

(C. W. B. June 18, 1948)

APRIL FOREIGN TRADE \$442,000,000

4 MONTHS AGGREGATE \$1,707,000,000: Foreign trade of Canada in April was valued at \$442,000,000 as compared with \$428,000,000 in the preceding month and \$419,000,000 in the corresponding month last year, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Aggregate for the four months ending April was \$1,707,000,000 as against \$1,583,000,000 in the similar period of 1947, an increase of 7.8 per cent.

Merchandise imports in April increased in value to \$226,700,000 from the March total of \$197,100,000, showing a similar movement to that of the two preceding years when April figures, contrary to the pre-war trend, were substantially higher than those for March. The month's total was slightly above the April 1947 figure of \$225,600,000. During the four months ending April, imports totalled \$812,000,000 as compared with \$785,400,000 in the like period of 1947, a rise of 3.4 per cent.

Featured by further gains in sales to the United States, Canada's merchandise exports in April were valued at \$212,300,000 as compared with \$228,400,000 in March and \$190,900,000 in April last year. Total for the four months ending April was \$884,400,000 compared with \$788,000,000 a year ago, an increase of 12 per cent.

BALANCE OF TRADE

The balance of trade with all countries was unfavourable to Canada in April to the extent of \$11,600,000 as compared with a favourable balance of \$33,900,000 in March and an adverse balance of \$32,200,000 in April last year. In the first four months of this year, however, the favourable balance rose to \$83,400,000 as against \$12,200,000 in the like period of 1947.

The month's debit balance with the United States was \$48,000,000 as against \$24,200,000 in March and \$91,600,000 in April last year, and the four-month debit balance declined to \$155,900,000 compared with \$294,800,000 in the similar period of 1947.

As the result of larger dollar purchases of British goods, the favourable balance with the United Kingdom in April was reduced to \$19,800,000 as compared with \$37,700,000 in March and \$30,400,000 in April a year ago, with the four-month total standing at \$134,800,000 compared with \$135,100,000 in the same period of 1947.

Chief features of Canada's import trade in April were a substantial decline in purchases from the United States as compared with the high levels of last year and a continuance of the upward trend in imports from the United Kingdom. On the commodity side, there were marked advances in the arrivals of farm and other machinery, crude petroleum and petroleum products, raw and unmanufactured wool, and sharp decreases in those of cotton, flax, hemp and jute products.

Imports from the United States were valued at \$159,500,000 as against \$181,600,000 in April last year, the decline of \$22,100,000 comparing with a drop of \$26,800,000 in March. Aggregate imports for the four months ending April were \$584,600,000 compared with \$622,000,000 in 1947, the substantial reductions in March and April and a small decline in February being partly offset by higher figures for Jan.

Shipments received from the United Kingdom advanced from \$21,600,000 in March to \$24,600,000 to reach the highest post-war month's figure. This compares with \$12,700,000 in April last year and the 1935-39 April average of \$8,400,000. Cumulative total for the January-April period rose to \$85,700,000 this year as against \$51,400,000 in 1947.

FROM LATIN AMERICA

Aggregate imports from the Latin American countries also rose sharply in April to \$20,100,000 compared with \$13,000,000 last year, largest increases being in purchases from Cuba, Mexico, San Domingo and Venezuela while those from Argentina were sharply lower. Imports from European countries were almost unchanged from 1947, standing at \$4,280,000 as against \$4,242,000, while the aggregate for other foreign countries was moderately higher.

Among British countries other than the United Kingdom, imports from Australia increased to \$2,483,000 compared with \$679,000; and New Zealand, \$1,761,000 against \$824,000. Imports from India and Pakistan together fell off to \$476,000 compared with \$3,700,000 a year earlier, and from Ceylon to \$482,000 compared with \$1,104,000.

Among the commodity groups, imports of non-metallic minerals and products in April were sharply higher at \$45,400,000 compared with \$31,800,000 last year, crude petroleum increasing to \$16,900,000 compared with \$9,300,000 and petroleum products to \$7,200,000 compared with \$3,900,000 and moderate gains being shown for coal and coal products. The iron and iron products group increased to \$70,300,000 compared with \$66,700,000, farm implements and machinery jumping to \$15,000,000 from \$9,700,000 last year and household machinery, mining, metallurgical, business, printing and other non-farm machinery making smaller gains. Imports of passenger and freight automobiles declined to \$1,500,000 from about \$5,000,000, while automobile parts were slightly lower at \$8,600,000.

