

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Dominion Bureau of Statistics

Department of Trade and Commerce

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Weekly Review of Economic Statistics--Economic Index 31 Per Cent Higher Than in March of last year--Revenues of Railways Show Excellent Gain in First Quarter--Construction Up in March--Mineral Production Had Greater Value in 1933

Reflecting the substantial betterment in economic conditions in Canada during the last twelve months, the weekly index maintained by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, was thirty-one per cent higher in the week ended March 31, than in the same week of last year. Each of the six factors used in the computation of the index participated in the advance.

Movement of railway freight in the first twelve weeks of the present year at 491,000 cars compared with 396,000 in the same period of 1933, recorded a gain of 24 p.c. The gross earnings of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the first quarter were \$27,487,000 compared with \$23,573,000, a gain of 16.6 per cent. The gain in the gross revenues of the Canadian National Railways on all lines was from \$30,578,000 to \$37,366,000 or 22.2 p.c. The new business obtained by the construction industry in the first quarter of 1934 was \$19,856,000 compared with \$9,703,000.

The average prices of speculative commodities showed moderate gain in the week ended March 31, over the preceding week. The marked advance over the corresponding week of 1933 was a strong incentive for the resumption of business operations. During the first two months of the year, the official index of wholesale prices averaged about 12 p.c. higher than in the same months of 1933.

After moving up sharply for six weeks, high-grade bond prices softened slightly in the week ended March 31. The marked advance over the corresponding week of last year, amounting to 14.2 p.c. in the index, reflects the improved credit situation characteristic of the reviving phase in economic conditions. The index of bond prices was 117.7 in the week ended March 31, compared with 103.1 in the same week of last year.

Bank clearings regarded as a measure of business and speculative activity recorded a gain of 38.6 p.c. over the same week of 1933. The index of common stock prices at 94.9, compared with 51.3, showed an increase of 85 p.c. in the same comparison.

The economic index was 89.2 in the week ended March 31, compared with 92.1 in the preceding. The gain over the same week of 1933 was 31 p.c., the standing at that time being 68.1.

New business obtained by the construction industry recorded improvement in March, the seasonally adjusted index moving up from 42.0 to 46.3. The total was \$7,517,000 compared with \$5,635,000 in February. A sharp gain was also recorded over the same month of last year. The largest contract was placed by the International Nickel Company for the construction of converters at Copper Cliff, the value being \$1,000,000. Other large contracts included the rebuilding of a cathedral in Valleyfield at \$300,000; apartments in Ottawa at \$130,000, and the Bridge River power plant at \$100,000.

Reflecting the betterment in economic conditions during the latter part of the year, the value of mineral production was greater in 1933 than in the preceding year. A report recently released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics gives the production in Canadian funds at \$220,500,000 compared with \$191,200,000 in the preceding year, a gain of 15.3 p.c. Canada's mining industry from about midsummer began to show a distinct improvement over the corresponding period of the preceding year. The output of nickel recorded a sharp gain, base metal prices advanced, and the rapid increase in the price of gold served to stimulate the industry.

The total value of gold production in Canadian funds was \$84,300,000 as against \$71,500,000 in the preceding year. The increased price in Canadian funds permitted the mining of low-grade ores and consequently less gold was produced than in 1932. The enhanced price resulted in the most intensive search for gold properties ever experienced in Canada. The managements of the older operating companies increased their plant capacity, mines which had experienced difficulty in maintaining economic operations were brought into profitable production and abandoned mines which could not be operated at the former price of gold, were reopened.

Lake Shore was the largest Canadian producer, the Hellinger mine rated second and Noranda though primarily a copper mine was third, McIntyre, Tock-Hughes, Dome and Wright-Hargreaves followed in the order named. In October the new 200-ton mill at the Macassa mine came into production at Kirkland Lake.

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Lead and zinc production showed considerable improvement during the latter months of the year, an advance being shown in zinc prices on the London market. In the early fall, the Base Metal Mining Corporation, Ltd. resumed the export of lead and zinc concentrates from the Monarch Mine. The principal source of Canada's lead production was the Sullivan mine in the East Kootenay district of British Columbia. Zinc production consisted of refined zinc produced at Trail, principally from the ores of the Sullivan mine; refined zinc made by the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Co. Ltd. at Flin Flon, Manitoba; zinc in concentrates by the Monarch Mine at Field, B. C.; and zinc in concentrates exported by the Britannia Copper Mine on Howe Sound, B.C. The value of lead and zinc production showed gains over 1932 of 16.9 p.c. and 53.1 p.c., respectively.

