

EMPLOYMENT: Industrial employment at the beginning of March declined 0.5% from a month earlier and was 3.2% lower than at the same time last year, according to the Bureau's monthly advance index. The decline in the February-March comparison conformed to the movement indicated at the beginning of March in 12 of the last 15 years.

Accompanying the slackening in industrial employment at the beginning of March was an advance of 0.9% in weekly payrolls as compared with February and a small rise over a year earlier. At the same time per capita weekly wages and salaries advanced to \$59.28 from \$58.47 at the beginning of February and \$57.40 a year ago.

The advance index number of industrial employment on the 1949 base, stood at 106.5 on March 1 compared with 107.0 a month earlier and 110.0 a year ago, and the payrolls index was 147.5 compared with 146.2 at the beginning of February and 147.0 at March 1 last year.

RAILWAY OUTLOOK: Canadian railways, beset by rising costs and competition, can maintain their present scale of operations only by constantly introducing improvements and economies, Mr. Donald Gordon, Chairman and President, Canadian National Railways, on May 6 told the 28th annual system meeting of the railway's union-management co-operative movement in Montreal.

Mr. Gordon said that while Canada seemed to be experiencing a "slight downturn" in the volume of rail traffic, he was optimistic about long term prospects. The Canadian economy and population will grow, bringing with it an increasing demand for transportation and communication facilities.

R.C.A. IN KOREA: The Royal Canadian Artillery has completed a full circle. The arrival at a Korean port of the 3rd Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery means that each regiment of Active Force Canadian field artillery has served in the Far East theatre.

Since the commencement of Canadian participation in the Korean action, each of the remaining three regiments of Royal Canadian Horse Artillery has completed a tour of duty in the Far East. The 3rd Regiment R.C.H.A. will be the fourth Canadian unit to display the sign of the winged white horse in Korea.

RISE IN CHEQUES TOTAL: Value of cheques cashed in clearing centres in March climbed 6% to \$13,107,000,000 from last year's corresponding total of \$12,331,000,000, and cumulative debits for the first three months of the year rose 4% to \$35,707,345,000 from \$34,342,218,000. Debits were higher than a year earlier in all economic areas except the Prairie Provinces.

PIPED OIL RISE: Net deliveries of oil through Canadian pipelines in February rose to 18,725,000 barrels, some 3,550,000 more than in the corresponding month last year. This boosted the cumulative total for the January-February period 39% to 29,091,000 barrels from last year's 20,897,000 barrels.

Increased deliveries were recorded in all provinces except Alberta in February, totals being as follows: British Columbia, 1,067,000 barrels (nil in 1953); Alberta, 1,267,000 (1,329,000); Saskatchewan, 1,134,000 (1,072,000); Manitoba, 3,142,000 (1,733,000); Ontario, 2,595,000 (1,701,000); and Quebec, 4,519,000 (4,337,000).

RAIL COSTS RISE: Both revenues and expenses of Canada's major railways increased in 1953 over 1952, but expenses rose more than revenues and net operating revenue and operating income were both lower, according to the Bureau's summary for the twelve months.

Revenues of the sixteen railways (with annual operating revenues of \$500,000 and over) included in the Bureau's monthly reports increased 2.8% last year to \$1,194,711,156 from \$1,161,662,978 in 1952. However, expenses rose 4.1% to \$1,091,798,976 from \$1,049,183,622, bringing a reduction of \$9,567,136 to \$102,919,180 from \$112,479,625 in net operating revenue.

HOME BUILDING: Total number of new dwelling units completed in Canada during the first quarter this year increased to 20,327 as compared with 18,392 in the corresponding 1953 quarter, but the number started was down slightly from last year at 11,722 against 11,930, according to the Bureau's monthly report. At the end of March there were 51,070 units under construction compared to 49,232 a year earlier.

Most important mineral in value terms last year was oil, which represented 15% of the total mineral production value as compared with 11% in the preceding year. In 1952 gold was first, closely followed by nickel and copper, each accounting for about 12% of the total.

Contract drilling for fuels and other minerals cost \$75,884,000 in 1952, 37% more than in 1951, and footage drilled was one-fifth greater at 13,635 feet.

Airlines carried a record 2,720,000 paying passengers last year, 18% more than in 1952 and three times as many as in 1947.

Three out of every four tons of refined zinc produced in Canada are exported.