ed to unions providing unemployment benefits other than travelling pay.

It is proposed that the Bill be put into operation on July 15, 1912, but a subsequent date, not later than January 1, 1913, may be substituted for the coming into effect of the Health Insurance scheme, and not later than October 1, 1912 for the Unemployment Insurance scheme.

EFFECT OF ASBESTOS DUST ON WORKERS' HEALTH IN ASBESTOS MINES AND FACTORIES.

OCCASION having arisen for an enquiry into the dusty processes connected with the manufacture of asbestos, an investigation into the matter was made during the month of January by an officer of the Department, having reference particularly to the effect of the processes concerned on the health of those employed in the asbestos industry. The report on this subject is in the following terms:

"The only factory in Canada for the manufacture of asbestos goods is situated at Lachine, Que. The operations of this factory are confined to the making of asbestos card boards, paper, slate for roofing and corrugated sheeting. In this factory about 150 hands are employed (all males), and no complaints have ever been received of the existence of any dusty processes. The establishment is under the Inspection of Industrial Establishments Act of the Province of Quebec, a copy of which is forwarded herewith. There are no provisions in this Act or regulations specially applicable to asbestos factories as such.

"The Bell Asbestos Mines and Mills, situated at Thetford Mines in the Eastern Townships of Quebec and employing about 425 hands, are said to be among the largest asbestos properties in operation anywhere. The processes in the Bell Mines and Mills may be regarded as typical of all the others. This being the dull season, a much reduced staff of workers is employed at present in the different departments, and also owing to the cold weather the windows in the mills are closed and the conditions with respect to dust are consequently now at their worst. In the mills I found 16 women and girls and about 20 boys from 14 to 20 years of age employed in the hand picking of the asbestos. In this room the atmosphere is kept moist from the evaporation of the raw fibre placed on steam pipes laid on a portion of the floor for the drying of the fibre. All the women found here looked strong and healthy, and none of them had any serious objections due to the presence of dust, which is carried off by means of strong aspirators connected with large galvanized iron pipes into special sheds to be used in the preparation of coverings and for other purposes, a small proportion being ejected through the roof. On examining the surface of the new-fallen snow around the building I noticed that it was not discolored by any dust. Other processes are crushing, screening, and carrying the fibre in bags to be picked and separated into different grades according to the length of the fibre.

"In brief, I observed in the different departments of the mills less dust than is generally found in flour mills, cotton mills, junk shops, bakeries, and in a large number of other industrial establishments.

"Work is carried on in the mills day and night. The number of hours for each shift is 10 hours during the day and 13 hours during the night, while in quarries 10 hours per day is the rule. The shifts are changed every week from day into night work. I was informed that a few years ago

see over

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workpeople in the mills were supplied with respirators, but since the adoption and the installation of fans and dust conveyors the employees have objected to their usage.

"The owners of the mills are now studying a new method by which all the offensive dust will be collected by means of electric magnets, and if this is found satisfactory the system referred to will be introduced in the mills.

"The work of extracting the mineral is done in open quarries and in underground tunnels with an incline sufficient to draw out all offensive dust.

"One of the oldest medical practitioners in Thetford expressed the view that the asbestos dust floating in the atmosphere of the cobbing room had a weakening effect on the lungs of those employed. He had, he said, several cases of tuberculosis under treatment, but recognized that conditions in the mills had been declared greatly improved since the introduction of the new apparatus for allaying the dust. Another medical practitioner of long standing stated that the employees of the Asbestos Company affected with lung trouble had been so affected previous to their employment in the mills. It was stated generally that the record of deaths from lung diseases is not higher in the centres of the asbestos industry than elsewhere.

"The number of workpeople engaged in the asbestos industry in and around Thetford is between 3,000 and 4,000."

INTERVIEW OF TRADES AND LABOUR CONGRESS WITH DOMINION GOVERNMENT.

IT has been the practice for many years for a deputation from the executive committee of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada to wait annually on members of the Dominion Government to present resolutions adopted at the last preceding convention of the Congress. The convention of 1911 was held in Calgary in September last, the proceedings of the same being reported in the issue of the *Labour Gazette* for October.

A deputation which desired to place before the Government certain of the resolutions adopted at the congress waited on members of the Government on Monday, January 8th. The interview with the Government took place in the Prime Minister's office, there being present the Right Honourable R. L. Borden, Prime Minister, the Honourable T. W. Crothers, Minister of Labour, and the Honourable L. P. Pelletier, Postmaster General. The deputation comprised the majority of the members of the executive committee and Mr. J. G. O'Donoghue, the Parliamentary Solicitor of the Trades and Labour Congress. Various resolutions passed were placed before the Prime Minister and his colleagues, and explanatory statements having relation to the same were made by the various members of the deputation. The Prime Minister promised that all matters placed before him should receive careful consideration.

The deputation was introduced by Mr. P. M. Draper, the secretary of the Congress. The first topic discussed was the advisability of continuing public grants to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company in view of the dispute between that Company and certain of its employees in western Canada. Mr. Bancroft and Mr. Somerville presented the views of the Congress in this connection. The second resolution had reference to alleged misrepresentation of labour conditions in Canada in the advertisements of certain employers; the administration of the Immigration Act was also discussed in this connection. Mr. James Simpson then intro-

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duced resolutions with reference Lord's Day Act, the extension fair wage clause to apply in cas Government funds are grant of the construction of public and the amendment of the Alie the enactment of a new law t forced by the Immigration br the Interior Department. On b the letter carriers in the emplo Government Mr. McMordie a Guy presented petitions for sup ation, improvement in uniform crease in provincial allowances, proved classification. Mr. Lo sented a resolution requesting ly statement as to unemploy the *Labour Gazette*. The que Asiatic immigration was discu

ANNUAL MEETING OF

THAT the Commission of tion has just closed a year o usefulness, was evidenced by th presented by the officials of th committees at the Annual Me Ottawa on the 6th of January.

The Hon. Clifford Sifton, Cha the Commission, presided. H ductory address was brief, bu the course of the meeting he some length on the great promi peat industry in Canada. He too, to the work of the Comm connection with the establishm National Health Laboratory, a result of the Commission's car make railway companies respo forest fires started by their loc

Instead of himself outlining of the Commission in detail, t man called on the officials in the work to present reports. A. Hodgetts outlined the work taken by the Committee on Health during 1911. He det steps that had been taken to in Federal Government in tub sanatoria, and in the establish

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