The value of copper production at \$21,600,000 showed a gain of 41.4 p.c. over the preceding year, the increase in the quantity being 21.1 p.c. The two refineries, one at Copper Cliff and the other at Montreal East, acquired a widespread reputation for their product, retaining a solid footing in many copper-consuming countries. The Horne Mine operated by Noranda Mines, Ltd. was one of the important copper producers, the copper-nickel ores of the Sudbury district being the source of the Ontario copper output.

Nickel production was 83,300,000 pounds compared with 30,300,000 in the preceding year, a gain of 174.5 p.c. The International Nickel Co. separates a large part of the nickel from the copper at Copper Cliff, sending the crude metal to Port Colborne for refining. The nickel-copper matte exported by the Company is treated in British and foreign plants. The Falconbridge Nickel mines exported nickel-copper matte to Norway for treatment.

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#### More Wheat Ground than a Year Ago

Wheat ground in Canadian mills in February amounted to 4,887,102 bushels compared with 3,744,957 for the corresponding month of 1933. Grindings of oats, corn, barley and mixed grain were higher, while buckwheat showed a decrease.

Grains ground during the month are shown in bushels with comparative figures of the previous year in brackets: Wheat 4,887,102 (3,744,957); Oats, 786,180 (698,881); Corn 157,303 (125,805); Barley 99,837 (55,880); Buckwheat 7,169 (11,529); and Mixed Grain 1,379,894 (1,275,855). Mill stocks of wheat on February 28, 1934 amounted to 8,722,856 bushels while for the same month in 1933 the amount was 8,811,463 bushels.

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#### Production of Automobile Parts and Accessories

Production from the Automobile Parts and Accessories Industry in Canada during 1932 was valued at \$12,161,456 compared with \$12,600,256 in 1931 and \$18,401,587 in 1930. This industry includes only the factories which reported auto parts or accessories as their principal products. Seventy-six plants were in this class in 1932 distributed by provinces as follows: Ontario 57; Quebec 6; British Columbia 7; Manitoba 3; Alberta 2, and Saskatchewan 1. Employees numbered 3,832 and salaries and wages totalled \$3,874,618. Materials purchased for manufacturing cost \$5,970,954.

Among the products made by the concerns were auto and truck bodies, radiators, axles, wheels, bumpers, chassis springs, lamps, piston rings, engines, generators, starters, transmissions, shock absorbers, motors, ignition coils, differentials, spark plugs, tire valves, brakes, clutches, lubricating systems, steering gears, etc.

Auto parts and accessories were also manufactured by concerns in other industrial groups. For example, tires were made in the rubber industry, brake linings in the asbestos products group, batteries in the electrical apparatus industry, auto service parts in the automobile manufacturing industry etc. The total production of parts and accessories including tires, batteries etc. amounted to \$34,831,386 in 1932 against \$49,295,504 in 1931.

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#### Car Loadings on Canadian Railways

Car loadings for the week ended March 31 amounted to 38,512 cars. The holiday on Good Friday, March 30, was the chief factor in causing the reduction from the previous week of 3,801 cars, but after adjustment for this the index number rose from 70.59 to 71.67. Compared with last year's loadings the total was up by 3,928 cars despite the holiday being three weeks later in 1933.

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### Coal Oil to Bermuda

The export of coal oil and kerosene in February was 7,841 gallons at \$519, all of it going to Bermuda. There was none a year ago.

### Asbestos Export Increases

The export of asbestos in February was 4,955 tons valued at \$228,336, more than double the quantity of a year ago.

### Export of Paints

Export of paints in February was of the value of \$27,639 compared with \$15,511 in February 1933; most of it went to Great Britain. The export of varnish, 537 gallons at \$828, was less than normal.

### Cost of Education

The expenditure for all Canadian schools and institutions of higher learning, public and private, is shown in the Annual Surveys of Education for 1930 and 1932 to have been about \$165,000,000. The intervening year is the only one in which it was ever higher. About \$20,000,000 of this is the share of the universities and colleges, something like \$35,000,000 on the high school students and \$110,000,000 on the elementary. It is indicated that out of a total expenditure by Canadian consumers that was probably in the neighborhood of \$4,750,000,000, about 3½ per cent went to schools and universities. About 55 per cent went for the purchase of food, clothing and shelter, including taxes.

### Index Numbers of Security Prices

The investors' index of industrial common stocks was 130.2 for the week ending March 29, compared with 130.1 for the previous week, domestic utility common 58.8 unchanged, common of companies located abroad 90.4 compared with 91.6, and for all three groups combined 94.9 compared with 95.1.

