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Another satisfactory feature of employment in cotton mills is that it is practically continuous throughout the year, and not seasonal to such an extent as are many other industries. While the sale of the product is in a measure seasonal, all mill managements plan their production with the objective of giving steady employment to their workers. Their ability to do this is largely due to the fact that the industry is organized on a sound financial basis. Capital reserves have been built up over a long period of years, enabling the mills to plan their production, which not only results in advantage to the workers, but is the most economical method from the standpoint of the consumers of their products.

On the whole, the industry furnishes well paid employment. In considering wage rates it must be constantly kept in mind that these apply to year round employment. Perhaps the most significant fact brought out by the inquiry was that out of the 15,500 employees there was not a single case reported in which the wages for female workers had been less than the minimum wages provided for by law in the various provinces. The average wages paid to female employees were far in excess of the requirements of the law.

During this inquiry it was quite apparent that a number of employers engaged both in production and distribution felt that their obligation to their female employees had been met if the minimum wage laws were complied with. In other words, in a great many cases the minimum wage became the maximum. This was not the attitude of employers in the Primary Cotton Textile Industry. For example, the auditors reported that the largest cotton company in Canada, whose mills were located in the Province of Quebec and who had mills in Montreal where the minimum wage for experienced workers was \$12.00 per week, had adopted a fixed policy of maintaining wage rates in Montreal well above the minimum required, and were working on a fixed differential of five per cent. lower wages in the districts outside of Montreal. In other words, while the law required that wages should be 20 per cent. higher in Montreal than in the smaller towns and cities, this company paid wages only five per cent. below the Montreal rate. That this policy had given the expected result is evidenced by the fact that the average wage paid all female employees throughout the whole industry was approximately 25 per cent. higher than the minimum required by law.

In reporting on the question of the payment of minimum wages, the government auditors reported as follows:

"In the cotton trade, we have actually gone over item by item the pay-rolls of ten mills. We have gone through the employees' experience records to see if there were any cases of infraction of the minimum wage laws. We found no mill that we examined breaking the law in regard to minimum wages, and the average of the female employees is lower than the average of male employees, which does not indicate a large or important proportion of very low paid male employees."

This last statement was made by the Commission's auditors, in view of the fact that in a great many cases employers were found in other industries who were paying actually lower wages to male employees than female employees because male employees had not the protection of minimum wage laws.

There are numerous tables given in the reports dealing with wages, but these are summarized in the following table showing average wages in the four sex and age classifications, by provinces. These figures are compiled from an actual payroll for one week in February, 1933, and one week in February, 1934:

6

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Hourly Wage Rates according to Sex and Age

Provinces	55% Adult males 21 years and over	11% Youths and boys under 21 years	31.1% Adult females 18 years and over	2.9% Girls under 18 years
1934	cts.	cts.	cts.	cts.
Ontario	32.72	22.26	25.00	19.65
Quebec	30.04	17.40	21.66	16.20
Maritimes	34.72	21.65	25.28	20.91
Average ...	31.01	18.24	22.75	17.23
1933	cts.	cts.	cts.	cts.
Ontario	35.63	21.98	25.29	20.08
Quebec	33.90	18.95	22.61	17.46
Maritimes	39.76	23.48	27.63	23.49
Average ...	34.73	19.44	23.63	18.19

It will be noted that the wage rates in the Quebec mills were somewhat lower than in the other provinces. However, as evidence of the fact that the wages as shown reflect wages much higher than the requirements of the minimum wage laws, the following table shows the wages required for females under the Minimum Wage Law in the Province of Quebec, in the towns in which most of the mills are located:

Quebec Minimum Wage Rates

	Rate per week	Rate per hour cents
Experienced workers, having over 24 months' experience at the trade .	\$10.00	18.18
Apprentices:		
Fourth six months	9.00	16.36
Third six months	8.00	14.55
Second six months	7.00	12.73
First six months	6.00	10.90
Average for apprentices		13.64

The Act does not fix any hours, but provides that the wages shall be based on the recognized working period of the individual mills. The hourly rates shown are based upon the average hours worked in the industry.

It will be noted that in 1933 the average paid to girls under 18 years of age in the Province of Quebec was 17.46 cents per hour, and in 1934, 16.20 cents per hour. It may be assumed that practically all of these were apprentices having less than two years' experience. The average rate required by law for apprentices is 13.64 cents per hour, so that the actual average wage paid in 1933 was 3.82 cents per hour, or 28 per cent., higher than the average wage required under the Act. In regard to adult female workers 18 years of age or over, the average wage received in the Province of Quebec was 22.61 cents per hour in 1933 and 21.66 cents per hour in 1934. Many of these workers had less than two years' experience and therefore should be regarded as apprentices. However, if we accept them all as being experienced workers, the rate they would have been required by law to

7