

HOUSE No. 150

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

ANNUAL SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE BUREAU OF STATISTICS.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives.

The following summary of the work of the Bureau of Statistics, with certain recommendations for the consideration of the Legislature, is made in accordance with the provisions of section 3 of chapter 371 of the Acts of 1909.

Labor Statistics.—For the fiscal year 1916 six Labor Bulletins have been prepared by the Labor Division of the Bureau, a certain number of copies of which, in accordance with chapter 358, Acts of 1913, have been set aside for binding and publication under the title of the "Annual Report on the Statistics of Labor" (Public Document 15). These bulletins are as follows:—

No. 113. (Part I.) Fifteenth Annual Directory of Labor Organizations, 1916. (59 pages.)

No. 114. (Part II.) Sixth Annual Report on Union Scale of Wages and Hours of Labor in Massachusetts, 1915. (103 pages.)

No. 115. (Part III.) Rates of Wages and Hours of Labor in Steam and Electric Railway Service in Massachusetts. (60 pages.)

No. 116. (Part IV.) Labor Legislation in Massachusetts, 1916. (83 pages.)

No. 117. (Part V.) Labor Injunctions in Massachusetts. (260 pages.)

No. 118. (Part VI.) Labor Organizations in Massachusetts, 1915. (64 pages.)

Five quarterly reports (ranging in size from 12 to 18 pages) on the subject of "Employment in Massachusetts" have also been issued during the fiscal year, the first of these being for the quarter ending Sept. 30, 1915, and the last, for the quarter ending Sept. 30, 1916.

The Chief of the Labor Division has had general charge during the year of a special inquiry relative to aged and dependent persons in Massachusetts, called for by the provisions of chapter 120 of the Resolves of 1914, the report of which is being made to this Legislature; and the Bureau, through this division, has also co-operated with the committee on social insurance, furnishing it with a considerable amount of data in connection with its several inquiries. In addition to these activities, the Labor Division, which includes the library of the Bureau, has been called upon to furnish, in answer to inquiries by mail and person, much information which does not appear in its printed reports.

Manufactures Statistics. — During the year the "Annual Report on the Statistics of Manufactures" (Public Document 36), covering the business year 1914, has been published, and the report for 1915 has been practically completed. The work of this division varies very little in scope from year to year, though the effort is constantly made to increase the number of establishments included in the tabulations so as to make the data as completely reflective of Massachusetts conditions as possible. One important new item of information, however, has been called for, the results of which it is hoped may appear in the next report to be issued, namely, an inquiry as to the product value of goods manufactured in Massachusetts for export and the value of these exports, so far as feasible, by countries of destination.

Municipal Finances. — The "Ninth Annual Report on the Statistics of Municipal Finances" (Public Document 79) was issued in November, covering the municipal financial year 1914. In this connection I may repeat the statement made in this document a year ago: Appreciable progress has been made in bringing these annual presentations up to date, but the time which elapses between the close of the municipal financial years and the appearance of this report ought to be

still further reduced if our statistics are to possess their maximum value for administrative purposes. An increase in the resources of the Bureau would be of some assistance in this respect, but the department will always be to a certain extent handicapped by the delays in the issue of the financial reports of various communities upon which it is more or less dependent for information, but over the publication of which it obviously can have no control.

During the year two towns — Athol and Webster — have petitioned for the first time for an audit of their accounts, and this has been accompanied in these cases by the installation of an accounting system; and three towns — Belchertown, Clinton and West Stockbridge — have taken advantage of the amendment of chapter 598, Acts of 1910, passed by the last Legislature, which enables towns to petition for an audit without obligation being incurred for the installation of an accounting system by the Bureau; and the city of Waltham has petitioned for an audit of its accounts. In all, there are now 73 municipalities (17 cities and 56 towns) which have taken advantage of the law authorizing the Bureau of Statistics to perform this work. There are, however, numerous municipalities of whose financial condition and administrative methods there is upon the files of this department sufficient evidence to justify a careful audit being made of their accounts, which, if not made upon the initiative of these municipalities or by the Bureau of Statistics under some broader authority than now exists in the law, may lead to serious consequences. Notwithstanding, therefore, the fact that various suggestions made from time to time looking to the granting of such additional authority have not as yet borne fruit, I feel it my duty to again call the attention of the Legislature to this important subject.

It frequently occurs that, in a city or town in which the Bureau has installed an accounting system under the provisions of chapter 598, Acts of 1910, we are asked to furnish additional books, forms and other accounting supplies after the original equipment furnished at the time of installing the system has been exhausted, and it would seem proper that the department should have authority to thus accommodate

these municipalities. I, therefore, make recommendation to this effect, and respectfully request legislation substantially in accordance with the accompanying bill.

For the year ending Dec. 29, 1916, town and district notes have been certified in accordance with the statute to the number of 2,304, and in the aggregate amounting to \$15,270,541.62. The fee now charged for certifying each note is \$2, except that the charge for certifying serials is \$1 per note where the issue consists of 20 or more separate pieces. The revenue to the Commonwealth from this source during the year ending Nov. 30, 1916, was \$4,347, while for the calendar year it was \$4,889.

Free Employment Offices. — The tenth annual report on the State Free Employment Offices for the year ending Nov. 30, 1916, now in course of preparation, contains data reflecting the activities of the several offices located, respectively, at Boston, Fall River, Springfield and Worcester, and embodies certain important recommendations for the improvement of the efficiency of their service, if it should be the desire of the Legislature to continue them under the administration of the Bureau of Statistics.

The Decennial Census of 1915. — During the year the clerical work preliminary to tabulating and presenting the statistical data relative to the composition of the population, including classifications by native and foreign born, foreign born by country of birth, parent nativity, color and race, ages, conjugal condition, etc., has proceeded satisfactorily and as rapidly as circumstances would permit. The continuity of the work has been somewhat interrupted by the delays incident to preparing certain special tabulations to which preference had to be given under the statute or for the accommodation of departments and public officers requiring particular groups of data for their own administrative purposes in advance of general results being made available. Of the aggregate expenditure authorized for the purposes of the census, \$400,000, a total of \$335,000 has been appropriated, and the amount expended to Dec. 30, 1916, was \$319,083.05, and at least \$65,000 (the amount remaining unappropriated of the total authorized expenditure) will

be required to complete the work, and every effort will be made to do so within this amount. The original estimates did not, however, include certain expenditures made for work performed under two special acts which provided that the cost of the same should be paid for out of the census appropriations, namely, the special inquiry relative to aged and dependent persons, for use by the Legislature in considering the subject of old-age pensions and which entailed an expenditure of \$7,258.67, and the compilation and publication of a list of surviving veterans of the War of the Rebellion, which cost \$1,088.29.

Certain employees of the Bureau of Statistics, some of them holding positions involving a high degree of responsibility and technical training, are not, in my opinion, fairly and adequately compensated for the duties they are called upon to perform, whether the same be judged from the standpoint of actual service or by comparison with positions of similar grade in other departments. I, therefore, respectfully request that authority be granted the Director of the Bureau to classify and designate the salaries of these employees substantially in accordance with the provisions of the accompanying bill.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES F. GETTEMY,
Director, Bureau of Statistics.

