

LABOUR CONDITIONS IN 1914.

quiet. Owing to the falling off in manufacturing and other industries throughout the Dominion there was a lack of demand for coal, and broken time in the mines of both eastern and western Canada was general. Conditions in Nova Scotia at the end of the year were somewhat improved, but in the West the coal mining industry was very quiet. Trade, both domestic and foreign, showed a marked falling off as compared with the previous year. Railway construction continued fairly active, with some diminution compared with the previous year, owing to the completion of some lines and the difficulty of obtaining funds to carry on others. During the first nine months of the year wages were almost stationary, there having been reported only 46 changes in wages and hours in this period, compared with 173 in the corresponding period of 1913. Of these changes 39 were increases affecting about 12,500 employees, and 4 were decreases in wages affecting about 2,000 employees. The situation was somewhat different in the last quarter of the year, when there were 27 changes, of which 22 were of the nature of reductions in wages, 1 a reduction in wages and hours, and 4 increases in wages.

Labour Organization.—The total trades union membership reported at the end of 1914 was 166,163, being comprised in 2,003 local branches of trade union organizations of all types. The membership reported at the close of 1913 was 175,799, comprised in 2,017 branches. There was therefore a decrease of 9,636 members and 14 branches during the year. Of the total trades union membership for 1914, 140,482 were members of international organizations, which have 1,774 local branches in Canada. The remaining 25,681 were members of national independent bodies. There was a loss of 9,095 in the membership of international organizations, a loss of 1,261 among independent bodies, and an increase of 720 in national unions. From the outbreak of the war to the end of the year, it was reported to the Department that 3,498 trade unionists in Canada enlisted for the war, and 417 reservists rejoined the colours, making a total of 3,915 members of 601 labour organizations, who joined the army. The actual number is probably somewhat greater than this, as information was not received from all the local unions with regard to the enlistment of their members.

Industrial Disputes.—The number of strikes and lockouts in Canada reported to the Department of Labour during 1914 was 44, the lowest number recorded since 1901, when the Department first collected statistics relating to strikes. In 1913, there were 113 trade disputes. There was a decrease in the number of establishments affected from 1,015 to 205, and in the number of employees concerned from 39,536 in 1913 to 8,678 in 1914. Similarly there was a decrease in the loss of time in working days from 1,287,678 days in 1913 to 430,054 in 1914. The number of trade disputes which began in 1914 was 40; the other 4, which account for over half the total number of employees involved in strikes and half the approximate time losses, were carried over from the previous year.