

rendered consumers in Canada less inclined to co-operative effort than in the older countries of Europe, so that many co-operative societies have languished for lack of funds, suffered from poor or indifferent management and lacked the enthusiasm of a membership of genuine co-operators. The success achieved by a comparatively small number of societies is all the more striking by contrast.

II.—WAGES.

1.—Wage Rates

Statistics of rates of wages and hours of labour have been collected for recent years by the Dominion Department of Labour and published in a series of bulletins supplementary to the Labour Gazette. Report No. 1 of this series was issued in March 1921. The records upon which the statistics are based begin in most cases with the year 1901. Index numbers have been calculated to show the general movement of wage rates; 21 classes of labour are covered in this series back to 1901, 4 classes of coal miners back to 1900, and common factory labour, miscellaneous factory trades and lumbering back to 1911. These index numbers are based upon wage rates in 1913.

The accompanying table of index numbers (Table 16) shows the relative changes from year to year. A downward movement appeared in most of the groups in 1921 and 1922, after the peak had been reached in 1920. The index numbers for 1923 and 1924 showed on the whole a slightly upward trend, but while there were slight increases during 1925 in some groups, a substantial decline in coal miners' wages reduced the average.

In the building trades there were many instances of decreases of 10 cents per hour in 1921 and 5 cents per hour in 1922, but during 1923-1924, and again in 1925, there were some advances. In the metal trades there had been considerable reductions during 1921 and further decreases were made in 1922, while in 1923 and 1924 wages in these trades showed a slight increase, and practically no change in 1925. For electric railways the index number averaged lower in both 1921 and 1922, but the wage rates were almost stationary in 1923, 1924 and 1925. On steam railways, a general cut in wage rates in 1921 was followed in 1922 by decreases for shop employees, maintenance-of-way workers, freight handlers, clerks and miscellaneous classes, but there were no changes for train crews and few changes for telegraphers. At the end of 1922 and early in 1923 there were partial restorations in some cases in the rates for maintenance-of-way employees, freight handlers and clerical employees. In coal-mining there were decreases in the Vancouver Island mines each year, although there were slight increases in the summer of 1922 over the preceding three-month period, in accordance with the agreement by which quarterly adjustments are made, corresponding to changes in the cost of living. In south-eastern British Columbia and southern Alberta there were no changes in wage rates down to 1924, although the average earnings of contract miners declined in 1922, to recover partly in 1923. In Nova Scotia rates were reduced substantially early in 1922, but were increased later in the year. In 1924 there was an increase in Nova Scotia in January, while in October decreases occurred in Alberta and Vancouver island. In 1925 further decreases occurred in all three areas. In factory labour, there were considerable decreases in wages in 1921 and again in 1922, but there were slight increases in 1923 and 1924, while in 1925 some factory labour was slightly higher and some slightly lower.