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WEEKLY BUDGET OF STAPLE FOOD TAKES BIG JUMP

Labor Department Reports Retail Food Prices Up and Drop in Wholesale Index.

The present issue of the Labor Gazette contains a report of the Deputy Minister of Labor on his mission to France and England as representative of the Canadian Government on the Governing Body of the International Labor Office, at its meetings in January and March. It also contains a summary of the laws bearing on labor matters which were passed at the recent sessions of the Dominion Parliament and the Legislatures of New Brunswick, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia, and an account of the proceedings of the 40th annual convention of the American Federation of Labor, which met at Montreal on June 7 to 12.

The cost of the weekly family budget of staple foods averaged \$18.92 at the middle of June, as compared with \$18.66 in May and \$17.85 in June, 1919. The index number of wholesale prices fell considerably, being 356.3 for June, as compared with 356.4 for May, 354.1 for June, 1919, and 353.5 for June, 1918. At the beginning of June the percentage of unemployment among members of trade unions was 2.85, as compared with 2.82 at the beginning of May, and with 3.32 at the beginning of June, 1919. According to returns received from nearly 5,000 firms, the increase in employment reported during May continued for June, with a slight decline toward the end of the month, owing to a shortage of fuel and raw material in some industries.

The time lost due to industrial disputes during June was greater than during June, 1919, but less than during June, 1918. There were in existence during the month 69 strikes, involving about 12,406 workpeople, and resulting in a time lost of 154,192 working days. At the end of the month there were on record 23 strikes, involving about 5,182 workpeople.

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B. C. WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION DURING FIRST HALF OF YEAR.

The half yearly report of the Workmen's Compensation Board of the Province of British Columbia, up to June 30th, has just been issued. It shows that lumbering is not only the leading industry of the province from the standpoint of total payroll, but also leads as the most hazardous from the accident standpoint. No less than 29 workmen lost their lives in lumbering during the half year, and in addition there were 1,595 non-fatal accidents resulting in temporary or permanent disability. Injured workmen receive under the Compensation Act 55 per cent. of their loss of wages through accidents. No payment being made for the first three days of incapacity from work. The time loss alone cost the lumbering industry \$195,774 for the first half of this year. Cash awards for permanent partial disability cost \$26,657 and pensions \$52,774 more.

CANADIAN MERCANTILE FLEET IS NOW NEARLY COMPLETE.

Such satisfactory progress is being made with the construction of Canada's mercantile marine fleet that it is believed in Government circles that the whole fleet of sixty-three vessels will be in commission by March 31 next, the end of the current fiscal year. Up to the present time thirty-two vessels have been finished and splendid headway is being made with the other half of the fleet. Particularly good headway is being made at the Montreal, St. John, Collingwood and Port Arthur yards. Several vessels of large tonnage being built in inland yards will be utilized in ocean-going services and it will be necessary to bring them through the canals to the St. Lawrence in sections.

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COST OF LIVING INCREASED 21 PER CENT. DURING PAST YEAR.

Many requests have reached this office for information concerning the increase in the cost of living over last year. This week we obtained from the Labor Department a table which shows that the increase has advanced slightly over 21 per cent in the past year. The able assistance of the Labor Department follows:

Food	115.53	116.55
Fuel	3.02	3.45
Rent	5.05	6.29
Clothing	5.98	7.38
Sundries	6.45	6.42
Total	135.05	140.19

Figures for food, fuel, and rent from the Labor Gazette; figures for clothing based upon average increases in men's clothing as shown by prices from several dealers throughout the Dominion; figures for sundries based upon the average increase in the other groups.

3,374 STRIKES AND LOCK-OUTS IN U. S. IN 1919.

Strikes and lockouts in the United States in 1919 totaled 3,374 and affected more than 4,000,000 workers, according to a review issued by the Department of Labor. Approximately one-half of the strikes occurred in five states: New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois.

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