

18. I found no positive evidence that the conditions in these small shops and dwellings were actually unsanitary, but in many instances they were very far from being cleanly, and not a few were the reverse of being comfortable working places. The ventilation was often bad and some of the rooms were too small for the number of people employed.

19. The competition of the small shops that do not come under the provisions of the Factories Acts, and the rivalry of people who work in their own homes undoubtedly has the effect of forcing contractors to take work at lower rates than they otherwise would, but this is only in part owing to the fact that they do not have to comply with the regulations of the Acts.

20. The Factories Acts both in Ontario and Quebec, appear to be fairly well enforced and to give general satisfaction in their working, both to employers and employees. A greater number of inspectors, however, is needed, and more frequent publication of reports would be an advantage.

21. There is pressing need that the provisions of the Factories Acts should be very greatly broadened and extended so as to bring within their jurisdiction all places where goods intended for sale are manufactured. In accordance with an amendment to the Ontario Factories Act, which was assented to on April 16th of last year, the government of that province appointed, in addition to the male inspectors, one female inspector, who is doing very efficient work, but it is not possible that one woman can effectually watch over even the factories and shops now under the Act, and it would be quite beyond the power of the present staff to do the work if the law were amended so as to bring the small shops under its regulations.

22. I do not find that employers in Ontario and Quebec are as yet suffering any disadvantage because of the enforcement of the Factories Acts in these provinces. It is very evident, however, that should competition become keen between them and manufacturers in other provinces where there are no such Acts in force, they would be placed at a very serious disadvantage. In the absence of common legislation in the several provinces it is a cause of regret among the working classes that there is no Dominion legislation of this character.

23. The general opinion among employers and workmen is that no one province could enact stringent legislation for the purpose of checking or preventing the "sweating system," without great risk of injury to business in that province, and that the probable effect of the enactment of such legislation would be the transference of the business to other provinces where such restrictive laws might not be enacted. Such a result appears to have followed the enactment of "anti-sweating" laws in some of the States of the neighbouring Union, notably New York and Massachusetts.

24. Should the Dominion Parliament enact legislation for the purpose indicated, both manufacturers and employees appear to fear that it would result in greater imports of ready-made clothing and a lessening of the quantity made in the Dominion, unless the import duties were raised sufficiently to cover the increased cost of manufacture.

25. Attempts have been made in several of the American States to check the "sweating system" by requiring that all goods should be labelled or ticketed so as to show whether they were made in factories, contractors' shops, private houses or tenement houses. These attempts have been followed by a limited measure of success only. It has been proposed by members of labour organizations and others anxious to uproot the "sweating" evil, and careless, perhaps, as to the consequences in other directions of the suggested remedy, that a system of labelling or tagging should be adopted and legally enforced that would practically have the effect of making all ready-made clothing, except such as should be made in factories, unsaleable, by attaching to it a suspicion of having been made under uncleanly or unsanitary conditions. While some of the working people with whom I conversed on this subject expressed themselves as desirous of having the labelling system tried, I did not find that, as a rule, they regarded its success, as a means of substituting factory work for the contractors' shop or home work systems, as more than problematical. Manufacturers on the other hand are generally of opinion that such legislation would be vexatious and troublesome to them without resulting in any corresponding benefit either to the public or to their employees.