

TABLE VIII. SUMMARY OF STATISTICS OF TRADE UNIONISM, EMPLOYMENT, PRODUCTION, PRICES, AND WAGES IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA, 1914 TO 1921

Year	Trade unions			Production		
	Number	Member-ship	Percentage of members not returned as unemployed ⁽¹⁾ (end of year)	Estimated value		Index numbers of value of production per head ⁽²⁾
				Total (in thousands)	Per head of population	
				£	£	
1914	712	523,271	89.0	209,495	42.40	4000
1915	713	528,031	93.2	254,620	51.02	4228
1916	705	546,556	93.3	270,444	55.47	4308
1917	747	564,187	92.6	283,629	57.47	4356
1918	767	581,755	94.5	298,669	59.37	4400
1919	774	627,685	94.8	348,483 ⁽³⁾	66.36 ⁽³⁾	1566 ⁽³⁾
1920	796	684,450	92.2	402,208 ⁽⁴⁾	75.04 ⁽⁴⁾	1770 ⁽⁴⁾
1921	796	703,009	90.5			

Year	Prices		Wages					
	Cost of living in 6 capital towns ⁽⁵⁾	Wholesale prices ⁽⁵⁾ (Melbourne)	Nominal average weekly rates (end of year)				Effective wage index numbers	
			Amount		Index numbers		Full time	Allowing for unemployment
			Adult males	Adult females	Adult males	Adult females		
			s. d.	s. d.				
1914	4000	4000	55 1	27 2	4000	4000	4000	4000
1915	1423	4396	56 6	27 4	1023	4005	905	949
1916	1140	4309	60 8	28 6	1100	1047	939	984
1917	1213	4446	64 2	30 5	1164	1124	998	1038
1918	1295	4683	66 5	31 9	1205	1168	1000	1061
1919	1461	4788	74 11	37 4	1350	1315	1017	1083
1920	1665	2458	89 10	44 6	1629	1637	1032	1069
1921	1454	1656	94 6	48 8	1715	1700	1142	1161

(1) Returns are obtained from some only of the total number of trade unions; in 1921 436 unions with a membership of 370,494 supplied data as to the numbers unemployed.

(2) Base: 1914-1900.

(3) 1919-1920.

(4) 1920-1921.

(5) Includes food, groceries, rent, clothing, and miscellaneous; figures for November of each year; base: Nov. 1914=1000.

ADMINISTRATION OF LABOUR LAWS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA IN 1921⁽¹⁾

The greater part of the *Annual Report* for 1921 of the British Columbia Department of Labour is devoted to analyses of returns concerning wages and hours of work made voluntarily by employers at the request of the Department. An analysis by industrial groups of the wages, hours, and nationality of workers employed month by month (pp. 9-28) shows that the 44-hour and 48-hour weeks were most frequently met with in the year under report, though many workers were employed for 54-60 hours weekly (e.g. in the lumber industry). Employment in general was slack, however, the normal winter

(1) BRITISH COLUMBIA: *Annual Report of the Department of Labour for the Year ending 31 December 1921*. 72 pp. H. M. Printer, Victoria, B. C. 1921.

unemployment being prolonged by a general industrial slump into spring and summer (p. 5). Much relief work was undertaken in Vancouver, while Victoria preferred the policy of assistance in kind on application (pp. 6-7). Owing to the depression of trade strikes were rarely attempted (21 as against 68 in 1920), the principal dispute occurring in the printing trade in connection with the change from a 48-hour to a 44-hour week (pp. 47-51). Wage reductions were mostly effected by the engagement of new workers on changed terms after a period of closing down (p. 5).

The fourth annual report of the Minimum Wage Board (pp. 55-72), which deals only with women's wages, gives details of wages and hours as returned by employers in the various groups of industries. The Board makes a point of insisting on proper training where learners' rates are authorised; while inexperienced adults may be paid lower rates under temporary licences (p. 56). Little difficulty was encountered in collecting arrears of wages due to workers owing to failure to pay scheduled rates from the proper date; and considerable progress in welfare work was noted during the year (pp. 64,65).

The factory inspection service, transferred from the Public Works Department to the Labour Department in 1921, is reported on very briefly (pp. 52-54), no statistics being given. The Chief Inspector notes a tendency to move factories from the centre of towns to the suburbs, and remarks that premises are often acquired without sufficient attention to the requirements of the Factory Act. Lifts in general are under the supervision of the factory inspectors, and the necessity for a frequent examination of cables is noted.

The report of the Department also contains a directory of employers' and workers' associations (pp. 33-46), and a note on the provincial employment exchange service (pp. 29-32), which received 99,240 applications for employment during the year, and placed 41,744 persons.

