

ALL PERSONS IN RECEIPT OF MATERIAL AID

From the National Registration—Department of Labour

(thousands)

Fiscal Years	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Average
<i>All Persons—</i>													
1938-39.....	1,024	956	885	836	758	554	641	787	896	977	1,019	1,028	863
1939-40.....	1,005	923	839	806	803	539	544	586	629	714	753	773	743
<i>AGRICULTURE—</i>													
1938-39.....	392	380	364	339	287	109	168	252	292	321	321	323	295
1939-40.....	319	297	282	271	258	50	60	78	73	96	112	124	168
<i>URBAN—</i>													
1938-39.....	632	576	521	497	471	445	473	535	604	668	698	705	569
1939-40.....	686	626	557	535	545	489	484	508	556	618	641	649	575

WAGE EARNERS UNEMPLOYED*

Estimated by Dominion Bureau of Statistics

(thousands)

Fiscal Years	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Average
1938-39.....	437	400	387	407	368	346	378	398	472	485	491	494	421
1939-40.....	473	395	369	352	332	300	283	296	364	377	387	391	360

* Beginning with Sept. 1939, includes a considerable number of enlisted men who were previously unemployed wage earners.

PRICES

12. The gradual decline of wholesale prices which had marked the latter part of the fiscal year 1938-39 continued up until August of 1939, and the index reached a low point of 72.4 in that month. During the economic adjustments that took place in the month or two immediately following the outbreak of war, and in considerable part due to such factors as exchange movement, higher ocean freight and insurance rates, and forward buying both by consumers and producers, wholesale prices of some commodities rose fairly steeply, particularly those of certain imports and exports, including grains and animal products. The total index rose to 79.3 in October, i.e., by about 10 per cent in two months. From that point on to March the rise was more gradual and the index reached a peak of 83.2 in that month. This rise showed up mainly in a further increase in grain prices and in textile prices. Since March there has been a slight decline largely due to lower prices for animal products and grains, and the index for the week ending June 7 was 81.9.

It may be of interest in wartime to note that prices of fully and chiefly manufactured goods

have followed very closely the movements of the general index, and that the index of the group "iron and its products" has risen by only about 5 per cent since August while the group "producers' equipment" has increased less than 2 per cent. It may also be worth noting that the index of our export prices had risen by about 24 per cent, and that for imports about 17 per cent between August and April.

During the six months before the war the cost of living remained at the low level to which it had declined in the latter part of 1938. Increased cost of food and, to a much lesser extent, of fuel, caused a rise of about 2 per cent in the index in the first two months of war. Since that time only minor changes have occurred in the total index. Increases in the cost of clothing early in 1940 were offset by some reduction in the cost of food. The latest figure shows an increase of only 3 per cent over that of a year ago.

While no official indexes of wage rates exist except on an annual basis, other information indicates that there have been numerous increases in wage rates, particularly in those trades where there is already some evidence of a shortage of skilled labour.