

*Miners.*—The binns-boys engaged at the Blackball Mine demanded increased remuneration for short shifts, and on the demand being refused all the miners ceased work for a short time. Proceedings are now being taken.

*Freezing-workers.*—The chamber hands at Southdown, Westfield, and Horotiu, failing to agree with their employers for improved conditions of employment, ceased work. As the workers were not bound by an award or industrial agreement under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act the matter was referred by the Acting Minister of Labour to a Labour Disputes Committee under the Labour Disputes Investigation Act. The workers agreed to return to work after being out ten days, and also to accept the decision of the Committee as binding. Proceedings were taken against the workers who took part in the strike, and penalties were imposed in a number of cases. Additional interest is lent to this case by the fact that it is the first case arising under the Labour Disputes Investigation Act.

#### FOOTWEAR REGULATION ACT.

A considerable number of inspections in factories, wholesale warehouses, and retail shops was made by Inspectors of Footwear throughout the cities, towns, and country districts.

Though the boots and shoes examined were usually stamped, it was found necessary in some instances to require branding or rebranding as to composition. Court proceedings were instituted in seven cases, and a conviction was obtained in each case, fines totalling £27 5s. being imposed. Several thousand pairs of boots made for the Expeditionary Forces were examined both during manufacture and after completion for the Munitions and Supplies Department, the Inspectors being given authority to reject all materials which were deemed unsuitable for the strenuous use to which they would be subjected. Assistance was also rendered to the Customs Department in inspecting sole and other leathers for export.

#### DETAILS OF EXPENDITURE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR DURING THE YEAR.

Salaries, temporary clerical assistance, and allowance to police and other officers acting as departmental agents* ... ..	£	18,794
Advertising and publications ... ..		106
Fares (at reduced rates), board and lodging, &c., advanced to persons proceeding to employment ... ..		419
Fares (proportion of) contributed by Department to persons proceeding to employment (viz., 25 per cent. on railway fares) ... ..		276
Fees paid to assessors of Conciliation Councils ... ..		1,729
Legal and witnesses' expenses (see refunds of same, below) ... ..		65
Postage, telegrams, telephones, and rent of letter-boxes ... ..		1,543
Printing and stationery ... ..		2,134
Office requisites, fuel, and lighting ... ..		345
Travelling allowances and expenses, bicycles and motor-cycles and maintenance of same		5,267
Workers' dwellings†—		
Administrative and travelling expenses ... ..		514
Fire insurance, rates, and repairs ... ..		1,544
Miscellaneous—	£	
Arbitration Court and Conciliation Councils ... ..		63
General ... ..		196
		259
Less refunds of—		32,995
Fares ... ..		253
Legal and witnesses' expenses ... ..		17
		270
		<u>£32,725</u>

\* Exclusive of the salaries of the Judge and members of the Court of Arbitration, which are appropriated by special Act of Parliament.

† Recoverable, and credited to Workers' Dwellings Account.