

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). At present 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), the Government Annuities Act, 1908 (7-8 Edw. VII, c. 5), the Technical Education Act, enacted in 1919 (9-10 Geo. V, c. 73), and the Combines Investigation Act, 1923. The scope of the Department has increased in other directions, especially in the investigation of questions relating to the cost of living and in connection with the International Labour Organization of the League of Nations.

Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.¹—The Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, 1907 (6-7 Edw. VII, c. 20), has attracted considerable favourable attention from legislators and publicists throughout the world. As enacted in 1907, it forbids strikes and 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. In January, 1925, a judgment was rendered by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council declaring that the Act as it stood was not within the competence of the Dominion Parliament. So at the ensuing session of Parliament, amendments (15-16 Geo. V, c. 14) were made to the statute, with the object of limiting its operation to matters that are not within exclusive provincial jurisdiction. It was also provided by these amendments that the statute should apply in the case of "any dispute which is within the exclusive legislative jurisdiction of any province and which by the legislation of the province is made subject to the provisions of this Act"

The Legislatures of five of the provinces, namely, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, have taken advantage of this provision and enacted enabling legislation, by which the Dominion Industrial Disputes Investigation Act becomes operative in respect of disputes of the classes named in the Dominion law and otherwise within exclusive provincial jurisdiction.

A review of the proceedings under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act from its enactment in March, 1907, to March 31, 1926, shows that in the 19 years 642 applications were received for the establishment of boards of conciliation and investigation, as a result of which 450 boards were established. In all but 37 cases strikes (or lockouts) were averted or ended.

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 the Dominion Government contracts and must be adhered to by contractors in the execution of such works. The number of fair wage schedules prepared, from the adoption of the Fair Wages Resolution in 1900 up to the end of the fiscal year 1925-26, was 4,273. The number of fair wage schedules and clauses furnished during the fiscal year 1925-26 was 127.

Fair wage conditions are also inserted in contracts for the manufacture of certain classes of government supplies and in contracts for all railway con-

¹See page 241 of Labour Gazette for February, 1925, for text of judgement of the Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council in regard to the validity of this statute.