

Some years ago Mr. A. W. Wright, a well-known Conservative, who is at present a Conservative candidate in West Toronto for the Local Legislature, and who in 1895 was appointed by the Conservative Government of Canada as a Commissioner to enquire into the existence, or otherwise, of the "sweating" system in the Dominion, and who for many years has been an organizer of the Conservative party, while occupying a position on the Executive Board of Knights of Labor of America, evidently took pride in referring to the Ontario labor laws in the following words:

"While there is still a good deal of legislation which we labor cranks think should be enacted, I am free to say that Ontario has not much to learn from any State in the Union in this respect, and is immeasurably in advance of most of them."

The Shops Regulation Act provided that no person under ten years of age should be employed in any shop, and that no child, young girl or woman should be employed in or about a shop on any day of the week excepting Saturday, or the day next before a statutory holiday, before seven in the morning or after six in the evening; nor shall they be employed in a shop on Saturday or the day next before a statutory holiday before seven in the morning or after ten in the evening—provided that such person may be employed on one day per week other than Saturday, or the day before a statutory holiday until ten o'clock in the evening, but shall not in such case be so employed on Saturday evening later than six o'clock. Every such person shall be allowed not less than one hour for a noon meal each day; and when employed after six o'clock in the evening, not less than forty-five minutes for evening meal.

During the last session of the Legislature, as a direct result of the persistent advocacy of Mr. T. H. Preston, M.P.P., Liberal representative for South Brant, who has always taken a great interest in this question, the age limit was raised from ten to twelve.

CONVICT LABOR.

In 1889 the Government of Sir Oliver Mowat made an agreement with The Brandon Manufacturing Company, Toronto, for the manufacture of a large quantity of wooden goods in the Central Prison, on what is known as the Contract System basis. The prisoners in the Central Prison were hired out to The Brandon Manufacturing Company, and piecework prices