### Export of Eggs Coming Back to Proportions of Decade Ago

During the past year Canada's export of eggs has been climbing up towards the aggregate of a decade ago when it reached the total of about two and three-quarter million dozen. The export during the last twelve months was 2,131,000 dozen compared with 272,000 in the previous twelve months. The value was almost half a million dollars as against about \$67,500.

### Imports of Crude Petroleum

Crude petroleum imported in February amounted to 44,369,000 gallons, of which 36,255,000 came from the United States, 4,038,000 from Colombia and 4,076,000 from Peru. The imports of crude petroleum have been running higher of late than a year ago, indicating an expansion of the use of the product.

### Large Export of Farm Implements to South Africa

The exports of farm implements and machinery in February amounted in value to \$160,543 compared with \$69,308 a year ago. The largest purchaser was British South Africa with \$61,361. The United States followed with \$29,905 and the United Kingdom with \$26,959. The articles sent to South Africa were of a wide variety, including mowing machines, cultivators, harrows and ploughs.

### Increased Imports of Farm Implements and Machinery

There was a large increase in the imports of farm implements and machinery in February. The value was \$199,412 compared with \$144,067. These imports have been increasing during the past year. Some of the larger items were: Cream separators from the United States, 290 at \$19,920; pronged forks from the United Kingdom, 155 dozen at \$1,025, and from Czechoslovakia 400 dozen at \$951; traction engine parts from the United States \$80,930 and from the United Kingdom \$526; parts for repairs from the United States \$49,614; pruning hooks and shears from the United States \$1,200, from the United Kingdom \$1,163 and from Germany \$917; grain crushers from the U.S. 113 at \$9,238.



### About Canadian Trade with the Irish Free State

Canada is one of the few countries that increased their share of the Irish Free State import trade in 1933. Imports from Canada rose from £801,900 to £1,061,753. These figures represent the direct trade only. Irish Free State imports in 1933 declined in value by nearly £7,000,000. Practically all of this decline is represented by the decrease in imports from Great Britain, but declines are also shown in the case of the United States, Argentina, Germany and India.

### Index Number of Twenty-Three Mining Stocks

The weighted index number of twenty-three mining stocks computed by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics on the base 1926=100, was 131.3 for the week ending March 29, as compared with 128.1 for the previous week. Nineteen gold stocks rose from 124.8 to 128.3, and four base metals stocks from 145.4 to 147.4.

### Wheat Stocks and Movement

Canadian wheat in store on March 30 amounted to 223,982,594 bushels compared with 224,781,418 the week before and 225,529,220 on the corresponding date last year. Canadian wheat in the United States amounted to 5,655,616 bushels, of which 1,526,513 were at Buffalo, 1,013,917 at New York and 2,778,000 at Albany. This compares with 5,992,493 in store on the same date last year, of which 4,733,820 were at Buffalo, 151,412 at New York and 370,317 at Boston. United States wheat in Canada was shown as 2,228,643 bushels compared with 6,402,564 last year. For the first time in this crop year the visible wheat stocks have fallen below those of the same date of the previous year.

Wheat marketings in the Prairie Provinces for the week ending March 23 amounted to 1,981,647 bushels compared with 2,052,549 in the previous week and 5,159,028 in the same week last year. By provinces the receipts were as follows, the figures within brackets being those for the same week last year: Manitoba 271,638 (521,606), Saskatchewan 960,686 (2,457,531), Alberta 749,323 (2,179,891). Marketings for the thirty-four weeks of the crop year were: Manitoba 24,517,314 (32,334,324), Saskatchewan 91,898,287 (160,961,652), Alberta 70,068,433 (122,191,797), Total 186,484,034 (315,487,773).

Export clearances of wheat during the week ending March 30 amounted to 1,414,596 bushels compared with 1,837,619 in the previous week and 2,668,855 in the same week last year. Clearances by ports were as follows, the figures in brackets being those of the corresponding week last year: Vancouver-New Westminster 559,797 (1,766,976), United States ports 451,000 (673,000), Saint John 323,605 (228,719), Halifax 79,994 (nil), Montreal 200 (160), Total 1,414,596 (2,668,855). The wheat from Montreal was sent to Maritime ports for export. Clearances during the thirty-five weeks of the crop year were: Vancouver-New Westminster 34,925,852 (74,589,411), Montreal 31,928,354 (45,167,926), United States ports 18,924,000 (19,875,000), Quebec 8,491,665 (1,217,904), Sorel 5,287,684 (11,073,265), Saint John 4,801,603 (6,564,090), Churchill 2,707,891 (2,736,030), Halifax 1,502,419 (1,080,552), Victoria nil (1,166,721), Prince Rupert nil (677,813), Total 108,569,468 (164,148,712).

