
WAGES.

A table of wages, as paid in the several Provinces visited by the Commission, has been compiled, and will be found annexed. As some differences exist between the statements of employers and employes, the character of each witness has been indicated.

BETTER CONDITION OF WORKINGMEN.

The testimony taken sustains a belief that wages in Canada are generally higher than at any previous time, while hours of labor have been somewhat reduced. At the same time, the necessities and ordinary comforts of life are lower in price than ever before, so that the material condition of the working people who exercise reasonable prudence and economy has been greatly bettered, especially during the past ten years. (*See Appendix A.*)

RENTS.

The most marked exception to the rule of lower prices for the necessities of life is in house rents. These have advanced in all the large cities, and that to such an extent that a serious burden has been added to those borne by people struggling for a living. In one or two places co-operative savings associations have been formed, to enable persons in comparatively humble circumstances to acquire homes. (*See Appendix B.*) It is believed that the principle might be greatly extended, in such a manner that weekly or monthly payments, not materially greater than present payments for rent, would in a few years purchase homes, by means of terminable life insurance policies. This should be a purely business affair, though it is probable that benevolent legislation, in the direction indicated, might materially aid working people, without making them objects of charity. (*See Appendix C.*)

MUNICIPAL TAXATION.

In some cities, if not in all, the houses of the comparatively poor are, in proportion to their value, more highly taxed for municipal purposes than those of wealthy people. This is unjust. The poor man is justified in asking that he be no more highly taxed in proportion to his means than his more fortunate neighbor. The practice—happily not common—of leasing land for others to build upon was subject of complaint in Toronto and Hull, and appears to be productive of no little injustice.

LANDLORDS' PREFERENCE.

It is believed that in the collection of rents landlords should have no preference over other creditors, and that as many articles of household use as are necessary to comfort should be exempt from seizure to satisfy any debt.

SANITARY ARRANGEMENTS.

In many places no effectual means are taken to secure proper sanitary conditions in workingmen's dwellings. Testimony supports a belief that these houses yield to the owners a much larger revenue than houses of a better class, and certainly landlords can afford to make them safely habitable. In any case, the letting as a dwelling of a house in bad sanitary condition should be forbidden by law. Frequent inspection should be made, and some competent authority should order alterations or repairs when necessary to health. If the hours of labor be shortened workingmen will be able to seek homes in the suburbs of towns, where they will have the benefit of lower rents and will secure better sanitary conditions. Means for rapid and cheap transit are now being introduced, which will relieve congested industrial centres of their surplus population, to the great benefit of the working classes.