

**FOURTEENTH BIENNIAL REPORT
OF THE BUREAU OF LABOR
AND INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS
OF NEBRASKA; 1913-1914**

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Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics of Nebraska; 1913-1914 by Various

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FOURTEENTH BIENNIAL REPORT
OF THE
BUREAU OF LABOR
AND
INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS
FOR THE
STATE OF NEBRASKA

1913-1914

GOVERNOR JOHN H. MOREHEAD, Commissioner
CHARLES W. POOL, Deputy Commissioner
SUSAN BARKER, Stenographer

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
1914

The Claffin Printing Co.,  University Place, Nebr.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To Honorable John H. Morehead,
Governor of Nebraska.

Dear Sir—Complying with the provisions of the statutes for the State of Nebraska, I herewith present for your consideration the Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics, covering the biennium in part, from February 1, 1913, to December 1, 1914.

Respectfully,

CHARLES W. POOL,
Deputy Commissioner of Labor.

Lincoln, Nebraska, December 1, 1914.

(RECAP)

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ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BUREAU OF LABOR AND THE DUTIES THEREOF

The Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics was inaugurated in the year 1887, and has been a source of great benefit to the State of Nebraska, even though the different sessions of the Legislature have made but slight provision in the way of appropriation for the carrying out of the many provisions of the Act creating the office.

The statutes prescribe a multiplicity of duties to be performed by the Deputy Commissioner of Labor, namely:

To collect, collate and publish annually one bulletin upon the manufacturing statistics of the state.

To gather and publish information upon industrial accidents and occupational diseases of the wage earners of the state.

To collect, collate and publish bulletins giving statistical information upon all surplus shipments and products raised or manufactured within the state.

To collect and publish information concerning the state's resources and opportunities.

To inspect all buildings within the state, over three stories in height, as the means of determining whether or not they are properly equipped with fire escapes.

To inspect all theaters and moving picture houses within the state to ascertain if each is properly provided with exits in case of fires, and that booths are constructed in accordance with law.

The inspection of all factories, mills, workshops, mercantile or mechanical establishments, or other concerns, where men and women are employed, for the purpose of improving the sanitary conditions of their surroundings and the hours which they are required to labor, and to see that proper safe-guards are placed around all machinery for the protection of the lives of those who are required to operate the machines.

To maintain a free employment bureau, and to render such assistance as is possible to those seeking employment, and those desiring the services of disengaged persons.

To investigate and inquire into the cause of strikes, lock-outs and all other matters pertaining to the welfare of the laborer.

To see that all persons, firms or corporations employing females keep posted in their places of business placards stating the exact facts as to the hours that their employees are required to work.

To co-operate with the truant officers of the different towns and cities to see that the child labor law is not violated.

The legislature appropriated for the last biennium \$6,000.00, exclusive of the salary for the Deputy Commissioner and one stenographer.

For Maintenance of Department

The appropriation of 1913 for the Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics, including salary of the Deputy Commissioner and stenographer, aggregated \$10,680.00, divided as follows:

Deputy Commissioner of Labor, per year \$1500; for biennium.....	\$3000
Stenographer and Librarian, per year \$840; for biennium.....	\$1680
Total salaries, per year \$2,340; for biennium.....	\$4680
For traveling expenses, printing, postage, office supplies, telephone, telegraph, rents, advertising, displays, factory inspectors and special deputy inspectors, and all incidental expenses, per year \$3000; for biennium	\$6000

This amount was appropriated by the Legislature in lieu of the recommendation of my predecessor in office who asked for a total appropriation of \$42,680.00.

The Department has accomplished a great deal during the past two years with the limited appropriation at its command, yet I do not feel that it would be the proper thing for me, at this time, to ask that more money be appropriated, but rather I would suggest that some of the duties devolving upon the Deputy Commissioner of Labor be handled through other channels or, as has been done in the past two years, by co-operation with some of the other departments.

I have received much assistance from personal friends who were pleased to render their services without compensation, and in this manner I have been enabled to greatly add to the usefulness of the Department without the expenditure of money.

Some criticism has been aimed at the Department from sources that should have been pleased to give assistance and advice. Each and every complaint filed with the Department has received careful attention whenever those filing the complaint signed their own names and furnished the name or names of those against whom the complaints were lodged.

In many instances I have found that complaints were made because of an ill-feeling on the part of the complainant toward the party against whom the infractions of the law were charged.

In not one instance has complaint been made about the Department by any persons who had taken the pains to advise themselves as to the different duties required of the Deputy Commissioner of Labor; nor had they called on the official in charge or offered a single suggestion as to any improvements that might be made with a view of bettering the condition of the laboring people.

It is a physical impossibility for the Department to perform all of the duties provided in the statutes, and it has been the custom in the past to look after that which appeared to be of the greater importance.

I would suggest that the Legislature amend the law and delegate authority to the Commissioner of Labor to collect fees under certain contingencies. The Department has spent many days in preparing information along special lines for which no charge could be made under the law as it now stands. These fees should be fixed by the statutes, and all fees should be turned into the State Treasury.

Fire Escapes

During my incumbency of the office of Deputy Commissioner of Labor I have had much to do with inspecting fire escapes and suggesting changes that might lessen the life hazard of those who were, by force of circumstances, required to occupy buildings more than two stories high. I have, in most instances, met with no resistance whatever in having the orders of the Department carried to a successful termination.