### Tourist Trade of 1933

Canada's tourist trade, in common with that of most countries, showed a marked contraction in 1933 reflecting the low level of economic activity, the general lowering of incomes and the "depression" psychology which probably reached its height during last year's tourist season. Not only did the volume of travel show a considerable decline but there was an unusually sharp drop in tourist expenditures in Canada the estimated value of which receded to less than the 1923 level. It is reasonable to believe that a great increase in tourist travel will accompany the next cycle of prosperity.

The total expenditure in Canada of tourists from other countries in 1933 is estimated at \$117,124,000 compared with \$212,448,000 in 1932, \$250,776,000 in 1931, \$279,238,000 in 1930 and \$309,379,000 in 1929, which was the peak year. In 1920 it was \$83,734,000 and in 1923 it had grown to \$130,977,000.

### Volume of Leather Footwear Production Continues Increase

The number of pairs of leather footwear made during February was 1,324,048, an increase over the preceding month of 293,381 pairs, or 28 per cent, and an increase over February 1933 of 123,772 pairs, or 10 per cent. All of the different classifications, excepting that of slippers, show increased production.



Total production for the first two months of 1934 was 2,354,715 pairs, compared with 2,122,174 in the corresponding period of 1933, an increase of 232,541 pairs or over 10 per cent.

### The Fur Farming Industry in Canada

In the early days of the fur trade it was the practice in Canada for trappers to keep foxes caught in warm weather alive until the fur was prime, and from this custom has arisen the modern industry of fur farming. The earliest authentic record of the successful breeding of the fox in captivity is that of a litter of foxes which was raised on a farm near Tignish, Prince Edward Island, about the year 1878. The beauty of the fur of the silver fox and the consequent high prices realized from the sale of the pelts caused attention to be directed chiefly to this kind, a colour phase of the common red fox, and the colour was finally fixed through the experiments carried on by the pioneer fox farmers.

After 1890 there came a period of rising prices for furs and the fur farming industry grew rapidly in Prince Edward Island. In 1913 an enumeration by the Provincial Commissioner of Agriculture showed 277 fox farms in that province, with a total of 3,130 foxes. Meanwhile attempts at rearing foxes in captivity were also being made in other provinces, the records showing that foxes were successfully bred in Quebec in 1898, in Ontario in 1905, and in Nova Scotia in 1906. In 1912 and 1913 the Commission of Conservation conducted an exhaustive inquiry into the history and possibilities of fur farming in Canada, and the resulting data, published in 1913, gave an impetus to the industry. The Prince Edward Island Silver Fox Breeders' Association was formed in 1915, and the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association in 1920. Branch Associations of the Canadian Association have also been formed in several of the provinces.

Fox farming is now carried on in all provinces of the Dominion and the number of farms has steadily increased. The latest statistics available, viz. those for the year 1932, 5,221 fox farms in Canada with a total of 99,109 foxes, of which 92,703 are silver foxes. In addition to the silver fox, the patch or cross fox, the red fox and the blue fox are also raised on Canadian fox farms. Attempts to raise the blue fox in captivity were made in the maritime provinces in 1912, a number of the foxes having been imported from Alaska, where blue fox farming had been carried on for some years. These early attempts were unsuccessful, but about the year 1921 fox farmers in British Columbia found that the blue fox could be raised in that province, climatic conditions proving more suitable. There are now in Canadian fox farms 858 blue foxes, 293 of these being recorded by British Columbia and the remaining 565 distributed through Quebec, Ontario and the Prairie Provinces.

Although the fox is of chief importance, other kinds of wild fur-bearing animals are being raised successfully--mink, raccoon, skunk, marten, fisher, and coyote. The mink, in particular, is easily domesticated, and thrives in captivity if care is exercised in the selection of environment and proper attention given to its requirements in the matter of diet. There are now 645 mink farms distributed among the various provinces, and mink farming in Canada may well be regarded as permanently established. Muskrat farming also is a branch of the industry to which attention is being directed, and numerous areas of marsh land are being utilized for raising this fur-bearer. The farming of muskrat consists chiefly of making provision for an adequate food supply for the animals and in giving protection from their natural enemies, i.e. hawks, owls, etc. On many of the muskrat farms the areas have been enclosed with strong wire fencing.

In 1932 the total number of fur farms of the miscellaneous class, i.e., farms on which various kinds of fur-bearing animals, exclusive of foxes, are raised, was 1,078 compared with a total of 1,340 in 1931. A few of the fox farms also, engage in mixed farming, raising miscellaneous kinds of fur-bearing animals in addition to the foxes.

