

*Retail Sales by Economic Divisions.*—The estimates of retail sales in the period prior to 1930 for economic divisions are, of course, subject to a greater margin of error than is the case for figures for Canada as a whole as consumption data are not generally available by provinces. Nevertheless, it is thought that the sales figures shown in Table 34 give a general indication of the movements in retail trade by economic divisions during the period under review.

The trend in sales from 1925 to 1928 was roughly parallel in all economic divisions. A considerable divergence at the beginning and end of the period may be noted for the Prairie Provinces, where the purchasing power of consumers is dependent, to a considerable extent, upon the level of agricultural income. The peak of sales in this region was reached in the year 1928 and thereafter the decline in trade was more severe than in other areas.

**34.—Retail Merchandise Trade by Economic Divisions, 1923-30.**

Year.	Maritime Provinces.	Quebec.	Ontario.	Prairie Provinces.	British Columbia.	Canada. <sup>1</sup>
	000 \$	000 \$	000 \$	000 \$	000 \$	000 \$
1923.....	156,419	494,824	863,091	472,783	189,355	2,179,398
1924.....	153,391	484,900	850,308	459,158	188,304	2,138,977
1925.....	160,182	515,176	901,225	521,675	202,314	2,303,598
1926.....	174,792	575,530	997,558	591,259	225,861	2,568,185
1927.....	185,053	624,847	1,080,831	645,138	243,986	2,783,189
1928.....	198,927	674,483	1,186,114	709,426	263,455	3,035,878
1929.....	215,133	721,986	1,249,833	687,173	280,275	3,157,927
1930.....	197,666	651,138	1,099,990	554,962	248,598	2,755,570

<sup>1</sup> Includes Yukon and Northwest Territories.

*Annual Retail Statistics.*—As in the case of wholesale merchandising, annual statistics of retail sales are based on the complete census covering 1930, supplemented by an annual survey of all the more important retail establishments, such establishments having accounted for over two-thirds of the total value of sales in 1930. In Table 35, therefore, the figures for 1930 are the results of the comprehensive census, while the figures for later years are estimates calculated from the annual surveys.

It is impossible to measure accurately the effect of the general decline in prices as a factor in the decrease in the total sales from 1930 to 1933. It probably was the principal factor in the food and apparel groups. On the other hand, the prices of more durable goods have not declined so much as food prices, so that the greater reduction in sales of groups handling durable goods is, no doubt, due much more to reduced volume.

Although retail sales in 1934 showed an increase of 9.4 p.c. over the total for 1933, they were still 29.5 p.c. below the 1930 level. While increases in trade were general for practically all lines in 1934, compared with 1933, the greatest gains were made by the automotive, the lumber and building materials and the furniture and household groups. Increases in the value of retail trade for 1934 were reported by all provinces; the largest increase over the preceding year, 11.4 p.c., was recorded for Nova Scotia and the smallest, 6.1 p.c., for Quebec. (See Table 35.)