

(IV.)

Labour Exchanges.

MEMORANDUM BY BOARD OF TRADE.

Since the establishment of the national system of Labour Exchanges in February, 1910, vacancies for workpeople of various classes in the overseas Dominions have been notified to the Labour Exchanges, and the Board of Trade have had under consideration the question of the method of dealing with these applications. In the absence of formal arrangements with the Governments of the Dominions in question, these vacancies have been dealt with provisionally in consultation with the Dominion representatives in London. It is thought that definite and more systematic arrangements should now be made.

Further, the Board of Trade understand that the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia are proposing the reaffirmation of a resolution passed at the Colonial Conference of 1907, dealing with the question of the migration of suitable persons from the United Kingdom to the overseas Dominions. In view of this resolution, and of the views expressed at informal interviews between officers of the Labour Exchanges and representatives of the Dominions in London, the Board of Trade have prepared a draft scheme whereby, if desired, it would be possible to make the Labour Exchange organisation now established in the United Kingdom available for some of the purposes specified in the resolution of 1907.

In the arrangements suggested below, it is proposed that employers in the Dominions desirous of obtaining the services of workpeople from the United Kingdom should notify the vacancies to the Department of their Government concerned, which should, in its turn, through its representative in London, notify the vacancies to the Central Office of Labour Exchanges; and that the Labour Exchanges, in consultation with the representatives of the Dominion Government in London, should then take the necessary steps to fill these vacancies. It would also be possible, subject to the making of regulations to be approved by the Treasury, for the Labour Exchanges to advance fares to these men travelling to situations, provided that the Dominion Government through whom the vacancy was notified would undertake responsibility for the recovery of the loan from the employer or the workman.

It is not suggested that employers of labour in the Dominions should be absolutely restricted to this method of notifying vacancies. It would be possible for them to notify their vacancies direct to the Labour Exchanges; in such cases the Labour Exchanges would, in consultation with the representatives of the Dominions, take the necessary steps to fill approved vacancies, but, in view of the fact that in the event of the last named procedure being adopted the fare could not be advanced by the Labour Exchanges and of the delay which would necessarily occur in making the necessary enquiries as to the conditions attaching to the vacancy, it is probable that employers of labour would, as a general rule, adopt the official method of communication. Whichever of the two methods mentioned was adopted by the employer the Dominion Governments, while having at their disposal official machinery for assisting migration of suitable people as and when required for openings in the Dominions, would be in a position to ensure that any vacancies dealt with by the Exchanges were of a nature properly to be filled from the United Kingdom, and that adequate enquiries were made as to the suitability of the applicants.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE.

1. Demands by employers in the Dominions for workpeople from the United Kingdom made by Governments in the various overseas Dominions to be notified through representatives of the Dominion Government in London to the Central Office of the Board of Trade Labour Exchanges.
2. Suitable applicants for the vacancies thus notified to be selected and despatched by the Labour Exchanges in co-operation with the representatives of the overseas Governments in London.
3. Arrangements to be made whereby travelling expenses could be advanced as a loan to workpeople travelling to situations obtained for them through this means, the overseas Governments to be responsible for the recovery of the loans.
4. Vacancies in the overseas Dominions notified by employers direct to Labour Exchanges in the United Kingdom to be made by means of a special form, of which alternative* draft specimens are attached. In such cases the Representatives of

* Only one Form is printed here. The Forms were identical except that one of them did not contain the words in **C** or the Declaration.