In this connection I feel that my duty to the boys and girls of Nebraska will not have been performed unless I earnestly urge the enactment of a law compelling the officers of school districts, wherein are located school buildings more than one story high, to provide adequate means of escape in case of fire for the little folks. In my judgment all buildings, two stories high, occupied as schools rooms, should be provided with some means of easy exit from the buildings in case of fire.

The Law Pertaining to Employment of Females.

The Legislature of 1913, very wisely, in my judgment, passed an Act naming nine hours instead of ten hours as the limit that a female might be required to labor in certain lines of industry, namely:

Manufacturing, mechanical or mercantile establishments, laundry, hotel, restaurant, office or by any public service corporation, the hours being so arranged that females should not begin work earlier than 6:00 o'clock a. m., or labor later than 10:00 o'clock p. m., except those who are employed by public service corporations, and they are permitted to work between the hours of 10:00 p. m. and 6:00 a. m., but in no event shall such employment be for more than eight consecutive hours.

The change in this law which became effective July 17, 1913, has been the cause of great annoyance to the Department, the public and those laboring under its restrictions. As a rule the Department has met little resistance in its endeavors to enforce the provisions of this Act, but in many instances it has proven a hardship to those whom it was passed to benefit.

Many females have been displaced by males because of the fact that

they were not permitted to work until 12:00 o'clock at night, notwithstanding the fact that they desired to do so. Many complained that the law granting special privileges to the public service corporations in their employment of females was unfair.

The Department was forced to prosecute two public service corporations in order to establish the authority given it by the law.

The first prosecution resulted in conviction and fine, and before the hour set for trial of the second case the corporation plead guilty and paid a fine, thereby admitting error on its part and acknowledging that the ruling of this department was sustained by the statutes of Nebraska.

In another instance the Department was forced to bring action against the manager of a cafe for requiring his female help to labor more than the number of hours provided by the statutes, and resulted in the payment of fine and costs by the defendant.

Child Labor Law

Nebraska has a child labor law which appears to meet with universal commendation from all sections of the country and in conjunction with the truant officers of the different sections of the state, the Department has contributed, in no small degree, to its enforcements and very few complaints have been registered that were founded on a substantial basis.

The percentage of children employed in the different industries in the state is very small and with proper supervision, the annoyance caused thereby, should be entirely eliminated in the near future.

Theaters and Moving Picture Shows

The law makes it the duty of the Deputy Commissioner of Labor to investigate all complaints arising through oversight or carelessness on the part of owners, managers or lessees of theaters and moving picture shows. The greater number of complaints filed with the Department were caused by a lack of exits properly placed and improper lining in the operating booths.

When these matters have been called to the attention of the person in charge, steps have been taken immediately to correct the error, and in no instance has the Department been forced to institute proceedings to force a compliance with its orders.

Inasmuch as quite heavy expense is frequently incurred in making inspections of buildings or rooms coming under this law, it appears to me that it would be the part of wisdom for the Legislature to amend the law requiring each and every play-house to pay a reasonable sum of money for a certificate from the Bureau of Labor showing that they had complied fully with the law and were permitted to cater to the wants of the public. This would be a source of revenue to the state, and at the

same time give reputable play-houses better standing in the community. This tax should be placed more heavily upon persons who travel through the country and exhibit at different towns. Not one dollar of revenue is received by the Department of Labor other than through the appropriations made by the Legislature for its maintenance, and I think it only good business judgment to require slight compensation for the necessary expenses incurred in inspecting the institutions which come under this law.

Manufacturing Industries of Nebraska

In our efforts to place before the public the fact that Nebraska is a manufacturing, as well as a leading agricultural state, the Department has made great effort to get a report from each concern engaged in that line of endeavor. We have received reports from one thousand seven hundred fifty-six (1756) institutions operating in the state during 1913. These concerns employed fifty thousand seven hundred eighty-four (50,784) laborers during the year, for which they paid in wages \$20,025,850.00. Capital invested aggregated \$75,065,848.00, while the cost of material amounted to \$147,363,757.00 and the manufactured product was valued at \$175,204,779.00. While this shows an increase of five hundred ninety-four manufacturing institutions over the preceding year, it is not claimed that these are new concerns, but shows a more ready compliance with the demands of the Department made upon those who were engaged in this business.

The Department is under obligation to the Secretary of the Manufacturer's Association of Nebraska for assistance in securing a part of this increase, and I believe the report for 1914 should add considerably to the number herein given.

In many instances it has required from three to four appeals before a report covering the questions asked would be properly answered by the manufacturer, notwithstanding the fact that the law places a severe penalty upon any who may decline to comply with the request for such information.

Factory Inspection

The inspection of factories or manufacturing plants during the past two years has received very careful consideration from the Department, and many changes have been made with a view to lessening the hazard of life to the employees.

The number of accidents reported to this Department as having occurred in factories and other institutions, (which are by law required to report to this Department) in the past twenty-five months, amount to a grand total of 501. Of those accidents reported, but seven proved fatal, and the number of days lost by those who were injured in accidents total up 5,146 days. The Department has had the hearty co-operation of man-