

A maple leaf, the regulations state, may be worn by all personnel on Dominion Day and by personnel of French Canadian descent on St. Jean Baptiste Day. On the national days of England, Scotland, Ireland or Wales, soldiers may wear a rose, thistle, shamrock or leek if of English, Scottish, Irish or Welsh descent.

Wearing of poppies on Remembrance Day is authorized for all personnel, usually from the date they go on sale.

ODILON CORMIER APPOINTMENT: Appointment of Odilon Cormier, M.B.E., of the Immigration Branch, as Chief Supervisor for Continental Europe, was announced April 30 by the Hon. James A. MacKinnon, Acting Minister of Mines and Resources.

Mr. Cormier has charge of the Canadian Government Immigration Mission in occupied territory of Europe, with headquarters at Karlsruhe, Germany. A native of Quebec City, he has been in the immigration service since 1920. From 1924 to 1926 he was stationed at Danzig and Hamburg, Germany. He was Immigration Office in Charge at Quebec City from 1928 to 1938, and Immigration Attache in Paris from 1938 until June 1940. He left France just before the Germans took the city.

During the late war he was stationed at Lisbon, London, and Quebec City, and in December 1946 he resumed his duties in Paris. Since March 1947 he has been in charge of the Department's work in connection with Displaced Persons.

ECONOMIC SURVEY: A levelling out of the rise in prices, coupled with a continuing high volume of industrial production, and some rise in unemployment, featured the first quarter of 1948, states the March issue of the Canadian Statistical Review. An increase in freight rates and a number of developments in the United States also affected the current outlook.

It is not yet clear what effects the general 21 per cent advance in a wide range of railway freight rates, authorized late in March, will have on existing price levels. Final passage of the European Recovery Programme by the United States Congress, together with a number of proposals for increased defence expenditures, have contributed to a substantial recovery in stock prices both in Canada and the United States. Prospects for uninterrupted production have also been improved by the settlement of the almost month long strike of the United States soft coal miners.

The \$6,098 million voted under E.R.P. should help ensure a continued demand for products of the whole dollar area during the coming year. It is equal to about 31 per cent of the total value of goods and services exported by the United States during 1947 and amounts to about 2.6 per cent of their gross national product for the year. An equivalent percentage

of Canada's 1947 national product would amount to about \$345 million, just over 60 per cent of the amount of loans and credits advanced to European countries by this country during 1947.

While a construction programme equal in volume to that of the preceding year has been forecast for 1948, current statistical data show a few signs of weakness. Despite the higher level of building costs the dollar value of contracts awarded during the first quarter of 1948 is down almost six per cent from the same period in 1947. This drop is concentrated in the non-residential sector; contracts for business, industrial and engineering construction are down about 34 per cent while residential contracts, supported in part by government projects are up over two and one-half times. Another sign of weakness is provided by the index of employment in building construction, and this index has shown an unusually sharp drop from December 1 to February 1, though after this decline it is still 15 per cent above its level a year earlier. Incidentally, it is worth noting that, in view of the upward trend in construction activity throughout 1947, a programme of equal size for 1948 would not be inconsistent with some downward trend throughout the year.

COST OF LIVING

Though its 51 per cent increase since 1939 has been less than the 89 per cent rise over World War I, the cost-of-living index on March 1 reached a record high of 150.8, just 0.2 points higher than the level attained in July, 1920. Though the total index reached a new high, two groups in the index which have advanced the most during the last few years, food and clothing, are still somewhat below their 1920 level. Thus the current index for food is almost 16 points below its 1920 peak and the clothing index is over 50 points lower than the level reached in 1920. On the other hand, the index of rents, even though it has advanced less than any other group since 1939, is now 17.4 points higher than it was in July, 1920.

Since the end of the war the cost-of-living index has risen about 25 per cent, somewhat more than the 20 per cent rise in average weekly earnings. During the same period there has been a decline of about three per cent in the length of the working week. The major part of our post-war price rise has been concentrated in the past year and the rapid upsurge in prices during this period has carried the cost-of-living index up 17 per cent, substantially more than the 10 per cent rise in weekly earnings during this same period. Average hourly earnings in manufacturing industries also lagged behind the rise in prices during the past year. However, over the longer period since the end of the war, they have just kept pace with the cost-of-living index, both having risen 25 per cent. Of course, some of this price rise has been due to the removal of subsidies and this has been at least partially offset by a reduction in taxes.

