

The work of the Department was greatly increased in 1907 by the passage of the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, 1907 (6-7 Edw. VII, c. 20). The Department is also charged with the administration of an Act passed in 1918 known as the Employment Offices Co-ordination Act (8-9 Geo. V, c. 21), and of the Technical Education Act, enacted in 1919 (9-10 Geo. V, c. 73). The scope of the Department has increased in other directions, especially in the investigation of questions relating to the cost of living.

Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.—The Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, 1907, (6-7 Edw. VII, c. 20), has attracted considerable favourable attention from legislators and publicists throughout the world. It distinctly forbids strikes or lockouts in industrial disputes affecting mines and public utilities, until the matters in dispute have been dealt with by a Board of Conciliation and Investigation, consisting of three members, two appointed by the Minister of Labour on the recommendation of the respective parties to the dispute, the third on the recommendation of the first two, or if they fail to agree, by the Minister himself. After their report has been made, either of the parties to the dispute may reject it and declare a strike or lockout, a course adopted, however, only in a small percentage of cases. The machinery of the Act may be extended to other industries with the consent of the parties concerned.

A review of the proceedings under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act from its enactment in March, 1907, to March 31, 1923, shows that, in the 16 years, 597 applications were received for the establishment of boards of conciliation and investigation, as a result of which 428 boards were established. In all but 37 cases strikes (or lockouts) were averted or ended. In the fiscal year ended March 31, 1923, 39 applications for the establishment of boards of conciliation and investigation were received, and 27 boards were established. Strikes (or lockouts) were averted in all but three cases.

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 calendar year 1922 is 3,994. The number of fair wages schedules and clauses furnished during the year 1922 is 64.

Fair wage conditions are also inserted in contracts for the manufacture of certain classes of government supplies, and in contracts for all railway construction to which the Dominion Government has granted financial aid, either by way of subsidy or guarantee.

The Department of Labour is also frequently consulted by other departments of the Government regarding the wage rates to be observed in connection with work undertaken on the day labour plan.

An order-in-council of June 7, 1922, provided more effective measures to secure the observance of the fair wages policy of the Government of Canada.

Labour Gazette.—A monthly publication, known as the Labour Gazette, has been issued by the Department of Labour since the establishment of the Department in 1900. It contains a monthly review of the industrial situation in Canada and of the state of employment, including reports of the operations of the Employment Service of Canada in the various provinces, also information relative to labour legislation, wages, rates and hours of labour, wholesale and retail prices of staple commodities in Canada and other countries, labour disputes (including the pro-