

Revision of Workmen's Compensation Acts

Quebec Law to be Administered by Commission.

Mr. Louis Guyon, deputy Minister of Labor for Quebec, in addressing the members of the Electric Association in Montreal, last week, forecasted a revision of the Workmen's Compensation Act at the next session of the Legislature which would bring it more in line with the system now in effect in other provinces.

Manufacturers these days have no excuse whatever for unhealthy conditions in their plants or for lack of prospective appliances against accidents, said Mr. Guyon. One great trouble was the fact that the workmen were careless themselves. Often he had gone into plants, and seen appliances shoved away under benches, the workmen preferring to do without them, and occasionally losing a few fingers.

This was a matter for a shop discipline, said the Deputy Minister of Labor. Mr. Guyon talked of the work of shop committees in plants, saying that while they got along well with the factory inspectors, it too often happened that these committees had ideas of their own that did not conform to the law and regulations laid down, but instead have little systems of their own.

Mr. Guyon talked statistics of industrial establishment accidents in the United States and Canada, and from that point believed that the labor people would ask the legislature for amendments in the Workmen's Compensation Act. The present law had been drawn up ten years ago, suited to the time, and amendments had been made each year. One difficulty, however, was that it did not keep up to the times, and it had been an old French law. The workmen believed in a commission instead of claims being the subject for the cold mercies of lawyers. Mr. Guyon believed also that a commission was the proper body to administer a Workmen's Compensation Act, and he believed that the manufacturers would approve of it once they understood it. With a commission widows or workmen who are injured would know what to do and not have to go looking about for one to tell them what to do. Mr. Guyon believed that the changes in the law will come next session.

FISH CATCH POORER.

A slump in both the quantity and value of fish landed during September on both Atlantic and Pacific coasts, as compared with September, 1919, is reported by the fisheries branch at Ottawa. There were 1,157,870 cwt. of sea fish landed in September, 1920, against 1,429,160 cwt. in September, 1919. The value of the catch at the point of landing was \$3,581,567 in September, 1920, and \$6,113,723 in September, last year. The decrease in quantity landed, and in the value is attributed to the falling off of 108,000 cwt. in the aggregate catch of cod, haddock, hake

and pollock, and of 145,000 cwt. in the aldermen \$1,000 a year; to make two wards of St. Sauveur division; to have a general law passed to prevent municipalities from voting tax exemptions; to municipalize fire insurance.

QUEBEC WOULD BORROW \$900,000.

At a meeting of the Quebec special civic committee on charter amendments, which will be sought from the Legislature at its next session, it was tentatively decided to seek the following powers:

To borrow a sum of \$900,000, of which \$500,000 will be utilized for paving work and the balance to pay interest on former loans; to pay the mayor a salary of \$5,000 a year, and

Conditions in the West

By E. CORA HIND

Business conditions in western Canada are in a decided rut and there is very little going in the way of trade news. While some snow has fallen over the entire west the weather continues extremely mild and the little spurt of buying of heavy winter clothing has again died down and retail houses in Winnipeg and the fact in all the larger towns of the west are attempting to stimulate trade by putting very tempting bargains in furs and all classes and kinds of winter clothing on the counter, without a great deal of success. There is no disguising the fact that trade is very dull.

The Farmers Case

In farming circles the active partisans are still hammering away on the subject of the restoration of the Wheat Board and farmers' continue to hold wheat. To-day there are over fifteen million bushels of wheat at the lake head against some four millions for the corresponding date of last year and fully ninety per cent of this wheat is owned by farmers. The mild weather means that navigation is still open and possibly will be for another month, but even if this wheat should begin to move at once, of which there is little likelihood, it is doubtful if it could all be got across the lakes before navigation closes and as up to November the 19th only 87,653,750 bushels had been loaded out of country points from a crop of close to 250,000,000 of wheat it looks as if there would be bad congestion of terminal storage before spring.

Livestock Situation.

The writer has made the round of the big sales of purebred foundation stock which are always held during October and November, in connection with fall fairs in Saskatchewan and Alberta and in Manitoba as sales only. The offerings this season were exceptionally choice, in fact some of the best stock that has ever been put on the prairie markets. But breeders were slow to bid and at all sales there were number of cattle sheep and swine that passed through the rings without finding a purchaser and many of the sales were made at figures below the value of the animals.