WHEAT STOCKS: Stocks of Canadian wheat in store or in transit in North America at midnight on April 22 amounted to 76,391,439 bushels compared with 81,179,957 on April 15 and 95,696,666 on the corresponding date last year, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Visible on the latest date comprised 75,327,395 bushels in Canadian positions and 1,064,044 in United States positions.

PETROLEUM OUTPUT: Continuing the upward trend of recent months, Canadian output of crude petroleum and natural gasoline reached a high point in February, amounting to 779,841 barrels as compared with 534,510 in February last year, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The output for the two months ended February amounted to 1,557,424 barrels as against 1,132,082 barrels in the like period of 1947.

INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT: Industrial employment at the beginning of March was lower than at February 1, according to data furnished the Dominion Bureau of Statistics by 18,611 leading firms in the eight major industrial divisions, who reported a combined working force of 1,955,152 men and women, as compared with 1,957,862 at February 1. The decline reduced the index number, on the base 1926=100, from 189.3 to 189.0 at the beginning of March, when it exceeded by 4.8 per cent the figure of 180.4 at March 1, 1947.

Accompanying the slight recession in employment at March 1 as compared with February 1 was an increase of 1.9 per cent in the index of weekly payrolls, while as compared with March 1, 1947, there was a rise of 16.1 per cent. The March 1, 1948 figure was the highest in the record, with the exception of those at November 1 and December 1, 1947, when employment was in greater volume. The average weekly earnings per employee reached a new peak at the date under review, standing at \$39.44 as compared with \$38.63 at February 1, and \$35.61 at March 1, 1947.

The changes indicated at the beginning of March in the various industrial divisions generally conformed to the seasonal pattern, except that there were substantial increases from February 1 in the iron and steel branch of the manufacturing due to the resumption of operations in certain plants which had then been seriously affected by temporary shortages of gas and power, while the important recovery indicated in mining resulted mainly from the settlement of the dispute in the coal fields of Western Canada.

Manufacturing as a whole showed improvement, despite seasonal curtailment in the food industries; in addition to the revival in the iron and steel plants just mentioned, there were considerable gains in the textile divisions, in which the movement was seasonal in

character. Logging released large numbers of employees as the winter's work in many camps drew to a close. Construction showed marked curtailment, likewise of a seasonal nature. The trend was also downward in hotels and restaurants and in trading establishments, although the percentage losses in these classes were much smaller than those in logging and construction. On the whole, the change indicated in transportation was slight.

MOTOR VEHICLES SALES: Sales of new motor vehicles in March totalled 20,887 units with a retail value of \$39,667,506, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Volume was well in excess of sales in January and February this year, and also exceeded sales of 18,237 new vehicles sold for \$31,792,728 in March, 1947.

Passenger car sales numbered 13,492 in March this year compared with 12,329 in the same month of 1947. The margin over last year was even greater for trucks and buses, with sales numbering 7,395 in March 1948, and 5,907 in March, 1947.

The cumulative total of new vehicle sales in the first three months of this year fell slightly short of that for the same period of 1947. A greater volume was reported this year for commercial units, but passenger car sales were a little lower than in the same period a year ago.

1947 WAGE INDEX: A rise of 74 per cent, in the general index, over the 1939 wage level is revealed by the preliminary index of wage rates for 1947, it was announced by Honourable Humphrey Mitchell, Minister of Labour.

This index, calculated in the Research and Statistics Branch of the Department of Labour, shows a general increase of 12.2 per cent over 1946.

Substantial increases over 1946 are indicated in five of the six main industrial groups. In logging, the rise is 16.8 per cent, and in manufacturing, the largest group, it is 14.7 per cent.

A table of index numbers, on the base 1939=100, with the percentage increases in each group over 1946, is shown below:

	1946	1947 Preliminary	Percentage increase over 1946
GENERAL INDEX	155.2	174.1	12.2
Logging.....	167.4	195.6	16.8
Mining.....	140.6	162.1	15.3
Manufacturing	161.5	185.2	14.7
Construction	143.9	153.4	6.6
Transportation & Communication	143.5	146.0	1.7
Service (Laundries)	147.5	170.7	15.7