CANADIAN LABOR LAWS AND THE TREATY

BY

BRYCE M. STEWART

No. 278 in the 'Studies in History, Economies and Public Law' of Columbia University.

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN THE

FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK 1926 COPYRIGHT, 1926

BY

THE FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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PREFACE

It may be said that when Canada became a member of the International Labor Organization, Canadian labor legislation entered upon a new phase. The promotion of laws for the protection of the workers against the evils of industrialism, which before had been mainly the concern of the trade unions, became a matter of international obligation. This function at once assumed new dignity and importance. Labor legislation is now receiving attention in Canada as never before, and fortunately so, for it rests with Canadians at large whether their country will rank among the nations as a leader or a laggard in this field. If this outline of the growth of a considerable body of the labor law of Canada affords some background for the prevailing discussion, its main purpose will have been achieved.

The study traces to the end of 1925 the development of the legislation of Canada, Dominion and provincial, within the scope of the nine methods and principles of the Labor Section of the Treaty of Versailles, and endeavors to show in what degree it conforms to this new industrial jus gentium. To some readers the chapters on the nine principles of the Labor Section will appear unduly meticulous in their narration of changes in the statutes, but in this they may serve to emphasize the slow process by which competent legislation is attained. They show abundantly that an effective statute is not to be had "all complete like Minerva springing fully armed from the brain of Jupiter." as the Canadian Manufacturer said when a Dominion factories act was being considered in 1882. It is hoped, too, that this detailed treatment will relieve students of the subject from the necessity of consulting some hundreds of volumes of statutes.

As to the method of these chapters, each begins with a statement of the principle of the Labor Section with which it deals. This is followed, in order to show what further interpretation has been given the principle, by a summary of the draft conventions and recommendations on the subject adopted by the International Labor Conferences. An outline of the legislation is given next, the legislation of the competent authorities, Dominion or provincial, being treated in the order in which they gave attention to the subject. Each of these chapters concludes with a summarized statement of the development of the legislation. Readers impatient of the detailed treatment are referred to the summaries. Those interested in the text of the labor laws should consult the annual and quinquennial volumes on labor legislation issued by the Department of Labor of Canada since 1915.

It is impossible to mention by name the many who have contributed to this study. Professors Samuel McCune Lindsay and Robert L. Schuyler of Columbia University read the manuscript and made helpful suggestions for its Mr. Tom Moore, president of the Trades improvement. and Labor Congress of Canada, was kind enough to read and criticize Chapter V, and Mr. J. G. O'Donoghue, K.C., solicitor of the Congress, offered criticisms on Chapters II and V. Mr. W. C. Clark, Economist of S. W. Straus & Co., formerly of Queen's University, has contributed a number of valuable suggestions. The author has had the advantage of reading an excellent manuscript on the Canadian labor movement by Dr. H. A. Logan of Randolph-Macon Woman's College and of the use of the valuable library of the Department of Labor at Ottawa. He wishes especially to acknowledge his indebtedness to Mrs. Stewart for countless hours of assistance. In so detailed a study errors are bound to occur. and for these the author alone is responsible.

B. M. S.

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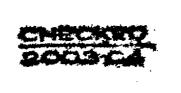
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VITA

Bryce Morrison Stewart, date of birth, November 24. 1883. Queen's University 1907-11, M. A. degree; Westminster Hall (Presbyterian Theological College), Vancouver, British Columbia, summer sessions of 1909-11; Columbia University 1911-12, 1913-14; Seminars with Professors J. T. Shotwell and J. Harvey Robinson. Articles in the Annual Economic Survey of the Toronto Globe, Social Welfare (Toronto), the Monetary Times (Toronto) Proceedings of the Canadian Political Science Association (1913), Queen's University Quarterly, the American Labor Monthly, Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science, the American Labor Legislation Review, the International Labour Review, Proceedings of the Society of Industrial Engineers (1925), and the Pollak Foundation volume on Population Problems in the United States and Canada.