Ring side conversations were very interesting as they practically all turned on the probability of Canadian cattle, wheat and wool being shut out of the American markets by the Re-

publican Government now coming shortly into power. There is no doubt that this expectation has had as much to do with the reluctance of the western farmer to increase his livestock obligations as the low prices.

Britain's Cattle Embargo.

There is a very strong feeling on the part of western stock men that it is high time very great pressure was brought to bear on Great Britain to have the embargo on our cattle removed. In fact it is freely stated that, to use a western phrase, "It is time to talk Turkey" to Great Britain and say plainly that unless the embargo on Canadian cattle is removed the preferential tariff on British goods must cease. This is the more significant in that the organized farmers have passed resolutions, even as recently as last winter, in favor of increasing the British preference. Apparently they are beginning to feel that it is a mighty poor rule that will not work both ways.

It is absolutely known that the talk about disease in Canadian cattle is pure buncombe and bluff and that the real reason is the big land owners and the Irish Cattle trade. In view of the present conditions in Ireland it is a little difficult for, say, a Canadian returned soldier, to see why his cattle should be kept out of the British market to further an Irish industry, unless it should be on the principle of the old jingle:

"The whole world love's a modest man
Who never will quarrel or bicker,
But the full right of way, permit me
to say

It gives to the strenuous kicker."

Winnipeg Civics.

Winnipeg is on the eve of a civic election, which like the last provincial will be a proportional representation election. There are literally and figuratively candidates to burn. The Tax Payers League, which really represents citizens generally apart from the Labor movement, has nominated a full slate. The Dominion Labor Party nominated a full slate weeks ago, but recently there has been a row and now there is practically a full slate of Labor Party Candidates and independent labor, with a few soldier representatives thrown in. The balloting papers are as long as the 39 articles and nearly as bewildering.

Increased Express Rates

Montreal Chambre de Commerce Would Put Limit on Period.

That if express rates must be increased the increase shall be granted for a definite period only, is the gist of a letter which the Montreal Chambre de Commerce has sent to the Dominion Board of Railway Commissioners at Ottawa, in connection with the application for a 40 per cent. increase in express rates. The Chambre will also express the opinion that an increase of 40 per cent. is too high, and furthermore that the service should be improved, and if possible, brought back to pre-war efficiency.

In the discussion at the meeting of the Chambre de Commerce, last week, J. A. Paulhus, who represents the fish industry, said no objection was made to an increase, but the issue was the amount of the increase, and the time. Mr. Paulhus pointed out that the effect of a 40 per cent. increase in rates would have a serious effect on fisheries, for the reason that an increase in prices might mean a drop in the demand for fish, and consequently cause suffering in a cheap foodstuff to the general public.

C. H. Catelli said that the question of the express companies' finances would be gone into at the Ottawa sitting so as to determine the necessity of the increase being necessary, and to what degree. He pointed out that with prices dropping generally it was reasonable to oppose the increase asked for, but at the same time said that the express companies charged only the nett weight of the fish, and not for cases or ice. Mr. Catelli said the situation was different in Canada to what it was in more densely populated countries, but he hoped that it would be possible to have more accommodation trains which could handle the freight express.

Mr. Alex. Prud'homme believed that a time limit for the increased rates should be fixed to one year, but it was decided not to suggest a limit of time. Mr. Prud'homme commented on the fact that the wages were dropping, and gave instances in big plants in support of this contention, believing also that wages are due for additional drops, consequently increases in express rates should have relation to such drops.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY Week-End Service Montreal-Toronto

Canadian Pacific Railway now operate two night trains, each way, between Montreal and Toronto, daily including Saturday. On Saturday, second train leaves Montreal, Windsor St. Stn. 11.45 p.m., arriving Toronto, Yonge St., 9.15 a.m. Sunday.

From Toronto, Union Station 11.59 p.m. Saturday, arriving Montreal, Windsor St. Stn., 9.10 a.m. Sunday.

GROUP INSURANCE FOR TEACHERS.

Group life insurance is being considered by the teachers of Toronto who number over 2,000.