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by

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PREFACE.

The first Labour Report of the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics was published in 1912. The present is the fourteenth issue, and contains information in a summarized form regarding trade unionism, unemployment, prices, rents, wages, industrial disputes and similar matters.

The principal details are given on the lines that were adopted in previous issues, thus presenting a continuous review of such questions to the end of the year 1923. In addition, the present issue includes certain new features of which the following are the most important:—
 (i) The results of investigations concerning inter-state organization amongst employers, (ii) The present extent of the co-operative movement, (iii) Comparisons between rates of wages in 1914, 1921, 1922 and 1923 in Australia (Sydney) and England (London), (iv) Particulars concerning the organization and functions of the International Labour Office, and the International Labour Conference, both of which are part of the general organization of the League of Nations.

For the purpose of tabulating the results of the investigations which have been made in regard to labour organization, employers' associations, unemployment, rates of wage, industrial disputes, etc., the following classification of trades and occupations has been adopted:—

Classification of Industries and Occupations,

<p>I. Wood, Furniture, Sawmill, Timber-works, &c.</p> <p>II. Engineering, Metal Works, &c.</p> <p>III. Food, Drink, and Tobacco, Manufacture and Distribution.</p> <p>IV. Clothing, Hats, Boots, Textiles, &c.</p> <p>V. Books, Printing, Bookbinding, &c.</p> <p>VI. Other Manufacturing.</p> <p>VII. Building.</p>	<p>VIII. Mining, Quarries, &c.</p> <p>IX. Railway and Tramway Services.</p> <p>X. Other Land Transport.</p> <p>XI. Shipping, Wharf Labour, &c.</p> <p>XII. Pastoral, Agricultural, Rural Horticultural, &c.</p> <p>XIII. Domestic, Hotels, &c.</p> <p>XIV. Miscellaneous.</p>
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In previous issues attention has been drawn to the great variety of sources of the data upon which this Report is based.

It is gratifying to record that secretaries of trade unions and of employers' associations, officials of State and Commonwealth Departments, private employers, retail dealers, house agents and others have readily responded to the somewhat heavy demands made upon them.

Without the help so rendered, the investigations contained herein would have been impossible, and I take this opportunity of expressing my cordial thanks to all who have thus assisted.

My special thanks are due to Mr. J. T. Sutcliffe, the Supervisor of Labour Statistics in this Bureau, for the marked ability and zeal displayed by him in the performance of the complex duties attaching to his position, and to the staff under his control for the ready and capable assistance rendered by them at all times.

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Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics,

Melbourne, 14th August, 1924.

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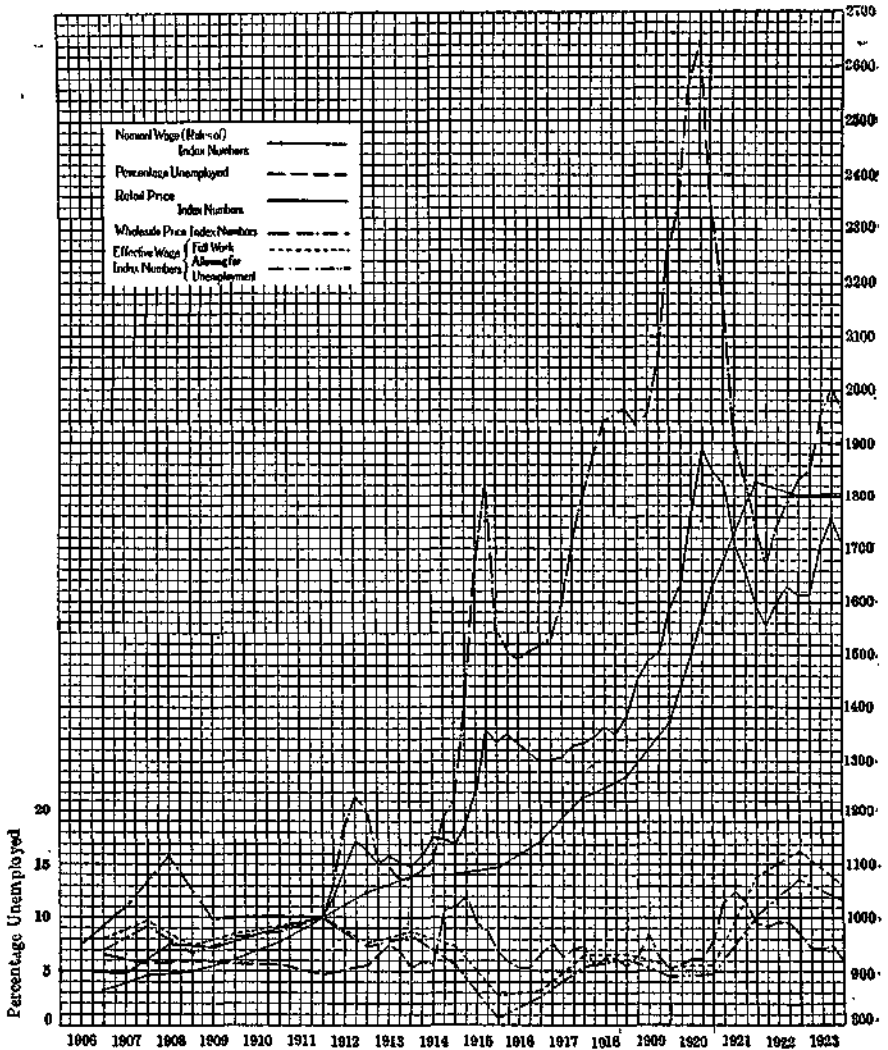
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Retail and Wholesale Prices and Nominal and Effective Wage Index-Numbers, and Percentage of Unemployed.



NOTE.—The figures on the left represent the scale for the percentage unemployed according to trade-union returns. The figures on the right represent the scale for the several index-numbers, the year 1911 being taken in each case as base (= 1000). Since the end of the year 1911, the Retail Price Index-numbers (weighted average cost of food, groceries, and house rent for the six capital cities), and the Wholesale Price Index-number (Melbourne) are shown each quarter, while unemployment percentages are shown quarterly since the end of the year 1912 only. The other index-numbers since 1913 refer to the average or the whole year, but for purposes of convenience are plotted on the graph as at the end, not the middle, of the year. Retail Price and Wholesale Price Index-numbers show the average level during the whole of each quarter, and they also for convenience are plotted at the end, and not the middle, of each quarter.