

977,594 UNION MEMBERS: The number of trade union members in Canada has reached an all-time high according to a statement issued Aug. 15 by the Minister of Labour, Mr. Mitchell. He stated that the membership of labour unions has increased by more than two and a half times during the past ten years and is now approaching one million.

Since 1911 the Department of Labour has conducted an annual survey of the membership of unions active in Canada. The results of the latest survey, conducted by the Economics and Research Branch of the Department, are contained in the publication, The Thirty-Eighth Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, which is to be issued shortly. The report shows that there were 977,594 trade union members in Canada at the end of 1948.

The surveys have indicated an almost continuous increase in union membership since 1939. Membership figures to the nearest thousand for the years 1939 to 1948 have been as follows:

1939.....	359,000	1944.....	724,000
1940.....	362,000	1945.....	711,000
1941.....	462,000	1946.....	832,000
1942.....	578,000	1947.....	912,000
1943.....	665,000	1948.....	978,000

An estimate of the industrial distribution of the members shows that almost one-fifth is concentrated in the "Metals Industry". The next largest groups are "Steam Railway Transportation" and "Services" which take in approximately 15 and 12 per cent of the union membership respectively. The largest numerical gain over the year 1948 was in the "Construction" industry where almost 20,000 new members were added. The membership in the "Wood and Wood Products" group increased by slightly more than 17,500. On the other hand, slight decreases were recorded in the "Mining and Quarrying" and in the "Clothing and Footwear" industries.

NATIONAL PARKS ATTRACT: Visitors are flocking to Canada's National Parks in greater numbers than ever before, according to attendance figures just released by the Minister of Mines and Resources, Mr. Gibson. An increase of 46.5% has been registered during the first four months of this fiscal year over the comparable period of 1948.

With attendance already over the one-million mark this season last year's all-time record will likely be greatly exceeded.

EMPLOYMENT HIGHER: Important expansion in industrial activity as compared with May 1 was reported by 20,306 of the larger firms in the eight major industrial groups at the beginning of June, when their personnel showed an increase of 2.8 per cent, according to the Bureau of Statistics. This advance was similar in size to that indicated at the same date last summer, but on a rather larger scale than at June 1 in earlier years since 1941.

Based on the 1936 average as 100, the index of employment rose from 189.1 at the first of May to 194.4 at June 1, to reach the highest point in the record for the time of year, slightly exceeding the previous maximum of 192.3 at June 1, 1948. During the war years, the peak index for the beginning of June was 181.2 in 1943.

Accompanying the general rise in employment at June 1 over a month earlier was a gain of 0.8 per cent in the weekly salaries and wages disbursed by the reporting establishments. The increase was limited to the non-manufacturing industries. Lowered payrolls were reported, on the whole, in the factory group, largely as a result of the observance of the Victoria and the Ascension Day holidays in the week under review. As compared with the same week in 1948, the general index number of payrolls showed an increase of seven per cent at June 1 this year.

The trend of employment was favourable in all provinces and in each of the main industrial divisions.

Weekly earnings in the eight major industries--as revised since issue of an advance statement earlier this month--averaged \$42.34 at June 1 as compared with \$43.19 at May 1. The decline from the beginning of May was due partly to observance of public holidays and partly to variation in the industrial distribution of employment and a reduction in working hours in certain establishments. The average at June 1 last year was \$40.02.

WHEAT, FLOUR EXPORTS UP: Total exports of wheat and wheat flour during the first eleven months of the current crop year amounted to 207.2 million bushels, an increase of 28.4 million bushels over the comparable period of 1947-48, the Bureau of Statistics reports in its latest monthly review of the wheat situation.

Exports of wheat as grain on June 30 amounted to 161.9 million bushels as against 120.4 million in the same period of the previous crop year, a rise of more than 34 per cent. On the other hand, exports of flour in terms of wheat were down from 58.3 million bushels in 1947-48 to 45.3 million bushels.

The balance remaining on July 1 for export or carry-over was estimated at 114.1 million bushels compared with 93.7 million bushels on the same date in 1948. At July 31 last year the carry-over amounted to 77.7 million bushels.

ROYAL ROADS COMMANDANT: The Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton on August 8, announced a change of command at the Canadian Services College, Royal Roads. Succeeding Captain H.S. Rayner, DSC and bar, R.C.N., of St. Catharines, Ont., as Commandant of the college is Group Captain J.B. Millward, DFC, RCAF, (718 Parkdale Ave.) Ottawa and Montreal.