

showed a marked reluctance to ratify the draft conventions or adopt the recommendations; this led to a halt being called until the International Labour Office had an opportunity of endeavouring to arrange for the nations of chief industrial importance to consider the past proposals of the Conferences and to pass the legislation necessary to give the findings of the inaugurating body legal sanction. The main difficulty of the great industrial nations is said to have arisen from the fact that many causes operated to prevent the passing of Acts which would make the conventions and recommendations effective, particularly when the question of hours came to be considered; debtor nations maintained that they were entitled to work longer hours than those nations that were their creditors. The absence of uniformity regarding the hours to be observed in industrial undertakings has hindered the progress of the efforts the International Labour Conferences have made towards obtaining better conditions for workers in all countries, both inside and outside the League of Nations; during 1924 little was done in Europe despite the best efforts of the International Labour Office to promote a keener interest in the work of giving effect to the conventions and recommendations of the four Conferences.

The subsequent Conference (which sat in June and July of 1924) limited itself to the following matters:—

- (1.) Development of facilities for the utilization of workers' leisure;
- (2.) Equality of treatment for national and foreign workers as regards workmen's compensation for accidents;
- (3.) Weekly suspension of work for twenty-four hours in glass-manufacturing processes where tank furnaces are used;
- (4.) Night-work in bakeries.

The Conference was able to adopt conventions or recommendations concerning each of these subjects, although by a new method of procedure the final decision was in three cases reserved for a vote to be taken during the next (seventh) session of 1925.

The Conference also devoted some time to a discussion of the anthrax problem, which was not fully disposed of at the 1921 Conference. At the 1919 Conference a recommendation was adopted urging that arrangements should be made either in the exporting country or at the port of entry in the importing country for the disinfection of wool infected with anthrax-spores. The matter was again discussed at the 1921 meeting of the delegates, when it was resolved that further action was necessary; this led to the setting up of an Advisory Committee on Anthrax, and this body submitted its report with a draft convention to the 1924 Conference; this in turn led to a further committee drawn from the Conference itself being set up, as a result of which it was decided not to propose a convention on the matter to the nations. It is said that at a later Conference a draft convention may be introduced providing for the disinfection of hair used in brushmaking and upholstery, also of horns and hoofs, prior to all industrial manipulation.

ITEM NO. 1: WORKERS' LEISURE.

The Conference passed a long and suggestive recommendation dealing successively with the preservation of spare time (by the prohibition or discouragement of supplementary employment and the better organization of transport to avoid waste of time): the relation between spare time and social hygiene, including the problems of drink, tuberculosis, and venereal disease; housing policy; institutions for the utilization of spare time (*e.g.*, garden allotments, sports, education) which should be encouraged; and, finally, the free use of institutions and the co-ordination of local action in the matter. The committee further adopted a resolution asking the International Labour Office to keep in constant touch with the Governments on the questions discussed, and to publish regularly reports on the action taken and the results obtained.

ITEM NO. 2: EQUALITY OF TREATMENT FOR NATIONAL AND FOREIGN WORKERS IN WORKERS' COMPENSATION.

The general question of the protection of workers employed in foreign countries has occupied the attention of the organization throughout its career. The Washington Conference adopted two decisions bearing on the subject. The investigations carried out by the International Labour Office showed that practice varies greatly in this matter. In some countries, including New Zealand, a foreign worker to whom an accident may happen in the course of his employment has the same rights as regards compensation as a national worker; this is the ideal aimed at, but in many countries the International Labour Office found the foreign worker's position to be much less advantageous than that of the national, or it is dependent upon the existence of a reciprocity treaty between his own country and the one in which he is employed. A number of treaties along the above lines existed before the war, but some of them were abrogated by the outbreak of hostilities and have not been renewed; the creation of new States also increased the difficulties in bringing about this feature in labour legislation. The committee which was appointed to deal with this subject was unanimous in the opinion that there should be equality of treatment for foreign and national workers, but a cleavage revealed itself on the question whether States ratifying the proposed convention should be called upon to guarantee equality of treatment to all foreign workers or only to nationals of the other States that had ratified: the latter alternative was adopted. The result of the work of this committee was expressed in a provisional vote on two texts, a draft convention, and a recommendation, both of which were passed by the Conference; they were not, however, definitely adopted, but, as a result of a vote on the whole question, will come forward again for a final vote at the seventh session of the Conference (in 1925).