

The above figures cannot be relied on as being more than approximate; in addition to the workers included in this list, however, there was a large number indirectly affected by the strike. It has not yet been possible to arrive at any estimate of the loss caused to employers, but inquiries are being continued, and it is expected that the figures will be available for the next annual report of the Department.

Other Strikes.

Other strikes (prior to those previously dealt with but which occurred during the year) are as follow:—

Coal-miners, Blackball (18th August to 12th September, 1913).—In this case the men struck owing to the refusal of a demand for the abolition of the shift between midnight and 8 a.m. The dispute was settled at a conference between the union delegates and the employers, by which it was arranged that not more than six pairs of men should be employed on this shift, and that an increase on the ordinary rates of payment should be made for places worked in three shifts. The loss in wages to the workers concerned is estimated at £5,000. The strike was not illegal, as there was no award or industrial agreement in force affecting these workers.

Coal-miners, Puponga (7th April to 28th May, 1913).—This strike took place in consequence of the discharging of two truckers and the using of a pony instead for the purpose of hauling trucks. The miners asked for the reinstatement of the two truckers, and as this demand was not complied with they ceased work. In the course of the strike a disturbance took place, during which a hut occupied by a deputy was burnt down. The men returned to work under the old agreement, the employers agreeing to discharge the deputy whose hut had been burnt down. The loss to the workers is estimated at £1,600, and the loss to the employers at £700. As there was no award or industrial agreement in force affecting the strikers their action was not illegal.

Cement-workers, Warkworth (15th September to 1st October, 1913).—The employees of the Warkworth Portland Cement Works, numbering about 140, struck owing to the refusal of a demand for an increase of 1s. a day in their wages. The strike was eventually settled by negotiations between the United Federation of Labour, on behalf of the men, and the employers. A compromise was arranged, the men agreeing to accept an increase of 6d. per day. The loss in wages to the workers concerned is estimated at £750. The strike was not illegal, as the workers were not bound by any award or industrial agreement.

Coal-miners, Stockton (Westport), (6th October to 20th October, 1913).—This dispute arose owing to the opening of a new mine, which necessitated some of the workers leaving their homes ten minutes earlier than before. Shortly after this arrangement commenced these men decided to leave their homes at the same time as before the new mine was opened, with the result that they arrived at their work ten minutes late. The management declined to allow them to start work, and all hands in the mine then struck. Eventually the miners decided to resume work under the existing conditions, the employers refusing to make any concession. This strike was not illegal, there being no award or industrial agreement in force affecting these workers. The loss to the workers concerned is estimated at £2,100.

Coal-miners, Huntly (20th October, 1913, to 6th January, 1914).—This strike arose from the dismissal of certain men who it was alleged were "victimized" on account of their opposition to the formation of the union which had recently been registered under the Act. There were prospects of an early settlement of the trouble, when the Wellington waterside workers' strike took place, and the miners decided to remain on strike until that was settled. Eventually a new union was registered, and most of the strikers joined it and resumed work under a new agreement.

There were also several minor disputes, which were of a trivial nature, and in which it was not necessary for the Department to take any action, viz.:—

Rope-factory hands, Auckland (two days).

Storemen, Vacuum Oil Company, Auckland: In this case the workers were employed casually, and on their ceasing work the remainder of the cargo which they had been handling was sent to Wellington.

Firemen, s.s. "Te Anau," Lyttelton: In this case the men, who refused to accept the wages offered by the employers for a special trip, were paid off, and the proposed trip was abandoned.

Waterside workers, Wellington (*re* s.s. "Devon"—one day).

Coal-miners, Denniston (two days).

Lockout.

There was one alleged lockout during the year, in which case a sheepowner had dismissed a number of shearers because they had refused to shear certain sheep which they considered to be "wet." In legal proceedings instituted by the Department, the Court held that the wetness was not due to rain, but to perspiration, and dismissed the case.