

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES INVESTIGATION ACT.

tion Act, 1907, the machinery of the Act was not utilized by the disputing parties and no application for a Board being received from either party no Board could be established. The dispute was made the subject of a special inquiry by Mr. Samuel Price, as a Royal Commissioner during the summer of 1913, and the district affected was visited at different times by officers of the Department for purposes of inquiry and conciliation. The Minister also visited the strike area in the summer of 1913. Serious disturbances of the peace occurred about the middle of August, resulting in numerous arrests, and several hundred militia and special constables remained in the affected areas during the later months of the year.

Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.—The Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, a law to aid in the prevention and settlement of strikes and lockouts in mines and industries connected with public utilities, was enacted on March 22, 1907. Whenever a dispute occurs between employers and employees in any industry to which the Act applies and the parties have been unable to settle it themselves, it is provided in this statute that no interruption of the service must occur, either by way of strike or lockout, until the matters in dispute have first been submitted to a Board of Conciliation and Investigation. Boards established under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act are composed of three persons, one nominated by each of the disputants and the third chosen by agreement, or, failing agreement, by the Minister of Labour. The efforts of the Board are directed to bring about an amicable settlement and, failing adjustment in this way, to publish the facts disclosed for the information of the disputants and of the public at large which is thereby enabled to bring the force of its informed opinion to bear on the situation so as to avoid, if possible, any interruption of work. The law requires that in the case of mines and public utility industries at least thirty days' notice must be given of proposed changes in wages or hours, and, in the event of such changes proving unacceptable to the other party, that the status quo must be maintained until an effort has been made to settle the difficulty by negotiation or through Board instrumentality. During this time, until the Board has made its report, the disputants are restrained, under penalties, from engaging in anything in the nature of a strike or lockout. In the last resort, if the dispute is not otherwise adjusted, both sides have the right to accept or not to accept the Board findings and to cease work or declare a strike or lockout as they may see fit. Whilst the Act is primarily applicable to disputes of the classes above mentioned its provisions may also be applied to the adjustment of disputes in all classes of industry by joint consent of the parties affected.

Proceedings under the Act.—A review of the proceedings which have occurred under the Act during the seven year period ending March 31, 1914, shows that there were in all 161 applications received for the establishment of Boards of Conciliation and Investigation, as the result of which 141 Boards were established. In 19 cases the matters in dispute were adjusted by mutual agreement, whilst steps for the establishment of Boards were pending or the necessity for procedure