

# PERMANENT CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

## Ontario Unemployment Commission Will Get to Root of Trouble

### QUESTION OF IMMIGRATION

## Chairman Forecasts a System of Imperial and National Labor Exchanges

The Ontario Unemployment Commission held its first meeting yesterday afternoon when Mr. W. P. Gundy was elected treasurer, and Mr. G. E. Jackson, secretary. The following statement was later made by Sir John Willison, Chairman of the Commission:

"This Commission was appointed, not to consider conditions arising out of the war, or even out of the passing season of commercial depression, but to examine into the permanent causes of recurring unemployment in Ontario—and to recommend measures to mitigate or abolish the evil. I understand that the Commission is to devote itself wholly to the question of unemployment and not to questions of rates of wages. In any investigation that we may undertake we will not feel that we have any right to expose the business of private firms to the public.

#### New Sources of Work.

"The whole object will be to determine the volume of unemployment, to consider its causes, and if possible to suggest such measures as will ensure the certainty of a decent living for every man or woman who is willing to work. We will also, I have no doubt, try to agree upon proposals which will provide new work under new conditions for those who periodically are thrown upon charity in the industrial centres. If new sources of permanent employment can be discovered the pressures upon the labor market will be relieved and in proportion as the pressure is lessened wages will be steadied and the general position of labor improved.

#### Regulate Immigration.

"Probably the Commission will have to consider existing relief methods and the bearing of immigration upon the problem of the cities. Manifestly we should not seek to bring industrial workers from the Old Country, unless additional industrial labor is required. Just as clearly the volume of immigration should be adjusted to the ability of the country to absorb any influx of population. Ultimately it may be necessary to have a national, and even an Imperial, organization of immigration with a system of Imperial and national labor exchanges, co-operating to bring to the Dominion only such people as can improve their condition here and of such character as the country requires.

#### Import Useful Men.

"When we come to treat immigration as an Imperial problem we will bring to Canada only such people as are best fitted for the Dominion, and as will best strengthen the Empire by productive results of their labor in this country. The same considerations will govern in distributing immigrants throughout the other Dominions, and even in establishing more firmly in the old country all those who will best serve their personal interests and the interests of the Empire by remaining within the United Kingdom.

#### Commission Non-partisan.

"It would be impossible, however, to enumerate all the phases of the problem into which we are instructed to inquire. I trust that we will secure the hearty co-operation of social workers, municipal bodies, boards of trade and manufacturers' associations, and particularly the labor unions, without whose co-operation and sympathetic support the best results cannot be achieved. It is perhaps unnecessary to add, that this Commission is non-partisan in character. The sole and very earnest desire of the Government is that the Province may benefit from its investigations and deliberations, and that from its recommendations unemployment in Ontario may be reduced to a minimum, even if it should be impossible to ensure living and continuous wages for every worker."

Sub-committees were appointed to carry on investigations into the various phases of unemployment. Some time will be required by these committees to make full investigations and prepare their reports.