

and depressed the index from 145.5 for the week ending February 27 to 145.0 for the week ending March 26. This was 3.2 points below the peak of 148.2 for the week ended January 23. Canadian farm products moved from 138.6 to 138.5 in the same period, as increases in rye, oats and livestock failed to offset reductions in potatoes, hay and hides.

**DIVORCE INCREASING:** Number of divorces granted in Canada continued upward in 1947 for the eight successive year to reach a new peak of 7,942, an increase of 259 over the previous record figure of 7,683 in 1946, according to preliminary figures released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The 1947 rise however, is considerably below the increases in the preceding three years, comparing with 2,607 in 1946, 1,288 in 1945 and 525 in 1944. It brings the rate per 100,000 population to 63.2 as against 62.5 in 1946 and 18.4 in 1939, when 2,068 divorces were granted.

In contrast with 1946, when there were increases in every province, the number granted was higher in 1947 in five provinces and lower in four. Ontario had 3,252 divorces as compared with 2,639 in 1946, accounting for nearly 41 per cent of the Dominion total. British Columbia was again second in number with 1,826, representing about 23 per cent of the total but down from 2,005 the previous year. Alberta had 881, also a decrease from the 962 recorded in 1946; while the number in Manitoba advanced to 665 as compared with 636, and in Saskatchewan slightly to 509 as against 505 the preceding year.

Of the remaining four eastern provinces, the number for Quebec increased to 348 compared with 290 in 1946 and for Prince Edward Island to 18 as against four, while divorces for New Brunswick declined to 236 compared with 382 and for Nova Scotia to 207 compared with 260 in 1946.

**RETAIL TRADE:** Canada's retail trade in 1946 has been computed at \$5,506,286,000. With most wartime restrictions on production and distribution removed, high employment, rising wages and other favourable economic factors, retail sales in 1946 topped the 1945 figure of \$4,595,667,000 by almost \$1 billion. In terms of percentage gains, sales in 1946 were 20 per cent above those for 1945 and 60 per cent higher than in the last Census year, 1941. It is too early to give an accurate estimate of the dollar volume of retail sales in 1947. However, on the basis of material on hand, it is evident that sales for the year reached a point somewhere in the vicinity of \$6,250,000,000.

**PEACETIME PEAK:** Total freight carried on Canadian railways during 1947 amounted to 152,705,372 tons -- an unprecedented peacetime volume, and was exceeded only in the war years 1943 and 1944 when totals were 152,949,096 and 154,845,277 tons, respectively. A gain of 14,178,516 tons or 12 per cent over 1946 was recorded. Principal increases over 1946 were in wheat, corn, rye, potatoes, iron, copper and other ores, sand and gravel, petroleum, pulpwood, lumber, gasoline, iron and steel, building materials, automobiles, newsprint, wood pulp and in other manufactures and miscellaneous. Declines from 1946 were shown in tonnages of hay and straw, apples, and other agricultural products, cattle and sheep, wool, bituminous coal and coke, cordwood and fresh fish.

**NEW NAVY FLAG:** A distinctively Canadian flag to be flown from the ship of the Senior Canadian Officer present afloat, in both Canadian and foreign ports, has been adopted by the Royal Canadian Navy, it was announced Wednesday by Hon. Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence.

The flag will be triangular in shape, and will be dark blue with a white St. George's cross.

Up to the present, it has been the practice for the Senior Officer present afloat to fly the same pennant as that in use by the senior officer of the Royal Navy.

The new triangular blue flag, will be flown by the senior officer of any group of Canadian naval vessels. The only exception to the rule will be when the senior officer is an admiral or a Commodore when the flag or pennant of his rank will be flown.

**WORLD PRICES:** Wholesale price index numbers for most countries advanced to new post-war high points in the second half of 1947, with increases during this six-month period ranging from three to 35 per cent. Annual increases for 1947 were generally larger than for 1946. Some series, notably those for the United States, France and Czechoslovakia, recorded smaller annual gains in 1947, but these were cases where 1946 increases had been exceptional, reports the Bureau of Statistics.

