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Dominion-Provincial Conference: Called to discuss a new model vital statistics act for use as a guide in the revision or re-framing of provincial legislation, the fifth Dominion-Provincial Conference on Vital Statistics was opened Monday morning by the Hon. James A. MacKinnon, Minister of Trade and Commerce. The conference is being attended both by officers in charge of vital statistics and legislative counsels of the provinces, representatives of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and of various federal departments, and by representatives of national organizations interested in vital statistics. Present from the United States as observers are Dr. Don C. Peterson, president of the American Association of Registration Executives, and Dr. Albert E. Bailey, National Consulting Service, United States National Office of Vital Statistics.

In his address of welcome, Mr. MacKinnon pointed out that the first two Dominion-Provincial conferences on vital statistics were held in 1918, when the first model vital statistics act for Canada was discussed and approved. As a result of the labours of these conferences, a Dominion-wide system of vital statistics was established. During the intervening years many important changes had taken place. The present conference was for the purpose of considering revisions in legislation relating to the registration of vital statistics that are necessary or desirable for meeting present-day needs.

Dr. Paul Parrot, Demographer, Ministry of Health of the Province of Quebec, was elected chairman of the conference; G. Rutherford, Attorney-General's Department, Manitoba, vice-chairman; and J.T. Marshall, Assistant Dominion Statistician, secretary.

Merchandise Exports Higher: Reversing the downward trend of the preceding three months, the value of Canada's merchandise exports moved up sharply in October to \$250,800,000, showing an increase of 14.7 per cent over the September figure of \$218,600,000, and a gain of 22.8 per cent over October last year when the total was \$204,200,000, according to figures released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The October trade was the third highest monthly total in the post-war period, being exceeded by May and June this year. In the first ten months of this year, exports aggregated \$2,255,600,000 compared with \$1,868,100,000 in the like period of 1946, an increase of 20.7 per cent.

Trade with the majority of countries showed expansion in October. Shipments to countries of the British Empire rose from \$71,600,000 last year to \$104,500,000, and to foreign countries from \$132,600,000 to \$146,300,000. In the ten-month period, exports to British Empire countries advanced from \$725,200,000 to \$950,000,000, and to foreign countries from \$1,142,900,000 to \$1,305,700,000.

Exports to the United Kingdom in October showed a substantial increase, standing at \$66,776,000 compared with \$47,665,000 a year ago, while the aggregate for the ten months rose to \$609,403,000 from \$480,261,000. Exports to the United States in the month rose from \$99,086,000 last year to \$102,443,000, and in the ten months from \$714,845,000 to \$835,422,000. October exports to both countries showed marked gains over September.