

A stoppage of work involving 184 workers occurred at a Canterbury freezing-works owing to an objection by the workers to the transfer to No. 1 chain of certain workers from No. 2 chain, employment of which was being discontinued with the approach of the cessation of the killing-season. Work was resumed on the understanding that an Emergency Disputes Committee would be appointed. The decision of this committee provided that when a chain is put off owing to slackness a list of the men selected by the management to man the remaining chain shall be made available to union delegates, the management to give consideration to representations made by the delegates. This decision, nevertheless, was not to prejudice the right of the management to engage and dismiss workers as it thinks fit.

#### LABOUR DISPUTES INVESTIGATION ACT, 1913.

This Act provides machinery to deal with industrial disputes not coming within the scope of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. A strike or lockout of workers or employers may take place where there is no agreement or award in force under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, provided that a certain period—about three weeks—has been allowed for the investigation of the dispute and for a ballot on the question at issue as hereafter mentioned. Notice of the dispute must be given to the Minister of Labour, who may then refer the dispute to a Conciliation Commissioner, who calls a conference of the parties, or the Minister may appoint a Labour Disputes Committee to investigate the matter. After the expiration of fourteen days a ballot of the workers or employers, as the case may be, is conducted by the Registrar of Industrial Unions on the question whether the recommendations made for the settlement of the dispute should be accepted or on the question of striking or locking-out. After the expiration of seven days following the notification of the result of the ballot the parties may strike or lockout. Only nine ballots have been taken under the Act since 1913, and in none of these cases did a strike take place.

The Act also provides that agreements entered into by employers or workers to whom the Act applies may be filed with the Clerk of Awards and enforced for the period of their currency as if they were industrial agreements under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act (*vide* section 8).

During the year nine agreements were filed pursuant to section 8, the agreement in each case being reached without recourse to a conference under the Act or to a Labour Disputes Committee. Nine agreements were in force on 31st March, 1941.

#### APPRENTICES ACT.

This Act, which was passed in 1923, places the regulation of apprenticeships under the control of the Court of Arbitration. It also provides for the establishment of Committees representative of employers and workers, these to have such powers as may be delegated to them by the Court. At present there are some 129 Committees functioning throughout the Dominion, although some of these are not very actively operating. One hundred and fifty-seven special inspections were made under this Act during 1940-41, and, in addition, inspections were carried out in the course of ordinary inspection and investigation work and while visiting factories, &c., in connection with other duties. Complaints were received regarding 201 alleged breaches of the Act, while 287 other breaches were discovered by the Department's Inspectors, 310 warning being issued. There were twenty-eight prosecutions during the year for various breaches of the Act and the orders made thereunder, convictions being entered in all cases, and penalties amounting to £53 16s. being imposed. With six exceptions, the prosecutions were against employers.

The following table gives the approximate number of apprentices in the trades to which the Act now applies:—

RETURN SHOWING NUMBER OF APPRENTICES EMPLOYED IN SKILLED TRADES, APRIL, 1941.

Trade.	Number of Apprentices employed.	Trade.	Number of Apprentices employed.
Baking .. .. .	236	Gardening .. .. .	12
Boatbuilding .. .. .	45	Hairdressing .. .. .	113
Boilermaking .. .. .	27	Hatmaking .. .. .	12
Bootmaking .. .. .	325	Jewellery .. .. .	79
Boot-repairing .. .. .	40	Leadlight .. .. .	26
Blacksmithing .. .. .	13	Masonry .. .. .	17
Bricklaying .. .. .	36	Moulding .. .. .	120
Carpentering .. .. .	1,511	Painting .. .. .	347
Chemistry .. .. .	..	Photo-engraving .. .. .	51
Clothing .. .. .	228	Plastering .. .. .	134
Coachbuilding .. .. .	393	Plumbing .. .. .	511
Coopering .. .. .	7	Printing .. .. .	654
Carriers .. .. .	1	Saddlery .. .. .	37
Cycle-working .. .. .	5	Sail and tent .. .. .	8
Dentistry .. .. .	14	Tailoring .. .. .	30
Electrical .. .. .	733	Tile-laying .. .. .	2
Engineering .. .. .	1,294	Tinsmithing .. .. .	213
Motor engineering .. .. .	1,355	Wicker-working .. .. .	20
Furniture .. .. .	864		
			9,570