

Knights of Labour, which in 1885 reached its greatest numerical strength with about 1,000,000 members, extended its jurisdiction into Canada, establishing district and local assemblies in many localities in the Dominion. Seventeen of these were operating in 1891 in the province of Quebec. Soon after that, however, dissensions took place in the ranks of the organization, owing to the difficulty of uniting workers of different crafts in one body. The international crafts organizations, which had in the meantime become united under the banner of the American Federation of Labour, formed in 1881, offered strong opposition to the Knights of Labour, which in a few years ceased to be an important factor in the labour movement of the continent.

Trades and Labour Congress of Canada.—Through the initiative of the Toronto Trades Assembly (now the Toronto District Trades and Labour Council), the first national labour organization, the Canadian Labour Union, was formed in Toronto in September, 1873. This organization held its second and third annual meetings in 1874 and 1875, but disappeared as a result of the serious depression of the later 70's. In 1883 the Trades and Labour Council of Toronto, feeling the necessity of the wage-earners of Canada having a medium through which to express their opinions, assumed the responsibility of calling another trades and labour congress, which met in Toronto on Dec. 26, with 47 delegates. On the summons of the Toronto council, a second meeting, with 109 delegates, assembled on Sept. 14, 1886, the first occasion on which any labour body outside of the province of Ontario was represented. A permanent organization was effected at this meeting under the name of "Trades and Labour Congress of the Dominion of Canada" This was the title of the organization until 1895, when the title "Trades and Labour Congress of Canada" was adopted in preference to "Canadian Federation of Labour." Since 1886 conventions have been held annually, the 1927 meeting in Edmonton being counted as the 43rd. The Trades and Labour Congress is representative of international trade unionism in the Dominion, the bulk of its membership being drawn from the international organizations which have local branches in Canada. According to reports for 1927, the congress received payment of per capita tax from 55 international bodies and two national organizations which had their entire membership in the Dominion, with a total membership of 105,847 in 1,368 local branches. With other affiliations and unions directly under charter, the congress had in all at the close of 1927 a membership of 114,362 in 1,420 branches.

All-Canadian Congress of Labour.—The All-Canadian Congress of Labour was organized Mar. 16, 1927, by labour bodies not eligible for membership in the old established Trades and Labour Congress of Canada. One of the promoters of the new body was the Canadian Federation of Labour, which was formed as a result of the expulsion from the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada of Knights of Labour Assemblies and all other unions which were composed of members of crafts over which existing international organizations claimed jurisdiction. With the formation of the All-Canadian Congress of Labour the Canadian Federation passed out of existence. At the close of 1927 the All-Canadian Congress of Labour had ten central bodies in affiliation, with a combined membership of 45,411, as well as sixteen directly chartered local unions, with a membership of 868, making a total combined reported membership of 46,279.

Membership of International Organizations in Canada.—At the close of 1927 there were 85 international craft organizations having one or more local branch unions in Canada, four less than the number recorded in 1926. These bodies among them had 1,926 local branches in the Dominion with 204,400 members,