

# LAWS FOR WORKMEN.

## Recent Provincial Legislation to Secure to Labor the Reward Which it Earns.

### Wages and Homesteads Protected and Life Insurance Reserved for Families.

Recent legislation in the interest and for the protection of the laboring classes may be profitably reviewed at this moment, and while under this classification there might be included all classes of legislation having for its object the promotion of the social and industrial welfare of perhaps the great majority of the residents of the province, including the agricultural classes, what is here set forth will be restricted to those statutes having for their object, firstly, the defining of the respective rights and liabilities of master and servant; secondly, the securing to mechanics and laborers the price of their labor by means of a right of lien upon the property benefited by such labor; and, thirdly, for the purpose of facilitating the settlement of labor disputes, the maintenance of amicable relations between employers and employees, and the prevention of strikes and troubles.

These statutes, having a direct and powerful influence upon the rights and privileges of a large number of the inhabitants of the province, are certainly of sufficient importance to call for the somewhat extended explanation contained in, and to justify the title which has been given to this article.

#### MASTER AND SERVANT.

In the session of 1897, for the purpose of enacting in brief yet comprehensive form, the rules of law applying to the relations between master and servant the Honorable the Attorney-General in-

troduced an act intituled "The Master and Servant act, 1897," which was passed by the legislative assembly, received the Royal assent on May 8th, 1897, and is now consolidated as Chapter 131 of the Revised Statutes, 1897.

The act empowers justices of the peace upon complaint of any servant or laborer against his master or employer for non-payment of wages to issue a summons citing the employer or master to appear and answer the complaint, and upon proof of non-payment, to direct the payment of the amount of wages due the complainant, not exceeding the sum of \$50. The justices may award and enforce their judgment by warrant of distress. Justices are also by the act empowered to decide any dispute which arises between a master and servant after the termination of engagement, provided proceedings be taken within one month after the engagement has ceased. With reference to contracts of service it is provided that verbal agreements for service shall not exceed the term of one year; that no contract of service or indentures shall be binding for a longer term than nine years; and that, subject to these limitations, all agreements and contracts, verbal or written, between master and journeyman, skilled laborers, servants or laborers for the performance of any work or service shall, whether the performance has been entered upon or not, be binding upon each party thereto for the due fulfilment thereof.