

The Daily Mail

A Daily Paper For Every Home

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 17th, 1939.

ECONOMIC REVIEW

Economic conditions recorded improvement in the first week of the year. Five of the six factors used in this connection showed advances over the preceding week, the recession in wholesale prices being of a minor character. Four of the six factors recorded gains over the same week of 1938, declines having been shown in carloadings and wholesale prices.

Reflecting a somewhat lower position in industrial activity, carloadings in 1938 numbered 2,429,000 against 2,628,000 in the preceding year. Grain and ore showed gains of 76,000 cars and 17,000 cars, respectively, and a minor increase was registered in the movement of pulpwood. The eight other commodity groups showed decline from 1937. The index of carloadings in the 52nd week of 1938 moved up from 67.2 to 70.0, advances being recorded in both the Eastern and Western divisions.

While construction contracts awarded held up well during the closing months of 1938, a decline of 16.4 per cent was shown in the annual total from the preceding year. The aggregate was \$187.3 million against \$244.1 million in 1937. Business building increased 14 1/2 per cent, while residential declined slightly more than two per cent, a considerable deficit being shown in industrial and engineering construction. Marked gains were recorded in public buildings, schools and stores.

Fluctuations in whole prices were of a minor character, extending conditions of relative stability in evidence since the middle of September. The weekly index of prices has fluctuated within narrow limits at a level slightly more than ten per cent below the corresponding period of twelve months ago. Grain prices were uneven on the Winnipeg exchange in the first week of the year, recessions having been shown in wheat, barley and flax, while oats and rye were slightly higher. Metals recorded decline on the London exchange, electrolytic copper dropping from £50 to £48 10s. Export copper on the New York market dropped from 10.45 on January 3 to 10.32 1/2 on the 10th, while lead and zinc were fully maintained.

FOREST FIRE RESEARCH

While statistics for the past twenty years show there has been a general trend increase of ten per cent in the annual number of forest fires in Canada, they also show there has been a trend decrease of more than fifty per cent in the size of the average fire, according to the Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa. Carelessness and increased travel through the forested region in recent years have been largely responsible for the greater number of fires, while the reduction in the size of the fires has been brought about by the steadily increasing efficiency of the protective agencies. Modern methods of prevention and detection together with effective fire-fighting equipment now prevent many forest fires from reaching destructive proportions.

Progress in forest fire research is reported for 1938. Projects carried on at forest experiment stations in Canada during the year included the gathering of information for the compilation of fire-hazard tables, investigative work to develop improved methods of detecting and fighting forest fires and the testing of new kinds of fire-fighting equipment.

New fire-hazard tables for computing the daily hazard were published for the major forest types in Eastern Canada with the exception of spruce-balsam forests. Work on the spruce-balsam forests was carried

ried out at experiment stations in Quebec and New Brunswick, where numerous large-scale fires were set on specially prepared areas to study the behavior of fires under different weather conditions. From these tests and a study of past fire records much valuable information has been obtained, which will assist in the compilation of fire-hazard tables for cut-over spruce-balsam forests.

A study is being made also of the practical application of fire-hazard measurement and prediction to forest administration, and plans are being drawn up for one region which will indicate the administrative action required at each degree of hazard.

In co-operation with the National Research Council of Canada preliminary plans have been made for research projects on the penetration of smoke haze at lookout towers. Many bad fires which start during periods of low visibility are not detected by the lookout system until they have attained large size, and it is hoped that the projected studies will indicate means whereby the visibility at lookout towers may be improved during smoky periods.

Many other minor projects with a view to the general improvement of fire protection were carried out at the various forest experiment stations with gratifying results.

CANAL TRAFFIC

Traffic through the Welland Ship Canal established a new high record during the 1938 season of navigation when the movement of freight aggregated 12,633,093 tons compared with the previous high record of 11,747,950 created in 1937. Large shipments of barley, corn and wheat, which increased over 1937 by 293,899 tons, 1,344,769 tons and 781,029 tons, respectively, were the chief factors. Oats, other grains, flour, gasoline and sugar were also substantially higher. Soft coal, which since the canal was enlarged has become the commodity first in tonnage, amounted to 3,071,493 tons. Soft coal, iron ore, pulpwood, paper, automobiles, iron and steel, pig iron and flaxseed were amongst the heavier declines.

Freight traffic using the St. Lawrence canals also created a new high record with 9,236,318 tons in comparison with 9,195,439 in the 1937 season. Heavier shipments of grains were the chief factors in the increase. Barley increased over 1937 by 217,746 tons, corn meal 689,212, wheat 313,010, other grains 23,914, gasoline 29,889, sugar 23,032 and hard coal 82,404. Several commodities recorded substantial declines, the larger being in rye, flaxseed, pig iron, pulpwood, soft coal, coke, iron ore.

FACTS OF INTEREST

According to preliminary estimates the Porcupine and Kirkland Lake areas of Ontario produced gold to the value of \$80,074,714 in 1938.

Canada's mining industry attained a new high peak of production and employment in 1938, recording a growth of three per cent in physical volume of production and of two per cent in employment as compared with 1937.

Radio receiving licenses issued by the Government of Canada during the first eight months of the current fiscal year totalled 1,122,230.

Exports of paper and paper manufactures from Canada in November last had a value of \$11,591,726 compared with \$11,627,288 in October, and \$12,568,979 in November, 1937.

CO-OPERATIVES ENDORSED

FREDERICTON JUNCTION, Jan. 17.—In the "Good of the Order" hour in Sunbury L. O. L. No. 145, on the 14th inst., there was a round-table discussion on Current Topics.