The reports on the fur farms of Canada in 1931 and 1932 may be had by applying to the Dominion Statistician, Ottawa. The charge is 35 cents.

### Volume and Value of Retail Sales in February Higher than Year Ago

The value of retail sales in February, as measured by the index numbers of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics (January, 1929=100), showed an increase in the general index over the corresponding month of last year of over 7%. In February 1933 the index stood at 54.3, and in February 1934 it was 58.2. Since the Bureau's index number of retail prices of the commodities covered by this index has risen approximately 4% over February of last year, an increase of about 3% in volume is evident.

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Compared with February 1933 index numbers were higher for eight groups and lower for three. General and departmental sales rose from 49.8 to 54.2; groceries and meats from 67.0 to 71.1; hardware from 44.7 to 50.6, and candy from 58.9 to 59.6. Clothing sales increased from 42.7 to 50.7; dyers and cleaners from 62.0 to 66.1; furniture from 32.7 to 40.1, and music and radio from 17.9 to 21.4. Boots and shoes decreased from 43.7 to 40.2; drugs from 70.2 to 88.2, and restaurants from 51.2 to 49.4.

Compared with January 1934 index numbers show a small decline due to seasonal influences. The general index fell from 60.4 to 58.2 as compared with a fall from 57.4 to 54.3 for the corresponding months of last year. Of indexes for eleven sub-groups, seven declined. These included such staples as groceries, clothing and general and departmental merchandise. No adjustments have been made for seasonal variations or price changes.

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#### Wholesale Prices in March

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics index number of wholesale prices on the base 1926=100, changed fractionally from 72.1 in February to 72.0 in March. 94 quotations were higher, 99 were lower, while 374 remained unchanged.

Vegetable Products rose from 65.6 to 65.7, gains for wheat, bran, shorts, and tea more than counterbalancing losses for oats, rye, barley, and flour. Animals and Their Products fell from 70.7 to 69.9 declines for calves, hogs, eggs, hides and leather outweighing advances for steers, lambs, butter and fresh and cured meats. Fibres, Textiles and Textile Products moved up from 73.8 to 74.3, higher prices for cotton fabrics, cotton yarn and thread influencing the index more than lower quotations for raw cotton, silk and worsted cloth yarns. Wood, Wood Products and Paper advanced from 65.6 to 65.7 owing chiefly to higher prices for fir timber and unbleached wood pulp.

Iron and Its Products changed from 87.0 in February to 87.2 in March, gains for scrap iron and steel and foundry pig iron outweighing losses for steel rails. Non-Ferrous Metals and Their Products dropped from 66.8 to 66.1 largely because of lower prices for copper, lead and zinc. Non-Metallic Minerals and Their Products changed fractionally from 86.0 to 86.1, owing principally to higher quotations for glass tumblers. Chemicals and Allied Products moved up from 80.6 to 80.8 as a result of advances in the prices of fertilizers.

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#### World Shipments of Wheat and Wheat Flour

World shipments of wheat and wheat flour for the week ending April 2, amounted to 9,152,000 bushels as compared with shipments of 9,568,000 for the previous week and 11,552,000 for the corresponding week in 1932-33. Shipments from North America and the Argentine increased slightly. Clearances from Australia showed a decrease of 724,000 bushels.

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#### Reports Issued During the Week

1. Canadian Milling Statistics in February.
2. Automobile Parts and Accessories Industry in 1932.
3. Index Numbers of Wholesale Prices, March 1934 (Preliminary).
4. Weekly Car Loadings.
5. Weekly Grain Statistics.
6. Index Numbers of Security Prices.
7. Exports of Canadian Paints and Varnishes in February.
8. Exports of Canadian Petroleum and Its Products in February.
9. Asbestos Trade in February.
10. Summary of Retail Facts, Credit and Commodity Sales, Size of Business and Operating Expenses in Saskatchewan in 1931.
11. Cost of Education--Bulletin No. 2.
12. Imports of Petroleum and Its Products in February.
13. Imports of Farm Implements and Machinery in February.
14. Index Numbers of Mining Stock Prices.
15. Exports of Farm Implements and Machinery in February.
16. Tourist Trade of Canada in 1933.
17. Fur Farms of Canada in 1931 and 1932.
18. Summary of Retail Facts, Credit and Commodity Sales, Size of Business, Operating Expenses in Alberta in 1931.
19. Changes in the Value of Retail Sales in February.
20. Monthly Review of Business Statistics.
21. Production of Leather Footwear in February.
22. Butter, Cheese and Eggs in Cold Storage on April 1.

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