

The following three clauses were accepted by the masters without objection:—

6. That country work necessitating living from home shall be paid at the rate of 1s. 2½d. per hour, and that travelling-time and fare be paid both ways.

7. That time and a quarter be paid from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m.; and from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., and from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., double time. Saturdays, from 12 noon, and statutory holidays to be paid as overtime at time and a half.

8. Employers not to place any obstacle in the way of the representatives of the union collecting or endeavouring to collect moneys due to the union from its members, provided the same be done out of working-hours.

Clause 9 was as follows: "Employers to employ members of the Auckland House-painters' Union, or members of any other properly constituted painters' union, provided that the members of the union are equally qualified with non-members to perform the particular work required to be done, and are ready and willing to undertake it. 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. Employers to give the secretary of the union twenty-four hours' notice of workmen required before taking on non-union men. Any dispute under this rule, if it cannot be settled by a committee from both sides, to be settled by the Board of Conciliation." The masters replied: This was disallowed, the conditions being so arbitrary and demoralising to the conducting of our business.

10. That Friday be pay-day. If paid on the job, Saturday may be made pay-day. Allowed.

The points in dispute were therefore limited to three. The first is whether 1s. 1d. per hour shall be the minimum rate or the rate for competent men. The second is on clause 3, the proposal to limit the number of apprentices to one in each shop, and the rates of pay to be paid to apprentices. The masters thought there should be no limitation. As to pay, their final proposal was 5s., 10s., 15s., and £1 per week for the four years, and the union were willing to accept 8s., 10s., 15s., and £1, with £1 10s. for an improver who finds fresh employment in his fifth year. The last point of difference is on clause 9, the proposal that the masters should give preference to members of the union.

The recommendations of the Board, subsequently adopted as an agreement between the parties, were as follow:—

(1.) That forty-four hours constitute a week's work. (2.) That all journeymen painters be paid at the rate of 1s. 1d. per hour, which shall be the minimum for competent workmen. That an incompetent man at present in the trade may accept during one year only from the date of this industrial agreement a minimum rate of 11d. per hour. That workmen over fifty years of age may accept a minimum rate of 11d. per hour. Should any dispute arise as to the competency of a workman, such dispute shall be settled by a committee of employers and workmen, two on each side, with the Chairman of the Conciliation Board as chairman. (3.) That all boys working at the painting trade be legally indentured as apprentices, and shall not exceed one to every four journeymen or fraction of four. For the purpose of determining the proportion of apprentices to journeymen, the calculation shall be based on a two-thirds full-time employment for six months previous for the average of the journeymen employed. Every apprentice shall be allowed three months' probation previous to being indentured; the indenture to be for four years. The wages to be: For the first year, 6s. 6d.; second year, 10s.; third year, 15s.; fourth year, £1. No legal agreement in existence on the date of the acceptance of these conditions to be interfered with. All apprentices now serving under verbal agreement shall be allowed to complete their term, subject to a proper agreement being entered into. Should it be the desire of the apprentice, having served four years, to take service in the employment of any other employer with a view to improving his general knowledge of the trade, it shall be lawful for him to serve a further period of twelve months at a minimum wage of £1 10s. Should any employer, from unforeseen circumstances, be unable to carry out his obligation to his apprentice, it shall be allowable for the apprentice to complete his term with another employer. (4.) That an improver shall be a worker who is neither an apprentice, journeyman, nor member of an employer's family. Should an improver have worked at the trade for a period of two years continuously, he may enter into an agreement with an employer to serve the balance of the term of four years. (5.) That travelling-time be allowed one way outside a two-and-a-half mile radius of the employer's shop. When working at the North Shore, men may catch the half-past 7 a.m. boat, returning by the ten minutes past 5 p.m. boat; Saturday, half-past 7 a.m. and ten minutes past 12 boats. All fares to be paid by the employers. (6.) That country work, necessitating living from home, be paid at the rate of 1s. 2½d. per hour, and that travelling-time and fare be paid both ways; that is, all classes of workers be paid an addition of 1½d. per hour on town rates. (7.) That time and a quarter be paid from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m., and from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.; from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., double time. Saturdays, from 12 noon, and the statutory holidays to be paid as overtime at time and a half. (8.) Employers shall not place any obstacle in the way of the representatives of the union collecting or endeavouring to collect money due to the union from its members, provided the same be done out of working-hours. (9.) 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. (10.) That Friday shall be pay-day, but, if paid on the job, Saturday may be made pay-day. (11.) That the penalty for the violation of the above agreement shall not exceed £10, such penalty to be recoverable before a Stipendiary Magistrate. (12.) That this agreement take effect from 1st October, 1898, and remain in force until 30th September, 1900, both days inclusive.

Wellington.

The master bakers refused to accept the Board's recommendations (see last month's list), and the case went to the Court of Arbitration. (See October.)

Tailoresses' Dispute (before the Court of Arbitration).—The Tailoresses' Union was willing to accept the whole recommendation of the Conciliation Board, with the exception of the rate fixed as the weekly wage of coat hands. The masters asked that the minimum wage be reduced to £1 5s. for coat, trousers, and vest hands; second class, £1 2s. 6d.; third class, 17s. 6d.; machinists—first class, £1 5s.; second class, £1 2s. 6d.; third class, 17s. 6d., and a fourth class, 15s. They objected to limiting the number of apprentices (the present number being 1 to 5). The term of apprenticeship set by the Board was agreed to. They objected to the rate of payment for apprentices, and wanted the adoption of the factory rates—2s. 6d. per week for the first six months, and 2s. 6d. per week for each succeeding six months until the termination of the term of apprenticeship, and afterwards the same proportion until the minimum is reached. The overtime rate was accepted. The masters objected to the preference of employment of members of the union.

The Court adjourned to see if any arrangement upon the items in dispute between the parties could be come to, but this was unsuccessful; and, after hearing evidence from both sides, the Court made its award. It practically adopted the recommendations of the Conciliation Board, granting increases in some of the rates there set down, and accepting the log in its entirety.