

There is one feature to which I should like to draw attention, with respect to the several factors mentioned, one and all, with the exception of the last mentioned circumstance of the world's markets being increasingly one, have this in common that they operate as restrictions upon production, and reduction in the total volume of trade.

Conditions in Canada

Such is the view as one gets it at wide range of world conditions, which help to account for the prevailing high level of prices and consequent high cost of living. There is little in the conditions described that we can change. As respects these conditions, for the most part we can only wait for the improvement which comes with time. This makes it the more imperative that we should look more closely at conditions as they are within the borders of our own country, and see if they are such as tend to lend emphasis to the high cost of living, or will admit of change to the benefit of all concerned.

Supply of food all important to all classes

This causes me for the moment to direct attention again to the significance of the class of commodities with which the retail grocery trade is concerned. They are, as already pointed out, in the nature of food, and, as such, the most necessary of the so-called necessities of life. Two consequences of great importance flow from this. The first is, that if retail groceries are to be made available to consumers at prices which will serve to reduce the high cost of living, they must be available to retail dealers in plenty. The quantity of available supplies, more than anything else, will affect the barometer of the high cost of living. The food price lists will go up as the quantity of available food production lessens. They will come down as the quantity of available food increases. The other consequence is that only as the prices of foodstuffs come down from the present high level can we hope for an appreciable reduction in the cost of living as respects other commodities and services. The artisan cannot work for less than is