

varied needs make the business of supplying those needs, through the mechanism of distribution, an intricate and complicated process—a process of which all too little is generally known.

Ever since the creation of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in 1918 it has been one of the objects of the Bureau to fill up this gap in the national statistics, and to “blaze the trail” for other countries in this connection. The matter is referred to in the first Annual Report of the Dominion Statistician for 1919, and at the census of 1921 instructions were given to the census enumerators to collect on a special schedule a list of all individuals, partnerships, joint stock companies, etc., engaged in wholesale and retail trading. This list was subsequently checked over with local directories, gazetteers and other sources of information, and made the basis of a special questionnaire addressed by post to each concern in 1924. Among the matters enquired into were: the capitalization of joint stock companies, the actual capital invested in operating the business, the purchases and sales, the expenses for various items, and the number of employees of each sex.

Investigations such as the census of trading establishments depend for their completeness upon the co-operation of an enormous number of people. In a pioneer investigation that co-operation is naturally much more difficult to secure, either because those who are asked to assist are somewhat suspicious of a new departure or because they are unaccustomed to the particular form of the questionnaire or are generally inexperienced in the keeping of accounts. For various reasons, many of those invited to send in schedules did not do so, though most of those in this category were carrying on operations only on a very small scale. While the 66,814 firms which answered the questionnaire represent probably two-thirds of the total number of such establishments in 1924, it is thought that their capital, purchases and sales, etc., were far more than two-thirds of the totals for the Dominion.

Again, the census did not include what are known as “service establishments”, such as tailors, restaurants, photographers, dyers, etc., numbering in the aggregate at least 25,000 and representing a considerable capital investment.

Summarized results of the census of trading establishments were presented at pp. 629-635 of the 1929 Year Book, while more detailed figures were given in the “Census of Trading Establishments, 1924”, obtainable from the Dominion Statistician. It is proposed to take a second census of trading establishments in connection with the decennial census of 1931.

Grand Total of Capital, Purchases and Sales.—The grand total amount of the capital invested in the 66,814 stores reporting for 1924 was shown by their inventories to be \$1,580,123,723, including \$914,990,830 in 60,181 retail stores, \$476,559,544 in 3,782 wholesale stores and \$188,573,349 in 2,851 stores doing both a wholesale and retail business. The total purchases of merchandise were \$2,321,078,297, including \$1,225,016,362 by retail stores, \$812,139,031 by wholesale stores and \$283,922,904 by wholesale-retail stores. The aggregate of sales was \$3,030,663,185, including \$1,642,103,468 by retail stores, \$1,021,920,931 by wholesale stores and \$366,638,786 by wholesale-retail stores.