

SEEK SCIENTISTS: Extension of the scientific research facilities of the Department of National Health and Welfare is foreshadowed in a competition currently being held by the Civil Service Commission for positions as bacteriologists, biochemists, chemists and pharmacologists in the various laboratories operated by the National Health Department.

Salaries range from a minimum of \$2,100 per year to a maximum of \$5,400, with appointments being made at salary rates depending on the applicant's qualifications. The competition closes March 20.

The posts in the food and drugs laboratories provide opportunities for research and analytical projects in chemistry, physics, bacteriology, pharmacology, biology and biometrics, while those in the Laboratory of Hygiene call for laboratory and clinical studies of virus and bacterial diseases, immunology and control of vaccines, toxoids and antitoxins, biochemical and therapeutic studies of such products as penicillin and streptomycin, and food and sanitary bacteriology.

The food and drugs laboratories are responsible for establishing and maintaining standards of quality and purity in the foods and drugs marketed in Canada. The posts offered allow for specialization within specialties, with pharmacology alone being divided into toxicology, pharmacodynamics, bioassay, endocrinology and pharmacognosy.

The Laboratory of Hygiene is the public health laboratory of the federal government and undertakes studies of national health problems in co-operation with provincial departments of health, universities and other branches of government.

All applicants must be university graduates in either science or medicine, with additional credits given for post-graduate study or experience.

WORLD WHEAT SITUATION: Combined wheat supply of the United States, Canada, Argentina and Australia -- the world's four major exporting countries -- amounted to 1,580 million bushels at January 1, a gain of 19 per cent compared with supplies at the beginning of 1947, according to the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations of the United States Department of Agriculture. Substantial increases in the United States and Australia are the notable features, with a decline in Canadian stocks more than balancing an increase in the Argentine supply.

While wheat stocks at January 1 were up from a year ago, total supplies of all grains in the four principal exporting countries, estimated at 123 million short tons, are at the lowest level of recent years. The reduction in over-all grain supplies is due principally to the significant decline in the 1947 United States corn crop, and, in lesser degree, to the reduction in oats in both the United States and Canada.

The increase in wheat supplies has brought the estimated world exportable surplus of grains (excluding rice) up to 32 million long tons, an increase of three million tons over earlier estimates. However, import requirements, as indicated last fall by the International Emergency Food Council, amounted to 52 million long tons for the 1947-48 season. A large gap obviously remains and rigid rationing, high flour extraction rates and other conservation measures must persist in many deficit countries, at least until indigenous supplies are replenished by the 1948 harvest.

World exports of grain and grain products (excluding rice) for the period July-December 1947 reached a total of 16.5 million tons, an increase of more than 37 per cent over the 12.0 million tons moved into international trade channels during the comparable period in 1946. With total exportable supplies currently estimated at 32 million long tons, shipments for the January-June period of 1948 will apparently be at a somewhat lower rate.

Approximately 12.4 million tons, or slightly more than 75 per cent, of the world's grain exports during the first six months of the 1947-48 season consisted of bread grains. In the corresponding period of the previous season bread grain exports amounted to 8.8 million tons or 73 per cent of the total. Wherever possible, exports have been directed to areas where the food situation is most critical. It has been especially serious in those European countries which suffered near crop failure in 1947, and, nearly 71 per cent of the world's total grain exports for the last half of 1947 went to European destinations. (DBS)

ICAO COUNCIL STUDY: The possibility of international financing of existing radio communications, radio aids to air navigation, air traffic control facilities and meteorological services in Iceland by a joint agreement among the nations whose airlines fly across the North Atlantic is studied in a report now sent to these states by the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization. The report was prepared by H. R. Adam and J. D. Dean, ICAO Communications and Meteorological experts who visited Iceland to investigate the needs of international aviation in that area.

The estimated cost of the services, which include radio receiving and transmitting stations, an air traffic control centre, and a network of weather reporting and forecasting stations, would amount to \$600,000 (U.S.) annually. The report advocates the transfer of the air traffic control centre from Reykjavik to Keflavik Airport, the installation of remote control apparatus at the radio receiving station, and the establishment of one automatic and five manned weather reporting stations at various locations in Iceland. Many of the facilities now maintained on the island are needed only for international airline opera-

tions, although Iceland itself operates no international services.