The Worshipful Master, Clarence G. Smith, spoke on Credit Unions. Past County Master H. H. Stuart traced the history of the Rochdale, England, Co-operative Movement and the Co-operative and Public Ownership Systems of Sweden from A. D. 1600 to date and the beginnings of kindred movements in the U. S. A. and Canada, stressing the recent legislation in favour of Marketing Boards, Co-operative Insurance, Credit Unions, etc., in Canada and especially in the Maritime Provinces.

Past County Master D. A. Duplessis also endorsed the Co-operative Movement and urged study clubs everywhere to try to find an early remedy for the economic and social troubles of the day.

BATISTE AT THE BONSPIEL

De noder day a frien' of mine,
He say "Bateesse" to me,
"W'y don' you go upon the rink
For see bonspiel?" say he;
"Dere's plenty char for sit upon,
De place she's nice and warm",
And so at las' I t'ink I go,
She can't do me no harm.

Wall, dat is de mos' foolish game
I never yet did see,
For all de men was yell so loud
I t'ink dey go croose;
Dey have de stone like big spetoon
An' shove it wif' der han',
But w'y dey go so much excite
I can not understand.

De man down at de noder en'
Ees put hees broom down—so,
An' den he yell, "Now tak dat ice",
Dat's foolish t'ing you know;
He can not tak de ice away,
She's frozen down so hard
But still he yell, "Yes, tak her out,
I do not want de gard".

An' see dem feller sweep de broom
For w'y I can not tell,
Dere is no dirt upon de ice.
An' den some feller yell:
"Yes, hold her up"—say w'at he mean?
Madame's not here at all,
An' mam'selle in de gallerie,
I do not see her fall.

All sort of feller play dat game,
Dere's some dat's t'in and long
An' some dat's maybe short an'
strong
But when dey yell de stout man's
"wide"
An' man dats long an' tall,
"He narro sure", I do not t'ink
I stan' for dat at all.

I wonder w'at dat name she mean;
Well "bon" in French she's "good",
An' "Spiel" is Scotch for mak beeg
talk,
Dat's w'at I understood.
I s'pose she's sort of half-breed
name,
I spik de way feet—
I watch dat game for two-tree
night—
I t'ink she's mostly "spiel".
—MONCTON TIMES.

Just in Jest

OUR KIND

A trainer claims to have taught one of his horses to run backwards. Someone is sure to induce us to back it before long.

BLAMING POLLY

Jones: "Brown's wife thinks the world of her husband".
Smith: "Does she?"
Jones: "Yes. She even believes the parrot taught him to swear".

GIRL BOSSESS

"Some babies seem to be born to rule", muses a child psychologist. And the rest are boys.

HIS ADVICE

"Laura went to an astrologer to find out when was the best time to get married".
"What did he tell her?"
"He took one look at her and told her to grab the first chance".

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD

"That soda jerker mixes a nice soda. I wonder how he learned?"
"Oh, maybe he went to Sundaes school".

FINALLY

"Didn't Fishers", the famous boxer, start out as a trainer?"
"Yes; it's only in the last few years that he struck out for himself".

THE BRIGHT BOY

"There were only three in school today who could answer a question that the teacher asked us", said a lad to his mother.

"And I hope my boy was one of the three?" said the fond parent.
"Well, I was," answered the lad.
"I am very glad; it makes your mother proud of you. What question did the teacher ask, Joannie?"
"Who broke the window?"

IN REVENGE

The occupant of a ground-floor flat said to the postman: "You always seem to have something for the man in the top flat".

"Yes" replied the postman: "I once had a row with him, and ever since he has sent himself a postcard every day, just because he knows I have to climb five flights of stairs to deliver it".

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As I See It

Daily Foreign News

Comment
By H. M. Paint.

THE DRIVE ON BARCELONA

It is unquestionable that the success attained by General Franco's forces in their drive across the Ebro and Segre rivers, culminating in the capture of Tarragona, has displayed a high quality of tactical skill, expert staff co-ordination, and offensive power, in General Franco's army.

The Rebel advance was made over difficult terrain, without the element of surprise, against carefully prepared positions, and in the face of dogged resistance by Catalonian troops. That it was made possible by superior artillery, supremacy in the air, and better mechanical transport does not detract from the military merit of the achievement.

Whether Barcelona itself can be captured does not seem at all certain.

General Franco is reputed to have been able to dispose of 300,000 men for the Catalonian campaign. Considering the nature of the positions taken, and the obstinate nature of the defence during the present drive it would seem a conservative estimate to place the Rebel casualties at at least 50,000.

The offensives being carried on by the Madrid Government would seem to definitely preclude the possibility of large scale reinforcements from other parts of the rebel territory. Necessity for garrisoning and mopping up the recently occupied territory will eat up many additional thousands of men in view of the hostile nature of the conquered territory.

It seems safe to assume that Franco cannot dispose of more than 150,000 men for his final drive on Barcelona. If this is so, he will be outnumbered two to one. His mechanical superiority will grow less advantageous as his own supply lines lengthen and those of the Catalonians contract. The insurgent air control will grow less striking as the planes retained for the protection of Barcelona are enabled to participate in the aerial warfare at the city's gates.

Under these circumstances it would be difficult to assume certain victory for the insurgents. Indeed if the city is defended with the same bitter resolution as Madrid would be one might assume definitely that its capture by Franco was impossible.

The uncertain factor here is the Catalonians themselves. Are they as yet sufficiently seasoned in war to oppose the last ditch defense necessary for victory? Their record since last summer has been one of almost continuous reverses.

Have they the recuperative power to rally and wrest victory from disaster? We will know the answer in the next two weeks.

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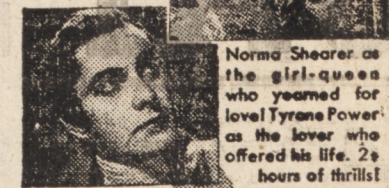
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