

lishments employing less than five workers could be omitted because of their relative unimportance, but even with these various exclusions the Bureau of Statistics is now compiling the accident experience monthly for approximately 25,000 establishments, more than two-thirds of which are manufacturing plants. By providing the Bureau of Inspection with current information concerning the accident experience in these establishments, the work of the inspector is concentrated primarily on the individual establishments having bad accident records, instead of following the system of routine inspections by block areas previously in effect. The new system is working very satisfactorily and is producing good results in accident prevention work. The attention of the inspectors is now directed more immediately to places where the need for their services is greatest.

EMPLOYMENT

Two principal forms of employment statistics are compiled by the Department. First is the record of activities of the State Employment offices, and second is the reports on volume of employment and wage payments secured monthly from approximately 900 manufacturing establishments and construction firms in the State.

The reports of activities of State Employment offices measure employment in three ways. First, they record the number of applicants for employment. This registration of applications for employment gives a fairly accurate picture of the condition of the labor market at any given time or in any locality. The second measure of employment is the record of the number and class of employes needed by employers. This second record serves to confirm facts shown in the application record; for usually when work is plentiful, applicants for employment are few and demands from employers for help are high; and inversely when work is scarce, applicants for employment fairly besiege the employment offices, while demands from employers for help are few. The third part of the Employment Bureau records that give an insight into employment conditions is the report of placements made.

The second class of employment information is obtained directly from individual industrial concerns by means of questionnaires sent to them monthly, asking for a report of their employment and payroll figures for the current month. Through a cooperative agreement this work is performed jointly by the Third Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia and this Bureau. Collection of this class of employment data was begun in January, 1923, from about one-half of the 900 firms that are now reporting. These employment figures represent approximately 30 per cent of the total manufacturing and construction employment in the Commonwealth and serve as fairly sensitive indices of employment and earnings for those two industries.

UNION SCALE OF WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOR

The Bureau has been able to do little in the matter of wage studies. Unless wages and wage rates are fixed by definite agreement, it is always difficult to determine actual earnings in a given industry or occupation. Where wage rates are fixed by definite agreement, the assembling and compiling of wage rates is comparatively easy.

The most complete wage study made by the Bureau is the annual compilation of the rates of wages and hours of labor as shown by