The rate of increase in the United States Bureau of Labour wholesale price series accelerated in the second half of 1947 after a gradual rise in the first six months. A June-December rise of 10.6 per cent left the index only 2.5 per cent below the May, 1920 figure, which marked the peak level following World War-I. However, price increases throughout 1947 were less rapid than the sharp advances which had occurred after the general suspension

of commodity controls in mid-1946. The rise of 15.8 per cent recorded for 1947 was about half the net increase accumulated in 1946. The whole price picture in the United States, has of course been modified by the sharp February 1948 break in primary commodity markets.

#### WHOLE PRICE INDEX

The Canadian whole price index rose 12.3 per cent from June to December, 1947. An increase of 28.1 per cent for the year was the greatest percentage increase to be recorded for any single year by this series. The December index was 12.7 per cent below the 1920 peak of 164.3 recorded in May. Wholesale prices in the United Kingdom mounted 7.2 per cent between June and December, 1947. The 12-month rise of 13.1 per cent was the largest annual increase recorded since 1940. Food and tobacco prices which had maintained comparative stability since 1940 were up 9.8 per cent in 1947, while foods alone rose 6.5 per cent. Industrial materials and manufactures rose 14.9 per cent in 1947. A rise in the Mexican index in the second half did not offset earlier declines; the November index showed a two per cent loss for the year to date in contrast to a gain of 18 per cent in 1946.

Among cost-of-living series, Czechoslovakia and Norway showed declines in the second half of 1947 and for the year. Other European series continued to record moderate increases with the exception of countries where current index numbers are upwards of ten times pre-war levels, e.g., France and Italy. The new interim index of retail prices for the United Kingdom rose four per cent from June to December. Cost-of-living series for Canada and the United States accelerated their rise in the second half of 1947, with increases of 8.2 per cent and 6.3 per cent respectively. Available index numbers for Australia and New Zealand recorded moderate increases in the first three quarters of the year. Price controls in both countries were retained throughout 1947.

**ASBESTOS:** Value of asbestos goods produced in Canada in 1946 stood at a new high point, amounting to \$6,409,000, an increase of almost 13 per cent over the 1945 total of \$5,677,000, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The products included brake lining valued at \$2,060,000, boilers and pipe covering valued at \$360,000, clutch facings \$475,000, asbestos packings \$210,000, and all other products, such as asbestos gaskets, cloth, yarn, dryer felts, cements, etc., at \$3,273,000. Exports and re-exports of asbestos products amounted to \$654,000 as against \$342,000 in 1945, while the imports totalled \$2,320,000 compared with \$2,214,000.

**WHEAT IN STORE:** Stocks of Canadian wheat in store or in transit in North America at midnight on March 25 totalled 92,239,000 bushels as compared with 94,834,000 on March 18, and 110,173,000 on the corresponding date last year, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Visible supplies on March 25 this year comprised 89,023,000 bushels in Canadian positions and 3,216,000 bushels in United States positions.

Deliveries of wheat from farms in the Prairie Provinces during the week ending March 25 amounted to 1,202,000 bushels compared with 1,078,000 in the preceding week, bringing the aggregate for the period August 1 - March 25 to 207,459,000 as compared with 261,161,000 in the similar period of the preceding crop year.

Overseas export clearances of wheat during the week ended March 25 totalled 1,371,500 bushels as compared with 2,173,600 in the corresponding week last year. Cumulative total for the period August 1 - March 25 was 82,414,400 bushels compared with 91,886,000 in the like period of 1946-47.

**IRON AND STEEL:** Production of steel ingots and castings in February amounted to 239,600 tons, down 17,100 tons from the January figure, but up 10,400 tons over February last year, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. During the first two months of this year, 496,400 tons were produced compared with 479,000 in the same period of 1947.

**NAVY FITNESS:** The Canadian Navy at Halifax has one of the finest recreation centres in Canada. So varied in its facilities that a man could go there every night for two weeks without doing the same thing twice, the Physical and Recreational Training School in the big naval establishment here not only sees to the physical fitness and social activity of sailors using the base but also renders substantial service to the community at large.

Within its walls are two gymnasiums proper, equipped for badminton, basketball, tumbling, volleyball, boxing, wrestling, fencing and other sports; a 90-foot swimming pool, six bowling alleys, five squash courts, a weight-lifting room, an oval track and a combined library and reading room. The larger gymnasium frequently is turned into a dance floor, the largest in Halifax, accommodating 3,000 persons.

Ships based at Halifax, hold regular periods of physical training there and have other periods set aside for sports and recreation. The gym is staffed by qualified instructors, all products of the school.