

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS RESULTING FROM BORDEN RULE.

Unemployment Greater.

ON March 11th, 10,000 men in search of work were registered at the Civic Employment Bureau in Toronto. That condition was typical of the conditions throughout all Canada. In every city hundreds of men sought work, and sought it in vain. Nor have conditions improved since then. The plain fact of the case is that not for upwards of twenty years past has unemployment existed on such a startling scale in Canada. Certainly, there never was a time during the rule of the Laurier Government when labor conditions in the Dominion approached in seriousness the state of affairs which now exists.

In Montreal, during April no less than 5,000 out-of-works rushed to the city hall when an intimation was given that the city would endeavor to find work for those who needed jobs. Huge mobs of unemployed were massed on the Champ de Mars of the city—all begging for work and few able to find it. In the endeavor to pick up a few cents that they might buy food, men and women went up and down the vacant fields of the city a few weeks ago collecting dandelion plants to sell for greens in the foreign colony.

In Hamilton, the unemployed have paraded the streets by the hundreds. Four hundred of them marched to the city hall on one day pleading for work that they might be able to support their families.

In Edmonton, in early May, between 600 and 1,000 of the men who sought work and found it not were marching the streets. In Regina, no longer ago than two weeks, a thousand men pleaded with the mayor to find them work. In Winnipeg, hundreds have walked the streets in idleness, not from choice or laziness, but because those who sought work outnumbered the jobs available many times over. In Ottawa the unemployed have run into many hundreds. So it has been in every city. East and west it has been the same. In St. John, N.B., in Vancouver, B.C., the cry is the same. Everywhere the demands upon charitable organizations have been multiplied many times. Families which never sought aid of anyone before have been compelled to ask charity.

These are the conditions which have come to Canada under the administration of Premier Borden. But the facts stand out: Under Liberal rule between 1896 and 1911, Canada experienced the greatest prosperity she has ever known; the demand for labor exceeded the supply. After less than three years of Borden administration, there has come an alarming slackening in the country's prosperity and men and women are in idleness and want because they can find no work to do.

Cost of Living Higher.

SINCE the Borden Government took office there has been a steady and marked advance in the cost of living. Statistics prepared by the Dominion Department of Labor itself give proof of this statement though no other proof is needed than the experience of the Canadian workingmen and other every-day citizens of the country.

According to a report recently issued by the Labor Department a weekly budget of food which would have cost \$6.95 in 1910, when the Liberals were in power, would have cost \$7.34 in 1913 under Borden. In that case there was an advance of nearly six per cent. In the case of the weekly expenditures of a typical Canadian family of five upon thirty-six staple articles and upon rent there was an increase of almost two per cent. in 1913 as compared with the preceding twelve-month.

Since 1911, the last year of Liberal rule, the index number of prices for meats and animals has advanced no less than 34.2 points. The Department says: meat prices "reached a general level (in 1913) higher than ever previously experienced". Similarly, the Canadian people paid more for fish last year than in previous years. Boots and shoes and other articles of clothing also cost more than in the past. The 1913 index number for textiles was 11.6 points

In these days of the present Government there is not sufficient work, and living is dearer, so that we are hit both ways. And this is Conservative prosperity!

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higher than the number in the last year of Liberal rule. Boots, leathers and hides showed an index number of 163.9 in 1913 as compared with 139.6 in 1911—an advance of 24.3 points. Taking 272 commodities, selected over the entire field of production and consumption, the statement of the Labor Department shows a considerable advance in commodities in common use by every Canadian family.

Under the Borden Government, then, the living cost is much higher than under Liberal rule. Moreover, it continues to increase steadily and greatly in Canada, while in other countries it is decreasing. Nor is this all. By raising the tariff for the benefits of Special Interests, the present Government is adding still more to the burdens upon the people of Canada. Already tariff increases ordered by the Government a few weeks ago have led to the exaction of higher prices from Canadians for several commodities and still further price advances are to be expected. So while Borden rule has brought a disquieting lessening of Canadian prosperity and widespread unemployment throughout the Dominion, it has also brought an increased cost of living, and tariff changes which will bring that cost to a higher level still.