

LABOUR

Proceedings under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.—

A review of the proceedings which have occurred under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act from the time of its enactment in March, 1907, to the end of the year 1916 shows that 217 applications were received for the establishment of Boards of Conciliation and Investigation, as a result of which 184 boards were established. In thirty-two cases the matters in dispute were adjusted by mutual agreement whilst steps were pending for the establishment of Boards or the necessity for procedure disappeared. In the remaining case a board was established early in the year 1917. The number of employees affected by these 217 disputes was approximately 350,000. During this period there were only twenty-one cases in which strikes were neither averted nor ended through the instrumentality of the Act. Eleven of these twenty-one strikes occurred in the mining industry, nine in connection with transportation, and one in the operation of municipal electric work. During the calendar year 1916 twenty-seven applications were received for boards, certain proceedings also taking place in connection with two applications received prior to the beginning of the year. In sixteen cases boards were established, and in ten cases the matters were adjusted without the necessity of establishing boards. In the remaining case a board was established early in the year 1917. Only one strike occurred after the matters in dispute had been referred to a board under the provisions of the Act.

Fair Wages Branch.—The Fair Wages Branch of the Department of Labour is charged with the preparation of schedules of minimum wage rates, which are inserted in Dominion Government contracts, and must be adhered to by contractors in the execution of the respective works. The number of Fair Wages Schedules prepared since the adoption of the Fair Wages Resolution in 1900 up to the end of the year 1916 is 3,561, of which seventy-eight were prepared during the calendar year 1916.

PRICES OF COMMODITIES IN CANADA.

Wholesale Prices.—The Special Report on Wholesale Prices in Canada during the twenty years 1890-1909, issued by the Department of Labour in 1910, has been followed by similar annual reports for each year, 1910 to 1916. The changes in prices are measured by index numbers which are percentages of the average prices during the decade 1890 to 1899. The list includes 230 commodities from 1890 to 1909 and