

32.—Retail Merchandise Trade in Cities of 20,000 Population and Over, 1930—conc.

City.	Popula- tion, 1931.	Estab- lish- ments.	Full-Time Employees.			Net Sales.	Stocks on Hand, End of Year (at Cost).
			Male.	Female.	Salaries and Wages.		
			No.	No.	\$		
Victoria, B.C.	39,082	809	1,790	914	2,944,900	27,108,500	4,998,900
Three Rivers, Que.	35,450	456	719	312	960,100	10,079,700	1,857,200
Kitchener, Ont.	30,793	399	725	343	1,211,300	13,770,500	2,005,700
Brantford, Ont.	30,107	451	809	375	1,230,300	13,966,900	1,937,100
Hull, Que.	29,433	443	645	133	663,800	7,776,900	1,319,300
Sherbrooke, Que.	28,933	428	737	258	977,400	10,959,900	2,050,600
Outremont, Que.	28,641	129	365	45	455,100	4,306,700	487,900
Fort William, Ont.	26,277	333	544	300	830,300	10,003,300	1,723,000
St. Catharines, Ont.	24,753	437	802	383	1,328,500	14,664,800	2,340,200
Westmount, Que.	24,235	128	504	116	727,500	6,330,100	600,500
Kingston, Ont.	23,439	376	858	328	1,214,500	12,873,200	2,079,000
Oshawa, Ont.	23,439	278	584	159	802,900	8,498,500	1,192,900
Sydney, N.S.	23,089	340	445	258	637,100	8,136,700	1,483,900
Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.	23,082	357	436	231	682,400	9,984,500	1,783,400
Peterborough, Ont.	22,327	383	688	317	969,500	11,132,500	1,706,600
Moose Jaw, Sask.	21,299	308	611	248	993,100	9,688,400	1,574,600
Guelph, Ont.	21,075	309	497	241	792,200	9,194,400	1,388,200
Glace Bay, N.S.	20,706	232	200	156	277,300	4,268,100	680,000
Moncton, N.B.	20,689	302	920	699	1,621,700	20,751,400	2,290,700

Review of Retail Trade, 1923-30.—On the completion of the Census of Merchandising and Service Establishments, 1931, which provided a complete enumeration of merchandising establishments, it became possible to carry back to 1923 (the year for which partial returns had first been obtained) calculations of the annual value of retail merchandise trade. For certain sections of retail trade the evidence presented to the Royal Commission on Price Spreads in 1935 provided a considerable amount of information on movements in retail trade prior to 1930. In the main, however, the estimates have been made on the basis of net consumption figures derived from the production and external trade records.* While the results obtained cannot approach the accuracy or comprehensiveness of the census figures, it is believed that they are sufficiently reliable to be used as indicators of the trend in retail merchandise trade in the period from 1923 to 1930.

Changes in the value of retail sales are due both to changes in the level of retail prices and in the physical volume of goods sold. Over a period of years the quantities of commodities purchased are affected chiefly by the growth in population and the available purchasing power in the hands of consumers. The general level of retail prices remained relatively constant from 1923 to 1930, although there were significant changes in the nature of some of the goods purchased in this period. These changes are reflected in the estimated sales of retail stores by kinds-of-business groups although such figures cannot be taken as estimates of commodity sales.

Retail Sales by Kinds of Business.—Sales of retail stores handling staple commodities, such as food and clothing, showed, by the figures of Table 33, a fairly uniform rate of growth in the period prior to 1930, but the trade in semi-durable goods—automobiles, furniture, radios, household appliances, etc.—advanced to a much greater extent as the purchasing power of consumers was enlarged by rising incomes and the extension of instalment credit. Some indication of the expansion in these lines is given by the figures shown for the automotive and furniture and household groups, but the sales for these kinds of business do not indicate the full

* See the bulletin "A Decade of Retail Trade", obtainable from the Dominion Statistician, for a discussion of methods employed in the calculations.