

years of patient effort was necessary to place the department in the possession of adequate information, gleaned by its experts directly from the books of several hundred American, and a hundred or more European industrial establishments. This data when published will give really accurate knowledge upon comparative conditions of competition. In time it will undoubtedly exercise an important educative effect. It has had absolutely nothing to do with existing fiscal legislation, for the reason that the results of the inquiry have not yet been published. I have cited these cases to show that public confidence must exist in a very large degree to enable such difficult and delicate lines of inquiry to be successfully prosecuted.

I believe it to be true that a large part of industrial strife and social discord is due to a misconception of the facts involved. Agencies consecrating themselves to the acquisition and dissemination of reliable knowledge cannot fail to cultivate a better understanding, and to operate powerfully in the interest of social peace. Such being the work American bureaus of labour statistics are seeking to perform, let us wish for them a success as conspicuous as their mission is exalted.

APPENDIX.

Giving a Résumé of the Provisions of the Laws defining the Duties of the several Commissioners of Labour.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR.—The general duties of this department are to acquire and diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with labour, in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word, and especially upon its relation to capital; the hours of labour; the earnings of labouring men and women; and the means of promoting their material, social, intellectual, and moral prosperity. The Commissioner is also specially directed to make investigations concerning the cost of producing staple articles at home and in the foreign countries exporting such articles to the United States, showing the elements of cost, the wages and hours of labour of working people, the profits of the manufacturers, and the comparative cost of living and kind of living in different countries; the effect of custom laws; the effect of the state of the currency on the custom laws, and on the agricultural industry of the country, especially as regards the mortgage indebtedness of farmers; concerning what articles are controlled by trusts, or other combinations of capital, business operations, or labour, and what effect such combinations have on production and prices; concerning the causes of,