

FACTORY ACT OF ONTARIO NEEDS MORE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION

Minister of Labor Tells What Will be Done For Labor in Ontario—Province Already Has Excellent Industrial Legislation, He Says.

By Hon. W. H. Holt, Minister of Labor in the Ontario Government.

Probably the question which has been asked the Ministers of the Farmer-Labor Government most frequently since they have assumed office is, whether the job of Cabinet Minister is all it is "cracked up" to be. To this question it is almost impossible to give a serious answer, because of the popular idea which appears to be that a Cabinet Minister is a kind of wizard who has merely to dictate a letter to his predecessor and the job is done. It is the fact that the best of his predecessors have failed to achieve that happy result.

The day following his taking over the seals of office he is supposed to render historic by his announcement of era-making reforms and because the announcement of these great and wide-sweeping reforms is not forthcoming, and because for months on end apparently nothing happens, his friends sorrowfully, and his opponents gleefully, assume that he is a disappointed dreamer. He may be another will-degenerate into a mere time-server. Contrary to this popular idea, however, if a Minister has really at heart the interests of the public which his department serves, he will first study and know thoroughly the existing Acts which come under his jurisdiction before he attempts to improve upon them or to add to their number. This is a task which cannot be accomplished in an evening's study, but requires months of hard labor.

Of Acts administered by the Department of Labor the Factory Act is perhaps the outstanding one. Few people in this Province seem to realize just what good legislation Ontario has on her statute books dealing with the conditions of industrial employment. It is too often assumed that Ontario has a good Factory Act because she is the premier manufacturing province of the Dominion, while the truth is that it is the attention paid to the welfare of the workers that has led skilled artisans to settle in this Province, which has in turn resulted in increased industrial efficiency and material prosperity. Ontario has been well repaid for her efforts on the workers' behalf and just so long as she keeps up the good work will she maintain her supremacy as the

shall not be closer than eighteen inches in order that live men and others doing outside overhead work shall be adequately protected. The plumbers and steamfitters would likewise be protected, and would provide for Government inspection of the installation of all steam and gas-fitting work. Some cutters, used for the production of electric cutters and chisels because of the paralyzing effect of these tools upon the hands and arms. Painters have been lured away from the paint-spraying machine, demanding either that the use of these appliances be discontinued or their operators supplied with eye goggles. Bakers would shortly make work in all large bakeries and there are strenuous efforts being put forth to have the Government exercise complete jurisdiction over steam boilers, thus ensuring a thorough annual inspection of every boiler in the Province in addition to insurance inspection.

There is every probability that the Department of Labor will heed these other demands, involving as they do the health and happiness of so large a section of the laboring population; and with the hazards of employment reduced to a minimum, the workers will be given a new impetus and Ontario will go forward by leaps and bounds always strengthening her claim to be Canada's industrial center.

MODERATE MINE LEADERS RESIGN

Brace and Hartshorn Leave British Miners' Federation.

British Trade Unionists lose one of its most effective leaders by the resignation of Mr. Brace, M.P., who as president of the South Wales Miners' Federation took prominent part in the recent strike negotiations. Throughout the dispute Mr. Brace fought a losing battle against the Welsh extremists, who repudiated every effort spokesmen made to gain peace through compromise. Every important vote taken at Welsh delegates' conferences found Brace in a hopeless minority. Frequently he was howled down and charged with selling the base to the enemy.

In disgust he has now chosen to sever his trade union connection and relinquish the parliamentary seat he has held since 1919 as member for Glamorgan. Mr. Brace has accepted a position in the Ministry of Mines, where his first hand knowledge of the coal industry will be invaluable to the Government.

A piquant feature of this change is that Brace will be actively identified with the Government's measure for the regulation of the mining industry. This measure, which pursues a course at variance with the recommendations of the Sankey Commission, has been rejected by the miners who state their refusal to work it.

Yielding to extremists' pressure Vernon Hartshorn, M.P., has also announced his intention of relinquishing his connection with the Miners' Federation, but will retain his parliamentary seat until the general election.

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Although no decision has been made in the matter, it seems likely that in the event of the Federal and provincial Governments agreeing to the establishment of a central institution for training teachers of technical education, that institution will be located in Ottawa. It will be remembered that the interprovincial conference on technical education, which was held in Ottawa last month, and included representatives from practically every province of the Dominion, went on record as being in favor of establishing such an institution.

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