

In order to supply the needs of unorganized trades wherein collective labour agreements could not be entered into, the Fair Wage Act was adopted in 1937. The Fair Wage Board, created under its authority, is a permanent arbitration tribunal having the powers and rights of a corporation. It may determine, even on its own initiative, for the periods of time fixed by it, for the territories it may designate, and for any category of employees it may indicate, fair wages, working hours, and, in general, deal with any matter pertaining to employment. However, this Act does not affect collective labour agreements in force or which may become compulsory thereafter. It replaces the former Women's Minimum Wage Act so far as the welfare of women is concerned.

The 1937 session gave fresh life to the Old Age Pension Act adopted in 1936 in line with Dominion Old Age Pension legislation; a commission was formed to supervise the carrying out of this Act and since September, 1936, it has been placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of Labour.

An Act respecting the welfare of youth authorizes the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to prohibit work by boys and girls under 16 years of age in industrial or commercial establishments designated by him and, with respect to such dangerous work as he may designate, the employment of boys and girls of less than 18 years of age.

Allowances to needy mothers will be granted in virtue of an Act to provide such assistance. The Old Age Pension Commission, which is entrusted with the carrying out of this social legislation, is also the organization supervising the enforcement of the Blind Persons Aid Act. Blind men and women over 40 years old are now in receipt of an allowance.

The Department has jurisdiction over the limitation of hours of work; since the coming into force of the enabling Act, hours of labour in the building trades have been limited to 44 and 48 per week throughout the province.

Since September, 1936, the Department of Labour has been charged with the control of unemployment relief in the province; such service was formerly under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Works.

The Department issues qualification certificates to workmen charged with the use and handling of explosives and is responsible for the enforcement of the Scaffolding Inspection Act in towns where there is no municipal enforcement.

The Department of Labour of Ontario.—The Department of Labour of Ontario was established in 1919 and placed under the direction of a Minister and a Deputy Minister of Labour. This Department had its origin in the Bureau of Industries formed in 1882 under the Department of Agriculture, to collect and publish statistics relating to the industries of the province and (later) to administer the first Factory Act of 1886. In 1900 a Bureau of Labour, attached to the Department of Public Works, was authorized to collect and publish information relating to employment, wages and hours, strikes, labour organizations, and general conditions of labour. Several investigations were made regarding such matters and the first free employment offices were opened by the Bureau of Labour. In 1916 this Bureau was in turn superseded by the Trades and Labour Branch, also under the Ministry of Public Works but administered by a Superintendent. The establishment of the Branch had been recommended by the Ontario Commission on Unemployment and the expansion of the work undertaken by the Branch, and the increase in the demands made upon its resources led to the creation of a special Department of the Government by the Department of Labour Act, 1919.