

in the existing award rates. When the season opened most of the workers refused to accept engagement. The employers immediately engaged "free labour" at award rates. Similar trouble arose at the freezing-works at Feilding, Longburn, Auckland, Wanganui, Masterton, Waitara, Picton, and Gisborne. A conference was eventually agreed to, which decided that a joint application be made to the Court of Arbitration for a new award to take the place of the existing award, and that in the meantime work should be proceeded with at the existing award rates. The Court subsequently made a fresh award, increasing the time and piecework rates of wages by varying amounts for the different classes of workers, and in its decision intimated that in the case of unskilled workers the new award brought the rates into line with its new basic rates. No action was taken in respect of the few men who had accepted engagement and then refused to commence, and no breach occurred in the other cases. As "free labour" was available when the dispute arose, little time was lost by the employers. While there was a delay of about a month before the men who had refused employment accepted work, it is understood that some of them were engaged in other employment pending a settlement of the dispute.

Freezing-works Employees, Feilding.—After ceasing work to secure the reinstatement of a worker who had refused to kill a ram lamb, the men demanded double rates for killing this class of animal. The management stated that no more ram lambs would be penned for killing, and the men agreed to resume work. When the time came to resume, however, they refused to do so until the volunteer butchers who had been taken on during the previous dispute referred to above had been dismissed, and did not return until the "volunteers" had left. The stoppage lasted for eleven days. As it appeared at the time that the volunteer butchers had left of their own accord, no action was taken.

Freezing-works Employees, Whakatu.—The dismissal of "free labour" was the object of a similar stoppage which took place at Whakatu nearly a month after the stoppage at Feilding. Most of the men drifted back to work before the end of a week. Proceedings were taken against the men for a breach of the strike provisions of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and fines were imposed.

Waterside Workers, Lyttelton.—An increase of 1½d. per hour, which had been granted to waterside workers on condition that they agreed to work on Saturday afternoons when required, in accordance with an agreement made between the Waterside Workers Federation of New Zealand and the ship-owners, was withheld by the employers at the Port of Lyttelton on account of the unwillingness of the men to accept the agreement. Upon the men refusing to accept engagement to work two vessels, apparently as a protest against the employers' action, the employers decided not to call for any further labour for work in the port until the vessels in question were worked. The deadlock lasted eleven days. Work was resumed under the conditions existing prior to the making of the agreement, and subject to a conference being arranged to discuss the questions of extra pay, work on Saturday afternoons, and working-conditions generally. No breach was committed by the men, as it is not an offence to refuse to accept engagement.

It will be seen that these disturbances were confined to coal-miners, freezing-works employees, and waterside workers, and that in only one instance did the dispute relate to main questions such as the wages of the workers in the industry generally.

Industrial Disturbances, 1st April, 1922, to 31st March, 1927.

The following information respecting the industrial disturbances that have occurred in New Zealand during the past five years will be of interest. In the figures given disturbances are excluded where there was no dispute with the employers (such as quarrels between the workers themselves, stop-work meetings, and the like). In other cases a disturbance extending simultaneously over several districts respecting the same matter has been counted as one disturbance only. Some of the disturbances consisted of refusals to work overtime without a cessation of work during ordinary hours—e.g., waterside work on Saturday afternoons—and refusals of coal-miners to work on certain Saturdays. In these cases the total amount of time so lost is counted as equivalent to the number of days shown in column 3.

(1) Workers affected.	(2) Number of Disturbances.	(3) Number lasting		
		One Day or less.	Two to Three Days.	Over Three Days.
Shipping and waterside workers ..	90	42	22	26
Miners	71	29	15	27
Freezing-workers	19	4	4	11
	—180	—75	—41	—64
New Zealand Railways employees ..	1	..	..	1
Flax-mill workers	2	..	..	2
Sawmill workers	2	..	..	2
Plasterers	1	..	..	1
Shearers (small parties)	5	4	1	..
Storemen	5	4	1	..
Labourers	3	2	1	..
Gasworkers	1	1	..	..
Metal-workers' assistants	1	1	..	..
Stage employees	1	1	..	..
Electrical workers	1	1	..	..
	— 23	—14	— 3	— 6
Totals	203	89	44	70