

9-10 EDWARD VII., A. 1910

labourers, workmen or mechanics shall contain a stipulation that no labourer, workman or mechanic in the employ of the contractor, sub-contractor, agent or other person, doing or contracting to do, all or a part of the work contemplated by the contract, shall be permitted to work more than eight hours in any one calendar day, except in cases of extraordinary emergencies, provided, however, that this section shall apply only to such work as is actually performed on the premises on which such buildings or works, are being erected, constructed, remodelled or repaired."

'Then there is a penalty clause of fine and imprisonment.

*By Mr. Macdonell:*

Q. That would seem to be the ideal Bill as drawn from the experience of the other Bills?—A. It would depend upon what your ideal is, Mr. Macdonell.

Q. I mean that that is the latest Bill?—A. It is one of the clearest, but also one of the most definitely limited in scope. Some of the other Bills, as you will see later on, covers somewhat more ground in the wording.

The CHAIRMAN.—They have in the University of Wisconsin, I believe, a group of economists who will undertake to draft any measure and furnish a brief in regard to it to any State in the Union. I have no doubt the Bill in question has been furnished by them.

Prof. SKELTON.—Yes. Wisconsin is regarded as one of the most progressive of States in all matters of legislation.

Mr. MACDONELL.—I believe that Bill is about as broad as it could be drawn after running the gauntlet of the courts.

The CHAIRMAN.—As an effective measure.

Prof. SKELTON.—Some few states cover something more than is provided for in this Bill. This Bill covers the great bulk of the work that has been done and has the merit of being much clearer in saying what its scope actually covers. The hours of labour in force in private employment in Wisconsin are prevailingly ten; in a very few localities, trade unions, particularly the building trades, have been able to reduce the hours from ten to eight. The Commissioner of Labour declares that this difference between the hours of work on public and on private contracts does not give rise to any serious complication. The wages paid by public contractors are at least as high as wages paid on private contracts.

*By Mr. Macdonell:*

Q. Are you speaking now of Wisconsin?—A. Yes. The law is strictly observed, but has been too recently enacted to have produced any effect on private employment.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. You refer to wages, is that per hour or per day?—A. That was not explicitly stated, but I think it is the wage per day.

Q. Will you communicate with the authorities as to that and ascertain?—A. I am quite sure. I did look into the matter.

*By Mr. Knowles:*

Q. At what time last year did this Act come into effect?—A. On June 14, 1909.

Q. Then it would not apply to contracts that were entered into at the time the Act was passed?—A. No.

Q. There has been very little application of the Act as yet?—A. Very little so far. I may say that several of the laws, as we shall see, have an explicit wage provision stating that the wage paid shall be the per diem wage paid in private employment.

Mr. MACONELL.—A fair wage clause?

PROF. SKELTON.