

WAGES.

Statistics of wages and hours of labour have been compiled for recent years by the Department of Labour, the records in some cases going back to 1900. To indicate the general movement of wage rates, index numbers have been calculated from the hourly and weekly rates. For 21 classes of labour in 13 cities, index numbers were calculated from published statistics back to 1901 and for common labour in factories, for a number of miscellaneous factory trades and also in lumbering back to 1911, hourly rates only being included in the calculation up to 1921. Index numbers of wages in coal mines have also been published for the three principal districts from 1900 to 1921, those for the years 1911 to 1921 being included here.

The accompanying table summarizes these index numbers and shows the downward movement during 1921 in the groups covered, the greatest decreases appearing in lumbering and sawmilling, amounting in some cases to 33 per cent.

Early in the year reductions in wages were made in many of the factories throughout Canada, some of which had closed down toward the end of 1920 or early in 1921 and reopened with wages on a lower scale. In some cases reductions were as great as 15 and 20 p.c., but in other cases were only 5 or 10 p.c., while successive reductions of 5 or 10 p.c. occurred in other instances. In the spring there was a fairly general reduction in wages in the building trades, amounting in many cases to 10 cents per hour. In the metal trades, reductions varied considerably, but averaged about 10 cents per hour. In the printing trades, the agreements of the unions with the job printing proprietors expired in many cases and in the new agreements reductions in the working hours from 48 to 44 per week were provided for in some cases, the weekly rates of wages being also reduced in some cases while in others increases occurred. Substantial increases in hourly rates therefore appeared. Owing, however, to strikes in these trades for the 44-hour week in many cities, conditions were unsettled during the last seven months of the year. In railway work, there were decreases averaging 12 p.c. for all classes, but ranging from 5 p.c. to 17 or 18 p.c. Coal miners in the various districts in Canada had received increases in wages in the closing months of 1920 and these rates continued through 1921 except in Vancouver island mines, where reductions according to calculations of changes in the cost of living in that mining district amounted to nearly \$1 per day. In some of the smaller coal mines in Alberta wages were reduced about 15 p.c. and in New Brunswick 12½ p.c. In metal mining, decreases were between 15 and 25 p.c. In smelters wages were similarly reduced. In the pulp and paper industry there was a general decrease in the summer of 1921, ranging in the different trades from 10 to 20 p.c. according to the trades involved, following a strike and the award of an arbitration board, the finding of which was applicable to many mills in Canada as well as in the United States.