

Canadian Trade Continues To Show Steady Activity

Marked Improvement Reported in Business in Three Months.

As assurance has been provided by an abundance of statistical reports that a marked improvement took place in business during the first quarter, despite the recession in some distributive branches during March, plans for expansion during the current quarter are being pursued with more vigor, as the political situation clears and the possibility of complications abroad ceases to becloud the international outlook. The rise of output in some industrial divisions thus far this year has been little short of phenomenal, and the upward trend gradually is extending to include lines long inactive, giving unmistakable evidence of the secure foundation on which progress now rests. Further improvement is being recorded for the lumber industry, the expansion of mining activity continues unchecked, and the foreign trade balance becomes more favorable with each succeeding month. The total of unemployed still is large, but is being reduced steadily, as more industrial workers are recalled and the demands of mining and farm work grow more numerous. The gain in employment in March was above the average, and was higher than that recorded for any March since 1922. Farmers have been held back in their spring work by the lateness of the season, and present indications are that much of the work will need to be rushed. Crop prospects, however, are considered encouraging, and soil conditions are favorable for a better yield than a year ago in most sections, according to despatches to Dun and Bradstreet, Inc., from branch offices located in the chief commercial and industrial centres of the Dominion.

Stimulated by the most favorable weather which has prevailed thus far this spring, distribution of merchandise at retail in a number of districts was broadened to the largest total since mid-December. Consumer buying power appears to have expanded at a more rapid rate than was estimated a month ago, as buying interest is not confined to regular Easter merchandise, such as women's and men's clothing, shoes, millinery, notions, and dress accessories, but has extended to such luxury items as jewellery, automobiles, radios, and the better grades of china, rugs, furniture, and musical instruments. Sales of electric refrigerators are exceeding last year's high total by more than 50 per cent., with a new all-time peak in prospect by early summer. The increases of the past month in the sales of seasonal hardware, farm implements, and garden tools has been widened, while shipments of mining equipment and supplies have reached the largest total in several years. Some of the seed supply stores are being rushed to handle current business, as farmers' purchases are heavy.

Wholesale buying expanded at a good rate during the week, as delayed orders for Easter requirements were released. Reorders for spring merchandise already are being received for sizable

FINANCIAL FACTS

THESE NOTES ARE SUPPLIED BY THE SAINT JOHN OFFICE OF JOHNSTON AND WARD, STOCK BROKERS

It would be impossible to foresee which of last week's developments—outward expressions of underlying forces bearing on the conduct of business—will prove ultimately to have been the most important. Probably, however, the greatest significance will arise out of conditions related to (1) the report of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads and Mass Buying, tabled in the House of Commons; (2) action of the United States' treasury in raising its price for newly mined domestic silver from 64.64¢ to 71.11¢ an ounce, and (3) passage by the Ontario Legislature of the Hepburn Bill invalidating contracts between the Ontario Hydro and Quebec power companies.

The outstanding recommendation of the Royal Commission provides for strict regulation and control of private business under a federal super-board of five members operating directly under the Prime Minister. To what extent the commission's recommendations will finally become effective law it is not yet clear, principally because the legal basis for federal control of business has still to be established definitely. The additional rigidities to be injected into the Canadian economy by regulative measures are, of course, unpredictable. Adjustment to them, no matter how unavoidable they may be, is bound to entail some time and difficulty.

Action of the United States in boosting its price for newly mined silver was accepted as evidence that the Administration intends to pursue the acquisition of silver for inclusion in its already enormous metallic money base. The result is a further beclouding of the already highly complicated currency situation—and one more inflationary step. There is, however, some encouragement in the greater disposition shown by Congress recently to question drastic experimental legislation.

The change made by Premier Hepburn in his power bill, providing for it to become law upon proclamation by order-in-council instead of the mere formality of royal assent, together with the intimation that the Government was prepared to negotiate with the companies, threw out some hope that the action may not be so drastic as the word of the bill. Nevertheless, a serious blow has already been dealt at the sanctity of contract, the basis of the credit system.

amounts from districts where weather conditions have favored shoppers in their desire to cover their requirements early. General wholesale volume now is averaging 10 to 12 per cent. above that of a year ago, although for dry goods the increase runs as high as 20 to 25 per cent.; for hardware, 10 to 15 per cent.; and for drugs and toiletries, 15 to 20 per cent. Some of the large wholesalers of groceries find current volume ahead of the comparative 1934 figures by 12 to 18 per cent., with the movement particularly large to mining centres and agricultural areas.

Reorders received during the week to fill out incomplete stocks held largely to women's fur-trimmed coats, dresses, handbags, shoes, dress accessories, curtains, and house-furnishings. Mail orders picked up sharply, with immediate shipments specified in the majority of cases. A steady turnover continue to be reported by wholesalers of groceries, plumbers' supplies, and hardware. In farm equipment and agricultural implements, some of the jobbers have booked the largest volume for this period in five years.

Wholesalers of builders' materials and equipment have received more orders lately, reflecting the steady gain in building activity, as for the first three months of 1935 building contracts awarded totalled \$29,391,300, compared with \$19,855,500 in the same period of 1934. This represented a rise of 48 per cent. Although repairs on residences and commercial structures form the bulk of the current activity in the building trade, new projects are becoming more numerous from week to week.

year's deficit after dividends was \$61,269 vs. \$610,037 in 1933.