Imports of fibres and textiles declined in April to \$33,100,000 compared with \$39,900,000, cotton products falling to \$7,100,000 from \$15,000,000 and flax, hemp and jute products to \$789,000 from \$3,600,000 while raw and unmanufactured wool rose from \$1,600,000 to \$5,300,000 and wool products and raw cotton and linters moved moderately upward.

RETAIL TRADE UP 13 PER CENT: A gain of 13 per cent in retail trade occurred in April compared with the corresponding month last year. This advance conformed closely to the average percentage rise in earlier months of the year, sales in the first four months of 1948 standing 12 per cent above those in the same period of last year. Unadjusted general index for 14 retail trades, on the base 1935-39=100, stood at 254.5 for April, 244.2 for March, and 224.5 for April, 1947.

Department stores continued the series of marked increases of the past months when sales moved 20 per cent above April 1947 volume. Women's apparel shops ranked second with a gain of 19 per cent and were followed by food and men's clothing stores with increases of 15 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively. Only these four trades recorded gains exceeding the average rise in sales, each of the remaining 10 trades reporting increases of smaller proportions.

On the whole, gains for the individual trades in April were strikingly similar to their average gains for earlier months of the year with little indication of any recent shift in the pattern of consumer purchases.

COST-OF-LIVING: The Dominion Bureau of Statistics released on June 10 cost-of-living indexes for eight regional cities for May 1, together with those for April and May 1, 1947. Between April 1 and May 1, six of the eight city cost-of-living indexes showed advances slightly greater than the Dominion increase of 1.7 points. Winnipeg and Edmonton failed by a slight margin to equal the Dominion change. The largest increases were recorded in the Montreal and Vancouver indexes, both of which advanced 2.5 points. Of the group indexes those for food and clothing increased in all of the eight cities. Food prices increased quite substantially while clothing prices gained only slightly.

PROPERTY REHABILITATION: The Department of External Affairs reminds Canadian citizens who have claims for restoration and rehabilitation of their property situated in Hungary, Roumania or Finland that, in order to avoid any risk of forfeiting their rights under Treaties of Peace with these countries, a formal claim must be filed with these respective Governments not later than September 19, 1948. Claimants should communicate without delay with the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, for information on the procedure to be followed. Claimants are advised that, notwithstanding any action taken previously by them, applications for restoration of property must now be resubmitted.

In order to allow time for the transmission of such claims, all completed submissions should be sent to the Department of External Affairs before July 31, 1948.

TWO CANADIANS HONOURED: The Royal Geographical Society on June 14 in London presented two of its most coveted medals to Dr. Charles Camsell, C.M.G., LL.D., F.R.S.C., former Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources, and Inspector Henry Larsen of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for their contributions to the advancement of the science of geography. It is a singular honour that these two medals come to Canada in the same year.

Dr. Camsell was awarded the Founder's Medal for his contribution to the geology and geography of the Canadian North and for his work in advancing geographical science in the Dominion. The award was made by His Majesty the King two years ago but owing to the difficulty of obtaining gold for minting, the presentation had to be delayed until this year.

Inspector Larsen, who navigated the R.C.M.P. schooner St. Roch eastward and westward through the famed Northwest Passage along Canada's Arctic shores, was awarded the Patron's Medal for this outstanding achievement.

Dr. Camsell sailed for London earlier in the month to receive his award and at the request of Inspector Larsen he accepted the Patron's Medal on behalf of the R.C.M.P. navigator.

BUTTER AND CHEESE: Creamery butter production in May amounted to 30,698,000 pounds as compared with 31,487,000 in the corresponding month last year, a decrease of 2.5 per cent, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. During the five months ending May, 77,422,000 pounds were produced compared with 82,853,000 in the like period of 1947, a decrease of 6.6 per cent.

Cheddar cheese output in May totalled 9,606,000 pounds as against 13,393,000 in the same month last year, while the five-month figure stood at 16,603,000 pounds compared with 25,046,000. Production of concentrated milk products in May amounted to 45,234,000 pounds compared with 37,382,000 a year ago, and in the five months, 120,710,000 pounds compared with 115,679,000.

FARM WAGES HIGHEST RECORDED: May wage rates for farm workers in Canada in 1948 were the highest recorded since the inception of the Bureau's farm wage survey in 1940. With board provided by the employers, the average farm wage rate per day for all Canada at May 15 was \$3.93 as compared with \$3.59 at the same date in 1947. When no board was provided, the daily rate was \$4.89 as against \$4.55 a year earlier. The average monthly wage rate with board for all Canada was \$83.26 as compared with \$77.01 a year ago. When workers provided their own board the average rate for men hired by the month rose from \$103.96 in May last year to \$113.07 in May 1948. Provincial wage rates, in each case, were lead by British Columbia.