

is beginning to be studied seriously in several countries, and a vocational Rehabilitation Act was passed late in 1920 in the United States, providing money to be appropriated for the purpose of rendering pecuniary assistance to encourage any State to set up systems of vocational rehabilitation. California and New York have already set up Bureaux of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Arbitration and Conciliation.

The past year has not witnessed any radical changes in other countries in the methods employed in dealing with industrial disputes.

In Australia there has been a small amount of friction between the Commonwealth Court of Arbitration and the Courts or Wages Boards in each State, which appears to be due to the fact that claimants endeavour to have their claims taken by the Court which appears most likely from the general tenor of its awards to meet their demands.

In the United States attempts have been made, in Rhode Island and New York, to introduce private members' Bills designed to set up Courts similar to the Court of Industrial Relations in Kansas, which has wide powers to prevent strikes in essential industries, and in the event of a strike can take over and manage any industry for the benefit of the public.

In Germany it is proposed to introduce Labour Courts, which will be substituted for the special Courts (Industrial Courts, Commercial Courts, Mining Courts, &c.), which at present exist, in order to provide a quick method for the settlement of cases by experts on the particular questions involved. These Labour Courts will possess many of the features common to the Arbitration Courts of Australia and New Zealand, particularly in respect of the fact that they will be competent to deal with all phases of industry and all civil disputes arising out of the relations between workers and employers. The Court will have additional features in that it will be empowered to hear appeals of workers against dismissal, the calculation of pensions according to earnings, and the valuation of payments in kind in the case of agricultural workers.

In Great Britain the Trade Boards (which deal with all questions of wages and hours in certain unorganized low paid industries), the Industrial Court (which is a permanent Court of Arbitration to which parties to a dispute can have recourse if they consent), and the Whitley Councils (consisting of committees of representatives of employers and workers for the settlement of disputes in particular industries), have continued to operate without any change in their constitution or method throughout the year.

STAFF NOTES.

Consequent on the reduction of work in connection with housing and the urgent necessity for reducing expenditure generally, the staff of the Department was reduced during the year by forty-four—from 147 to 103. Four Inspectors of Weights and Measures were transferred to the Department from the Department of Internal Affairs, making the staff of the Department 107.

EXPENDITURE OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT DURING THE YEAR
(other than out of the Housing Account).

Salaries, cost-of-living bonus, temporary clerical assistance, allowance to officers performing higher duties, and allowance to police and other officers acting as departmental agents*	£	24,118
Advertising and publications		453
Fares, board and lodging, &c., advanced to persons proceeding to employment (see refunds below)		669
Fees paid to assessors of Industrials Councils		1,590
Legal and witnesses' expenses (see refunds below)		127
Postage, telegrams, telephones, and rent of letter-boxes		1,728
Printing and stationery		1,828
Office requisites, fuel and lighting		440
Travelling allowances and expenses of Inspectors, members of Court of Arbitration, Conciliation Councils, &c., bicycles and motor-cycles, and maintenance of same		5,302
Upkeep of departmental residence		18
Miscellaneous expenditure—	£	
Arbitration Court and Conciliation Councils		406
General		324
		730
		<u>37,003</u>
Less refunds--		
Fares		487
Legal and witnesses' expenses		84
From Housing Account		570
From Internal Affairs Department		100
		<u>1,241</u>
		<u>£35,762</u>

* Exclusive of the salaries of the Judge and members of the Court of Arbitration, £3,500, which are appropriated by special Act of Parliament.