

the Supreme Court of Canada, was reached during the fiscal year 1928-29. Questions on this point have been raised in recent judicial decisions, in the Proprietary Articles Trade Association case and otherwise, and it was considered essential for the due enforcement of the provisions of the Act that these questions should be set at rest and a definite ruling obtained. The Supreme Court, in a judgment delivered April 30, 1929, found unanimously in favour of the validity of the Act. Leave to appeal to the Privy Council against this decision was asked for and granted. The appeal will probably be heard early in 1930.

Attention was given during the year to the efforts of certain trade associations to defeat the purposes of the Combines Investigation Act by securing registration under the Trade Unions Act. Under the latter statute, which was passed in 1872, registered trade unions, including organizations of employers as well as of employees, are exempted from prosecution for conspiracy merely because some one or more of their purposes might be in restraint of trade. The activities of one of these trade associations, the Amalgamated Builders' Council, in the plumbing and heating industry, were under observation, and after the validity of the Combines Investigation Act was passed upon, investigation was proceeded with.

Inquiries were made during the year into the milk industry in one of the larger cities, into charges of resale price maintenance in one branch of the clothing industry, into two alleged combines in which the element of international combination and monopoly played an important part, and into other combinations in the fields of manufacture and distribution. Evidences are reported of a growing activity in the formation of trade associations, and of a widening of the scope of their operations. Action with respect to them under the Combines Investigation Act has been taken only when possibilities have arisen of injury to the public. An increase has been noted also in the number of inquiries received from distributors as to their rights in demanding that manufacturers should sell to them.

The report of the Registrar of the Combines Investigation Act for the year concludes with a statement to the effect that the usefulness of the Act has been not a little hampered by reason of the doubt concerning its validity, and that a final decision on the point should do much to increase the effectiveness of the statute as a measure of protection to the Canadian public.

## PART II.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

### Section 1.—Wage Rates.<sup>1</sup>

Statistics of rates of wages and hours of labour have been collected for recent years by the Dominion Department of Labour, and are 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.

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 774-783 of the 1927-28 Year Book for an article on the "Wages Statistics of the Census of 1921".