The report marks the second stage in ICAO's efforts to provide and maintain the facilities required for safe and regular operation of international air transport across the Iceland portion of the northern route between Europe and the United States and Canada. Last year a joint support agreement between the Organization and six Member States -- Canada, France, Iceland, Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States -- made arrangements for the provision of some \$72,000 annually for the maintenance of a LORAN (Long range aid to navigation) station, one of the key stations of the North-east Atlantic Loran Chain, at Vik, Iceland, and ICAO undertook to provide the Icelandic government with all required technical aid and assistance. (ICAO)

CONSIDER FOUR NEW VESSELS: Construction of four vessels for the Department of Transport's marine service is being contemplated by the Canadian Government and provision has been made in the Estimates tabled last week for funds to cover designs and preliminary construction, according to an announcement made by the Honourable Lionel Chevrier, Minister of Transport. All Canadian material and workmanship will be used in their construction. The Minister added, however, that as the hulls of these vessels are to be of all-welded steel, the start of construction was contingent on the availability of that metal.

The largest of the four will be a lighthouse tender and buoy vessel to operate out of Halifax. This vessel will replace the C.G.S. "Montcalm". Another vessel will be a lightship to replace the old "Lurcher" which has been in service off Saint John, N.B., Harbour, for the past 45 years. A third vessel will also be a lighthouse tender and buoy vessel to operate on the Pacific Coast, and a fourth vessel will be a 45-foot utility vessel for use on the Great Lakes.

CONSUMER SPENDING UP: There was no slackening in the currently high rate of consumer spending in January when dollar sales in retail stores increased 18 per cent over January a year ago. Since price increases have undoubtedly contributed to this gain, it should be noted that the change from January 1947 reflects the increase in the flow of dollars into Canadian retail stores rather than physical volume of trading. The general index for January, unadjusted for seasonal variations and price changes and on the base 1935-39=100, stood at 213.1 as against 181.2 a year ago.

All 14 trades represented in the general index reported increased sales over January a

year ago. Even jewellery stores, which have been following a downward sales trend for some time, responded to the general acceleration of consumer expenditures with a minor gain of five per cent. A 28 per cent increase in retail trade in British Columbia stands out among the regional results. Other regions reported higher sales in January also and all, with the exception of the Maritimes where sales advanced only eight per cent, had gains corresponding closely with the average result for the country.

Outstanding gains have been made by durable goods outlets -- radio and electrical, furniture and hardware stores -- throughout most of the post-war period. As sales in these stores reached and surpassed levels in most other trades, the earlier sharp increases have given way to more moderate gains. As rates of increase in sales volume of household durables tended to fall off, sales increases for non-durable goods stores have come to the fore. Most pronounced gains in January were those for apparel and food stores. Sales in men's clothing stores were up 31 per cent, while women's wear stores increased volume by 23 per cent and family clothing stores reported sales 17 per cent higher. In footwear, sales increases were less notable, showing a gain of 13 per cent.

On the other hand, increases in durable goods stores were less pronounced. Radio and electrical stores alone had an increase of 21 per cent which approximated the average movement in sales from January 1947 to January 1948. Hardware and furniture store sales moved up by 13 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively.

NEW DWELLING UNIT SURVEY: The number of dwelling units in Canada which were under construction at the end of 1947 is estimated at 42,215, an increase of 2,045 over the number under construction at the end of 1946. Of these, 70 per cent were located in urban centres with a population of 5,000 or more, 12 per cent in smaller urban centres, and 18 per cent in rural areas.

These estimates released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics are the result of a nation-wide survey which took place in January. This survey covered all metropolitan areas and urban centres with a population of 5,000 or more and approximately 400 sample areas in the remainder of the country.

More than 70 per cent of the unfinished dwellings at the end of 1947 had been under construction for less than six months and only nine per cent had been under construction for nine months or more.

The following table shows the number of dwelling units under construction at the end of 1946 and the end of 1947 for each province: