

The following table shows in detail the work performed by Commissioners and Councils of Conciliation during the year:—

	Industrial Districts.			Totals.
	Northern and Taranaki. (Commissioner Harle Giles.)	Wellington, Marlborough, Nelson, and Westland. (Commissioner Hagger.)	Canterbury, and Otago and Southland. (Commissioner Triggs.)	
Number of industrial agreements arrived at—				
Through Councils	1	2	3
Through Commissioners	7	4	2	13
Number of recommendations fully accepted and forwarded to Court to be made into awards	22	41	48	111
Number of recommendations substantially accepted and forwarded to Court to be made into awards	11	10	11	32
Number of disputes in which no recommendation was made	7	8	16	31
Totals	47	64	79	190

Out of a total of 190 disputes 159 were settled or substantially settled by the Commissioners and Councils of Conciliation.

REGISTRATION OF INDUSTRIAL UNIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS.

During the year thirty industrial unions were registered—viz., workers' unions, 24; employers' unions, 6.

The usual annual return (to the 31st December, 1916) of the unions registered under the Act, with their membership at that date, is published herewith as Appendix A.

The number of unions of employers is the same as last year, with a membership decrease of 164, while the number of workers' unions has decreased by eleven, and the total membership of same has increased by 3,727.

DECISIONS OF ARBITRATION COURT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

In April the Court, in a memorandum to the Northern Builders' Labourers' award, laid down the course it intended to adopt in fixing wages to meet the increased cost of living. The Court found that a reasonable living-wage at that time was 1s. 3d. per hour in the case of hourly wages, and at least £2 12s. per week in the case of weekly servants. The necessary increase was given in the form of a war bonus, and the Court recommended that all employers grant a similar bonus of, say, 10 per cent. (Book of Awards, Vol. xvii, p. 130.)

Provision was made in the Christchurch District Painters and Decorators' award for the training of apprentices at a school of art. (Book of Awards, Vol. xvii, p. 944.)

The Court of Appeal, on a case stated by the Court of Arbitration, laid it down in the case of *Magner v. Gohns* (Book of Awards, Vol. xvii, p. 1006) that the Court of Arbitration has no power to provide in an award for "compulsory unionism." It is competent for the Court to provide for preference to unionists, but the Court cannot compel any person to join a union.

In the Agricultural and Pastoral Workers' case (Book of Awards, Vol. xvii, p. 1295) the Court laid down the important principle that an industrial union or industrial association may validly consist only of workers engaged in the one industry or in related industries.

INDUSTRIAL DISTURBANCES.

During the year there were a number of industrial disturbances of a minor character and a few of somewhat greater magnitude.

Petone Woollen-mills.—Proceedings were taken in this case (referred to in the previous year's report), with the result that the union was fined £50 and the secretary of the union £10 for instigating an unlawful strike.

S.s. "Maori."—Proceedings were taken in this case (referred to in the previous year's report) against fifteen of the men concerned, who were each fined £2 and costs. An appeal against the judgment of the Magistrate was dismissed by the Court of Arbitration.

Drivers.—The drivers of Auckland, dissatisfied with the minimum rate of wages (£2 16s. and £2 12s.) allowed by the award of the Court of Arbitration, gave notice of their intention to strike, and the trouble quickly spread throughout the Dominion. A conference, presided over by the Acting Minister of Labour, failed to come to an agreement, and the settlement of the dispute was left to Cabinet, which granted an increase by way of a bonus on the minimum rate of wages fixed by the award.

Waterside Workers.—The waterside workers throughout the Dominion, dissatisfied with their conditions of employment, decided to work no overtime between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. Various other matters were in dispute, but serious developments were averted by an agreement with the employers.