Unionists shall have preference to all employment.

The Board, after hearing evidence from both sides, decided to adjourn until the 15th November, by which time the Arbitration Court was to have settled the Furniture Trades dispute in Wellington.

*Dunedin.*

An agreement between the Operative Bootmakers' Union and the unassociated employers has been made, both sides agreeing to abide by the award of the Court of Arbitration made in November, 1896.

*Tailoring Dispute.*—The Conciliation Board met to consider the dispute between the Operative Tailors' Society and various master tailors of Dunedin.

The union asked for the following conditions of employment:—

(1.) That the number of apprentices be limited to one to four pieceworkers or fraction of the first four; all apprentices to be indentured after three months' trial, and to serve for five years. (2.) That not more than one day-wage man be allowed to each shop; the day-wage man to have charge of the apprentices, and have no other permanent assistance. (3.) Members of the society to have the pre-emptive right of employment. (4.) The minimum wage for day-wage men shall be £2 10s. (5.) The hours of labour shall be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with one hour for dinner, and on Saturday from 8 a.m. to 12 a.m. There was a further clause providing that where females are employed they must make and press their own work.

The full text of evidence and examination will be found in the *Labour Journal* of the 11th November, 1897.

On the 21st October the Chairman read the following recommendations of the Board:—

*Conditions of Labour.*

(1.) Apprentices: The proportion of apprentices to journeymen to be as follows: For the first four men or any less number, one apprentice; for more than four men and up to eight men, two apprentices; and so on in the same proportion. The proportion of apprentices to be ascertained in the manner prescribed by clause D. Clauses B and E to be struck out. This recommendation is not to interfere with engagements of the present apprentices.

(2.) Day-wage: Clause 2 to be struck out, and the following substituted: "Not more than two day-wage men to be employed in any shop; the day-wage men to have charge of the apprentices."

(3.) Unionism: (a.) 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. (b.) 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 position in their employment, nor is it to interfere in any way with the employment of females. (c.) 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.

(4.) Minimum Wage: The minimum wage for wages-men to be £2 10s. per week.

(5.) Hours of Labour: The hours of labour shall be forty-eight hours per week, the work to be done between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on the first five days of the week, and between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Saturday.

(6.) Overtime: The rule as to overtime to be accepted as framed.

(7.) Employment of Females: The clause, "Where females are employed they must make and press their own work," to be struck out.

(8.) Log: The log attached hereto to be accepted by all parties.

(9.) The foregoing recommendations to be embodied in an industrial agreement to remain in force for two years from the 1st November, 1897.

The Board adjourned to allow the parties time to decide whether they would agree to the recommendations.

The union refused to accept, and the case went before the Arbitration Court in December.

NOVEMBER, 1897.

*Wellington.*

*Furniture Trades Dispute.*—The union had disagreed with the recommendations of the Conciliation Board in September, and the case came before the Arbitration Court, which awarded as follows:—

(1.) The proportion of apprentices shall be not more than one to three men or fraction of first three men, the proportion to be gauged by full employment of journeymen for two-thirds of the year: but with the exception that, in the case of upholsterers, a second apprentice can be allowed as soon as the first has served three years. (2.) The time of apprenticeship shall be five years. It shall be optional on the part of the employer whether he indenture an apprentice or not. The terms of remuneration for apprentices shall be as follows: First year, 6s.; second year, 9s.; third year, 12s.; fourth year, 15s.; and fifth year, £1 per week. (3.) That the minimum wage shall be for cabinetmakers and upholsterers 9s., and for polishers 8s. per day. Men who are considered to be unable to earn the minimum wage shall be paid such lesser sum, if any, as shall be fixed by a committee consisting of two persons nominated by the employers and two persons nominated by the union, and, if they cannot agree, by the Chairman of the Board of Conciliation. (4.) Overtime shall be at the rate of time and a quarter for the first four hours, and after that time and a half. (5.) Piecework shall be allowed, provided the payment for it is based on the minimum wage. (6.) Employers in employing labour shall not discriminate against members of the union. Employers shall not in the engagement or dismissal of their hands, or in the conduct of their business, do anything directly or indirectly to operate to the injury of the union. Members of the union shall work in harmony with non-union men.