

AMBASSADOR OF ARGENTINA: His Excellency Dr. Enrique Jose Guillermo Plate on February 17 presented to His Excellency the Governor General his Letter of Credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Argentina to Canada.

Mr. Plate was born in 1909. He has held several important posts in his country's public service, including those of Director of Legal Affairs of the Department of Agriculture; Director-Comptroller of Immigration; Member of the International Commission of Neutrality; Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests; Government Minister of the Province of Jujuy; Director of Economic and Social Affairs of the National Agrarian Council; Judge of Labour in the Province of Buenos Aires.

In the educational field, Mr. Plate has been Professor of History and Geography and of Commercial and Administrative Law. He joined the Argentine Foreign Service in 1953 and was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Sweden, a post which he still held on being appointed to Canada.

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HOSPITAL CAPACITY PEAK: The combined capacity of hospitals of all types in Canada, including mental hospitals and sanatoria, amounted at the end of 1953 to 151,000 beds, enough to accommodate slightly more than 1% of the Canadian population at that time, according to the Bureau's annual report on hospital statistics for 1953, released February 16.

While the continuing addition of new beds brought total bed capacity to the highest figure of any year on record, the increase in 1953 failed to keep pace with Canada's rapid growth in population and the ratio of beds to population declined for the second successive year.

There has been steady and continuous growth in Canadian hospital bed capacity in the 21 years from 1932 to 1953 for which the report presents comparative figures. In this period general hospitals added about 28,000 beds, rising 83% to 62,102; mental hospitals added over 17,000 for an increase of 54% to 49,290; and tuberculosis sanatoria more than doubled in capacity from 7,150 to 15,150 beds.

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NEW HERRING TECHNIQUE: Encouraging herring catches have been reported on preliminary field trials in waters off the coast of British Columbia of a mid-water trawl being developed by the Fisheries Research Board of Canada.

Numerous successful night-sets have been made on schools of herring in the lower Strait of Georgia. Purchase-seining near the surface is the usual method of catching herring. The Pacific Biological Station at Nanaimo, B.C., reported to the Board's Ottawa headquarters that catches of herring ranging from 10 to 30 tons per drag were made in mid-water at depths of from 15 to 20 fathoms.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION LAWS: The Minister of Labour announced on February 18 publication of the 1954 edition of "Workmen's Compensation in Canada" which includes recent amendments to Workmen's Compensation Acts in six provinces.

The bulletin, which was prepared by the Legislation Branch of the Federal Labour Department, gives a concise description of the collective liability system of workmen's compensation in effect in all 10 Canadian provinces. In addition, the booklet contains a brief review of the two federal compensation laws, the Government Employees' Compensation Act and the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act as well as the Workmen's Compensation Ordinances of the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

The six provinces which amended their Workmen's Compensation Acts in 1954 were: Quebec, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

HIGHER BENEFITS

The Quebec Workmen's Compensation Act was amended during the 1954-55 session of the Legislature to raise from \$3,000 to \$4,000 the maximum yearly earnings taken into account for compensation purposes and to provide for higher benefits for widows and children. The monthly benefit to a widow was increased to \$55 from \$45. Children's allowances, which are payable to the age of 18, were raised to \$20 a month from \$10, or, where the children are orphans, to \$30 monthly from \$15.

In British Columbia, the rate of compensation for disability was raised to 75 from 70 percent and the maximum annual earnings on which compensation is computed were increased to \$4,000 from \$3,600.

In Ontario, the Workmen's Compensation Board was given authority to spend \$200,000 annually, in place of the former \$100,000, on rehabilitation work.

Amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Act in Nova Scotia brought a number of new industries under the Act, including hotels, restaurants and stores.

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NEW ESCORT SQUADRON: The Royal Canadian Navy will form a new escort squadron in its Atlantic Command in mid-April. The group, to be designated the First Coastal Escort Squadron, will consist of the Algerine-class coastal escorts Portage and Wallaceburg and the Bangor-class coastal escort Minas, now in reserve at Sydney, N.S.

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Operating revenues of railways which operated in Canada during 1953 amounted to \$1,205,935,000, up 2.9% from \$1,172,159,000 in the preceding year. Operating expenses increased 4.1% to \$1,100,394,000 from \$1,057,186,000. The result was a lower net operating revenue of \$105,542,000 as compared with \$114,972,000.