

CHAPTER XVIII.—LABOUR*

CONSPECTUS

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Section 1.—The Government in Relation to Labour

Subsection 1.—The Federal Department of Labour

The Department of Labour of Canada was established in 1900 by the Conciliation Act which provided machinery to aid in preventing and settling labour disputes, and required the Department to collect, compile and publish statistical and other information. The Department assumed, too, the administration of the Fair Wages Policy which was adopted in the same year for the protection of workmen employed in the execution of Federal Government contracts and on works aided by grants from public funds.

At the present time, in addition to the statutory duty of disseminating information concerning labour and industrial matters, the Minister is responsible for the administration of certain statutes: Conciliation and Labour Act; Fair Wages and Hours of Labour Act, 1935; Vocational Training Co-ordination Act, 1942; Unemployment Insurance Act, 1940; Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, 1946; and Government Annuities Act. The Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, enacted first in 1907, was suspended by the Wartime Labour Relations Regulations.

Fair Wages Policy.—Wages and hours for work on contracts for the manufacture of equipment and supplies for the Federal Government and for construction were governed for some years by a Resolution of the House of Commons (1900) which was later incorporated in an Order in Council and amended from time to time. Contracts for construction are now regulated under the Fair Wages and Hours of Labour Act, 1935, and, to some extent, by an Order in Council of June 7, 1922, as amended Apr. 9, 1924. Hours on such work are limited to eight per day and 44 per week except in an emergency or when declared exempt by Order in Council; wages to be paid are those current for the type of work in the district concerned or, if there are no current rates, fair and reasonable ones are determined by the Minister.

* Except as otherwise noted, this Chapter has been prepared or revised under the direction of A. MacNamara, C.M.G., Deputy Minister of Labour, Ottawa.