

Section 3.—Provincial Labour Departments and Bureaus.

The rapid industrial development at the end of the nineteenth century in Quebec and Ontario, the leading manufacturing provinces, brought with it the recognition of the need of special provincial offices to safeguard the interests of labour, with the result that the Ontario Bureau of Labour was established in 1900 and the Quebec Department of Public Works and Labour in 1905. In 1904 an Act was passed in New Brunswick providing for a Bureau of Labour, but this never became operative. Some years later, to cope with conditions created by the growth of industry in the West, Acts were passed providing for the creation of Provincial Bureaus of Labour in Manitoba (1915), in Saskatchewan (1920), and in Alberta (1922), while a Department of Labour was established in British Columbia in 1917. A Department of Labour was established in Nova Scotia by c. 3 of the Statutes of 1932, and the Manitoba Bureau of Labour became a Department in 1934. All these authorities publish annual reports on their activities.

The Nova Scotia Department of Labour.—The Act establishing the Nova Scotia Department of Labour provides that “the Department of Labour shall take cognizance of all matters relating to labour and shall administer such affairs, matters, Acts and regulations as the Governor in Council from time to time assigns to that Department, whether or not the same have been assigned or have belonged by or under any Act of the Legislature of Nova Scotia or otherwise to some other Department or to some member of the Executive Council”.

The Department is in charge of a Minister of Labour, who has under him a Deputy Minister of Labour. The latter is empowered to collect and publish information and statistics affecting labour, and to administer such Acts as may be assigned to the Department by Order in Council. At present, labour bureaus in the province, the administration of the Factories Act, Minimum Wage Board, Limitation of Hours Board and unemployment relief have been assigned by Order in Council to the Department of Labour.

The Quebec Department of Labour.—This Department was formerly known as the Department of Public Works and Labour, each division having a separate Deputy Minister, but in 1931 the Legislature raised each division to a distinct Department.

The duties of the Department of Labour include the institution and control of inquiries into important industrial questions and those relating to manufactures, and it may collect useful facts and statistics relating thereto, to be transmitted to the Quebec Bureau of Statistics. The Department is charged with the administration of provincial Acts respecting industrial and commercial establishments, trade disputes, and the maintenance of fair wages clauses in Provincial Government contracts. The Women’s Minimum Wage Commission is under its jurisdiction, together with the Provincial Employment Service.

The Department is responsible for the licensing and qualification of electricians, moving-picture machine operators, stationary enginemen and firemen, and pipe mechanics; it is also charged with the inspection of electrical installations, heating installations, steam, hot-water and hot-air furnaces, boilers registered under the Interprovincial Code, together with the registering of blue prints in connection with the construction of boilers. A special branch of the Department is entrusted with the inspection of public buildings and the approval of the plans of new buildings.