

that the effect of the adoption of fixed margins for all wholesalers and retailers was to stereotype the present distributive system and thus to discourage the development of new and more economical methods of merchandising which might make possible lower prices to the consumer. These results, together with the means adopted to enforce the maintenance of prices, namely a "stop-list", or the cutting off of supplies through the joint action of the whole trade, were considered against the public interest and therefore in contravention of the Combines Investigation Act. The P. A. T. A. appealed to the Minister of Labour for a new hearing, on the ground that they did not have the full opportunity which is contemplated by the Combines Investigation Act to present their side of the case. The request was granted, and a Commissioner was appointed to conduct a further and more extensive investigation. The first sitting of the commission was held on Jan. 7, 1927, and the inquiry was not completed before the end of the fiscal year. It may be added that the Commissioner's finding, as contained in his report submitted on Oct. 24, 1927, was to the effect that the P. A. T. A. was a combine within the meaning of the Act.

The above represent the principal cases dealt with under the Combines Investigation Act, 1923, and the only ones on which reports have been published. Over one hundred complaints have been received and dealt with since the enactment of the measure. Many of these have related to the basic industries or manufacturing, but most have arisen as a result of rapidly changing methods of distribution, the development of chain stores, co-operative buying agencies, department stores, mail order business, and the growing practice of direct selling. The points involved in these cases have included the principles underlying resale price maintenance, price-fixing by manufacturers and by distributors, exclusive dealing arrangements, withholding of supplies for various reasons, and other methods alleged to be in undue restraint of trade and against the public interest. Adjustments have been secured in certain instances without recourse to publicity or litigation, where such a course was obviously in the public interest. Evidences are many also of the restraining effect of the mere existence of the statute and the provision of adequate machinery for investigation under it. In this respect, as in the cases which have been dealt with by means of negotiation, publicity and prosecution, the Combines Investigation Act provides an effective safeguard against combines likely to operate to the detriment of the Canadian public.

II.—WAGES.

In this subsection, the material appearing under the headings Wage Rates and Minimum Wages has this year been condensed to provide space for a study of the wage statistics of the Census of 1921, which have recently been published in Vol. III of the Census of that year.

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. The index numbers are based upon wage rates in 1913 as 100.