DOMINION ENGINEERING

Net profit in 1934 was \$46,954 vs. \$104,121 in 1933.

DOMINION RUBBER

Earned \$10.09 per share on \$7 preferred stock in 1934.

DOMINION STORES

In four weeks ended March 21, sales were \$1,417,909 off \$110,364, or 7.0 per cent., bringing aggregate decline in first 12 weeks to \$385,349 or 8.8 per cent.

HAYES WHEELS, FORGINGS

Operating profits of \$48,494 reported for 1934 vs. deficit of \$67,005 in preceding year.

NATIONAL BREWERIES

Earned \$1.95 per share common in 1934 vs. \$1.63 in 1933 and \$1.60 annual dividend.

WINNIPEG ELECTRIC

Gross income in 1934 was \$2,016,204 vs. \$1,908,935 in 1933; balance after fixed charges and depreciation was \$149,257 vs. \$27,331.

Marketing Board Seen As Aid To All Primary Industries

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might take four or five years before actual results were achieved, but he was glad that a start had been made.

So far as marketing was concerned, he said it was necessary for shippers of various products to be organized under the Federal Marketing Board. Already the potato industry had been organized as the Eastern Canada Marketing Board, and while it had been criticized, it would not of course create an extra consumption of potatoes, and no doubt a portion of the crop would have to be dumped this season.

The proper grading and classification of the potatoes would be of considerable benefit and would enable the culls to be fed to the farm stock or turned into starch factories. If that were done, it would create a better potato for the market, as well as increase the price.

He was sure that the smoked herring industry of Grand Manan would be helped by the Federal Marketing Board, and already an application had been made to have the industry come under the scheme. The packers of smoked herring would benefit by the legislation, improve their products, stabilize grading and the flow to market would be increased. With 300,000 cases as a basis, there might come a time when the market would not absorb that quantity, and the result would be a drop in price. It would easily be seen that a drop in the price of 20 cents on a ten-pound box meant a heavy loss to a small industry. The Federal Marketing Board was now working out a plan for the benefit of the smoked herring industry and he believed the result would be satisfactory. He considered that Mr. King had been very efficient as chairman of the Provincial Marketing Board, and the fishermen of Grand Manan appreciated the excellent service that had been given to them.

Tariff changes were affecting the fishing industry and Mr. Gup-till called attention to some facts in this connection. Recently the Republic of Dominica had increased its tariff on imported fish 18 cents per ten-pound box to \$1.40, which meant that it was practically prohibitive. The same republic had dealt a blow at the hake industry of New Brunswick by increasing its tariff from \$1.30 a drum to \$10.15. The increased tariff had not been put on for purposes of revenue but to force the people of that country to consume their own products. As that republic had been importing \$250,000 worth of fish per year, its increased tariffs had been a severe blow. The matter had been taken up with the Department of Trade and Commerce at Ottawa, with the hope that the influence of England might be brought to bear, as the republic exported annually to that country \$6,000,000 worth of raw sugar.

While tariffs are necessary for the protection of certain industries the action of the Republic of Dominica had upset the fishing industry with very little warning. He was satisfied that the work of the Marketing Board would prove of great benefit to the Natural products of the province.

Three Problems Now Facing The Dominion Must Be Solved

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unemployment relief prevailed to "take a carefully prepared census, or inventory of the unemployed" and apportion work on a percentage basis to laborer and artisan.

In reference to capital and labor Premier Tilley said he was in favor of capitalism, but he thought capital could not exist without efficient labor and labor cannot exist without capital properly controlled and expended. He added that employees should have some share with bondholders and shareholders in profit bonuses.

He also said Canadians must place the nation's welfare above "narrow political partisanship" in solving the difficulties. The world's troubles he blamed on the manner in which one nation was treating another.

FANNING FOR THE FANS

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of 4-2. With the bases loaded for three runs Ruth stepped up to the plate, and with Carl Hubbell against him, knocked the horsehide over the fence and set 25,000 fans cheering and sewed up the game for the Braves. Ruth is now 40 years old and is starting out fine for this season.

DATES FOR THE CANADIAN Amateur Swimming championships to be held in Winnipeg have been altered from May 15, 16 and 17 to May 21, 22 and 23. It was announced by Harold Plant, secretary of the Manitoba section of the Canadian Amateur Swimming Association. Alteration of the dates was made to accommodate many contenders from Eastern Canada who would be unable to make the trip if the earlier dates were retained.

GOOD SECURITIES

John M. Robinson & Co., Limited

SAINT JOHN, N. B.

C. N. R.

Gross earnings in 10 days ended March 31, 1935, reported at \$4,452,342 vs. \$4,878,096 in same period last year, down \$425,754.

C. P. R.

Traffic receipts in final 10 days of March down \$334,000 or 10.2 per cent. to \$2,935,000.

CANADIAN WESTINGHOUSE

Net earnings in 1934 was \$977,731 vs. \$744,963 in 1933;

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HALIFAX

SAINT JOHN

FREDERICTON