

CHAPTER XI.—LABOUR LEGISLATION.

Question 9 : What effect, if any, has the labour legislation had on the increase in the prices of the commodities of life ?

Summary of
labour
legislation.

1. The labour legislation of New Zealand has been summarized in the preface to the "New Zealand Labour Laws" (5th edition) by the Chairman of this Commission when Secretary for Labour. The handbook and summary are complete to the end of 1908. Since that date the following Acts and amendments have been passed, introducing new or modifying existing provisions :—

- (1.) The Coal-mines Amendment Act, 1909, prohibiting the medical examination of any person employed or applying to be employed in a coal-mine.
- (2.) The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1909, striking pneumoconiosis out of the list of diseases which are deemed by the principal Act to be personal injuries by accident arising out of and in the course of employment.
- (3.) The Factories Amendment Act, 1910, providing that the occupiers of factories shall keep wages and overtime books open to an inspection by Inspector of Factories, and giving information relating to each employee's work, age, hours of employment, and wages paid. It also fixes the hours of employment in laundries, whether employers or not.
- (4.) The Shops and Offices Amendment Act, 1910, which makes hotels and restaurants "shops" for the purposes of the Act, fixes the number of hours of employment per week of male and female employees, and holidays to be granted, and requires a wages and time book to be kept.
- (5.) The Mining Amendment Act, 1910, abolishing the medical examination of gold-miners employed or applying to be employed in a mine, giving the miners the right to appoint check-weighmen when they are paid according to weight of material, and making it an offence on the part of the owner and agent not to afford check-weighmen so appointed reasonable facilities for checking weights; increasing the amount of compensation payable to injured workmen or their representatives.
- (6.) The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Amendment Act, 1910, giving power to unions to amend registered names without affecting their entity as industrial unions, and giving greater power to the Arbitration Court to waive technical irregularities.
- (7.) The Coal-mines Amendment Act, 1910, increasing compensation payable for death or injury of coal-miners, and providing for suitable sanitary arrangements, dressing and changing rooms, &c.
- (8.) The Industrial Conciliation and Amendment Act, 1911, providing that industrial agreements may be made, under certain circumstances, into awards; that awards may be made in the first instance to apply to more than one industrial district; that Dominion awards may be made in certain cases. It further provides for new procedure to be followed when no settlement is arrived at by Councils of Conciliation; new procedure for appeals from decision of Magistrate to Court of Arbitration when amount involved is over £5; and for three-monthly periodical sittings of the Court in the four chief centres.
- (9.) The Mining Amendment Act, 1911, amending provisions of existing Mining Acts, and making it lawful for the Public Trustee to apply any part of the Gold-miners' Relief Fund for the relief of miners who either before or after the commencement of the Act have been or are incapacitated for work owing to pneumoconiosis contracted