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THE JANUARY EMPLOYMENT SITUATION.

Jan 23

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DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS - EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS.
Dominion Statistician, R.H. Coats, B.A., F.S.S.

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C.L.

The volume of employment as reported by employers to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics at the beginning of January showed considerable contraction, largely on account of the temporary cessation of work in many establishments during the holiday season. Reductions in staff for inventories and other purposes also contributed to the losses. The percentage decline was slightly smaller than that recorded during the same period of last year, but since payrolls generally have recently been higher, the shrinkage involved the actual release of a somewhat larger number of workers. Both the number laid off and the percentage decrease were smaller than at the beginning of January, 1921. An aggregate payroll of 707,703 workers was indicated by the 6,221 concerns making returns for the period under review, who had employed 779,758 persons on December 1. The index number therefore declined from 95.1 on the latter date to 86.3 at the beginning of this month, while at the commencement of January, 1922, it had stood at 77.9. Contractions were general in all industries except logging and retail trade, both of which indicated rather greater activity. The reductions in the manufacturing division were especially heavy, but noteworthy recessions also occurred in transportation and construction. That conditions generally were better than during the corresponding period of last year, in spite of the pronounced losses recently recorded, may be seen from the tables on page 2, which give the index numbers of employment in Canada by months during the last two years and by districts, cities and industries as at the beginning of 1923, and December and January 1922.

The trend in all provinces was decidedly downward. Approximately 54,000 workers were released in the Quebec-Ontario district, a reduction of 9.9 per cent, the greater part of which was recorded in manufacturing. The smallest losses occurred in the Maritime Provinces; activity attendant upon the reopening of the winter ports partly offset the decreases in other divisions and caused the net contraction to be only 1.5 per cent. Employment in every section of the country was on a higher level than during the same period of 1922;

Firms in all cities registered general curtailment of operations. The losses in Montreal were particularly severe, over 17,000 persons having been let out by the firms reporting. Temporary shut-downs in the locomotive shops accounted for a large part of the decrease. Textile, tin can, sugar and tobacco factories, shipping and stevedoring, construction and local transportation also reported considerably reduced activity. In Toronto the most pronounced contractions were recorded in garment, biscuit, chocolate, confectionery, lead, tin and box factories, in construction and on the street railways. Employment in Ottawa sawmills continued to decline; construction and telephones in the same city afforded less employment. In Hamilton knitting, iron, steel and tobacco concerns reported a large share of the shrinkage. The reductions in employment in biscuit, confectionery, brick and textile plants and in construction were the most decided in Winnipeg. The declines in Vancouver were fairly general; canneries, sawmills and shipyards were not so busy, nor were the street railways and building contractors as fully engaged.

Employment in manufacturing displayed a distinctly downward tendency, every division within the group reporting losses. The partial closing of some of the larger railway car shops over Christmas and the New Year, supplementing contractions in automobile, heating appliance and general plant machine shops, caused especially large declines to be recorded in iron and steel, from which over 20,000 persons were released. Sawmills, container, furniture, fruit and vegetable canning, biscuit, confectionery, garment, knitting, thread, yarn and cloth factories registered considerable curtailment of operations. Moderate reductions were indicated in the mining of coal, metallic ores and asbestos and in also quarrying. The construction and transportation industries were decidedly slacker, indicating partly seasonal dullness.

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Note: Base period, January 17, 1920 equals 100.

The relative weight represents the proportion of employees in the indicated district or industry to the total number of employees reported in all districts and industries for the period under review.

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TABLE I.

Index Numbers of employment in Canada by months,

	1923	1922	1921
January 1.....	86.3	77.9	87.7
February 1.....		78.9	90.1
March 1.....		81.9	88.0
April 1.....		80.6	84.1
May 1.....		83.3	84.1
June 1.....		89.2	86.6
July 1.....		91.1	87.5
August 1.....		93.1	88.9
September 1.....		93.7	88.7
October 1.....		94.6	90.2
November 1.....		95.8	90.2
December 1.....		95.1	87.2

TABLE II.

Index Numbers of employment by Provinces.

District	Relative Weight	Jan. 1, 1923.	Dec. 1, 1922	Jan. 1, 1922.
Maritime Provinces.....	9.4	90.8	92.1	78.1
Quebec and Ontario.....	68.3	84.8	94.2	76.8
Prairie Provinces	13.6	90.0	101.5	82.3
British Columbia.....	8.2	88.3	95.6	79.9
CANADA.....	100	86.3	95.1	77.9

TABLE III.

Index numbers of employment by Cities.

City	Relative Weight	Jan. 1, 1923.	Dec. 1, 1922.	Jan. 1, 1922.
Montreal.....	12.9	79.8	94.7	73.2
Toronto.....	13.3	84.7	92.9	85.1
Ottawa.....	1.3	94.4	98.6	
Hamilton.....	3.5	81.5	88.2	
Winnipeg.....	3.8	92.6	97.3	85.2
Vancouver.....	2.8	87.7	90.7	79.9

TABLE IV.

Index numbers of employment by industries

Industry	Relative Weight	Jan. 1, 1923	Dec. 1, 1922	Jan. 1, 1922.
Manufacturing.....	54.4	73.1	87.7	68.7
Logging.....	4.5	87.0	84.7	59.5
Mining.....	6.5	100.8	102.8	93.0
Communication.....	2.9	97.4	101.5	101.1
Transportation.....	14.9	104.8	115.3	99.2
Construction & Maintenance.	6.0	95.0	122.6	92.4
Services	1.6	92.3	95.8	92.9
Trade.....	8.3	98.2	97.0	96.9
ALL INDUSTRIES.....	100	86.3	95.1	77.9

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