

disputes can readily arise from the following matters relating to wages :—

1. The fixing of day rates.
2. Price lists, allowances, the existence or non-existence of abnormal places, etc.
3. Standard bases and percentages.
4. Minimum rates.
5. Questions relating to war wage; whether payable or not, etc.

In addition to disputes over wages there are to be found many debatable points in respect of working conditions, hours of labour, meal times, stops and the hundred and one questions which arise in all industries between capital and labour.

The coal-mining industry has, however, been organized better than any other to deal with such questions. The negotiating machinery is wellnigh perfect and should be capable, with good will on both sides, of settling any point which can arise. Against the lightning strike the Conciliation Board machinery is, of course, useless. Any conceivable method which might be employed would be, for the lightning strike precludes the possibility of negotiating. Such strikes are not countenanced by the responsible miners' leaders.

The Conciliation Boards to which we have frequently referred are the most important part of this negotiating machinery. They existed in some districts before the passing of the Conciliation Act of 1896, but the purpose of that Act was to regularize the proceedings and encourage the